

OPPORTUNITIES FIFE PARTNERSHIP

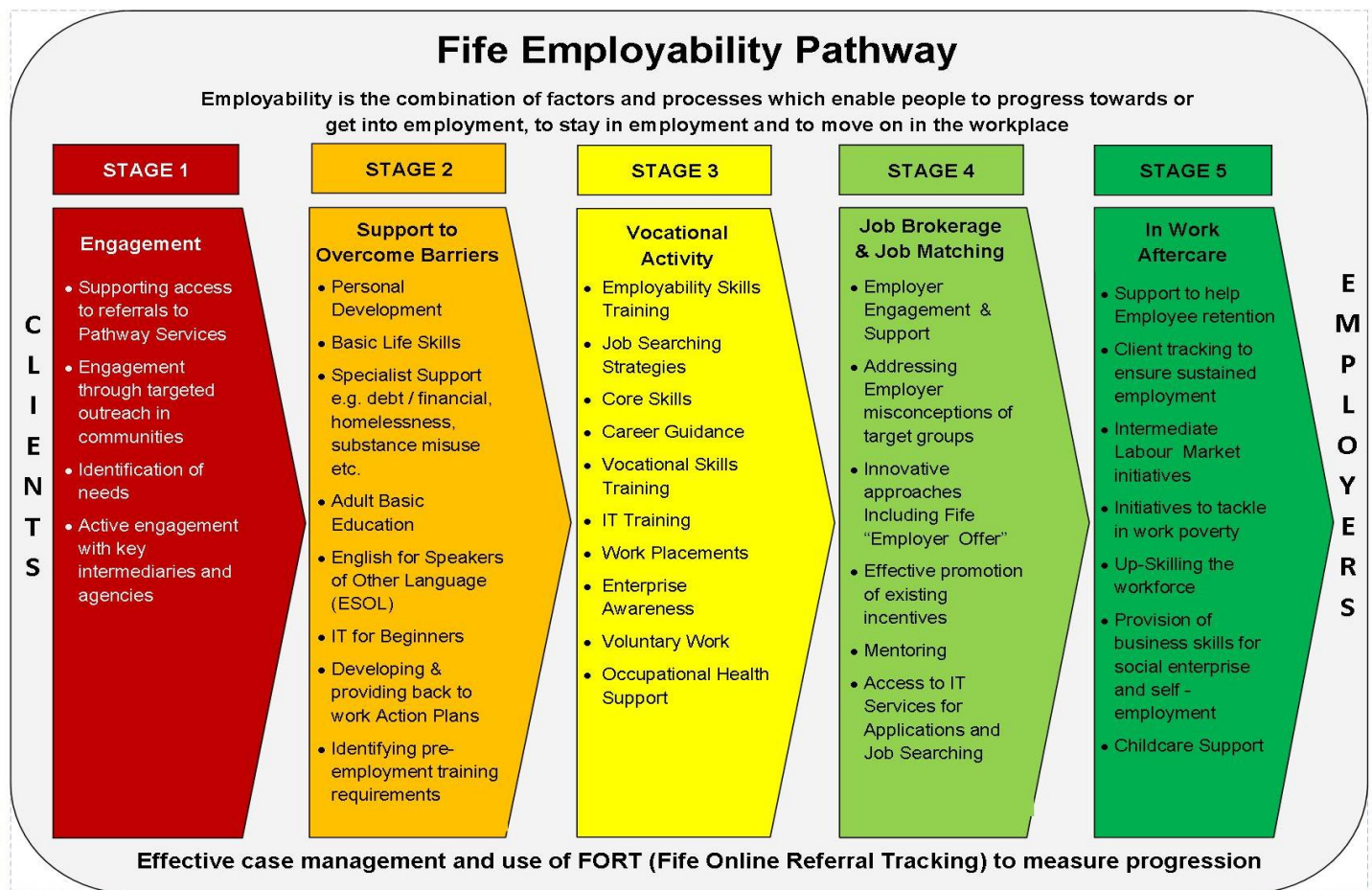
FIFE EMPLOYABILITY PATHWAY:

POVERTY & SOCIAL INCLUSION CHALLENGE FUND FRAMEWORK

JULY 2016

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Challenge Fund Framework sets out the Opportunities Fife Partnership intentions for investment in Poverty and Social Inclusion provision and is intended to provide the framework for all funding within the control of the partnership and Fife Council. Investment will be aligned to the Fife Employability Pathway:



1.2 During 2013 the Opportunities Fife Partnership undertook a review of its Employability Pathway to ensure that it was current against national best practice and innovation and that it was aligned to local and national sources of funding as effectively as possible. As a result of the review the partners now wish to give a clearer focus to positive outcomes and performance management for the pathway with service delivery focused on specific employability activities targeting SIMD areas and key groups. The partnership will ensure that its investment in employability activities from all funding sources complements and adds value to Scottish and UK funded employability interventions rather than duplicate or replace these.

- 1.3 This Challenge Fund Framework sets out the partnership's intentions for the delivery of Poverty and Social Inclusion activities which will provide additional and complimentary services to support to the Fife Employability Pathway. The framework reflects gaps in provision identified in the 2013 review of the pathway and takes into account where additional need has been identified in the intervening period by the Partners. The framework aims to ensure that European Structural Funds 2014-2020, is complemented by other sources of funding to ensure our full allocation can be drawn down.

2 STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FOCUS

- 2.1 The Opportunities Fife Partnership's investment will complement the services commissioned in April 2015 and re-contracted in April 2016 on the Fife Employability Pathway. The strategic focus for the investment has been developed to ensure that it targets unmet need for specific target groups and in Fife's most deprived geographical areas.

- 2.2 European Funding – The UK Partnership Agreement for European Funding was adopted in October 2014 by the European Commission. Fife's Strategic Intervention Application received approval from Scottish Government in October 2015 and two Operation Applications for the Fife Employability Pathway; Delivery and Management received approval in March 2016. These applications outlined the key priorities for our ESIF allocation and eligible expenditure can be dated back to the 1st April 2015, which is the start date of the SI.

Part of our Strategic Intervention Application is a commitment to deliver programmes in line with horizontal themes outlined in the European Structural and Investment Fund's guidance. Partners will be expected to demonstrate how they deliver programmes taking into account; Equal Opportunities, Environmental Stability and Social Inclusion.

The OFP will monitor the activity delivered by each of the Delivery Partners, to ensure performance against agreed target outputs/milestones, including how the horizontal themes will be addressed. Progress will then be monitored by regular meetings and the provision of monitoring information by each of the operations.

- 2.3 An additional Strategic Intervention for Poverty and Social Inclusion Allocation was Submitted to Scottish Government in February 2016 and received approval in June 2016. The focus of this SI was to offer additional targeted support for vulnerable families to access employment. It will specifically focused on addressing the multiple barriers faced by workless households living in Fife's most deprived areas.

- 2.4 Opportunities Fife / Fife Council Funding - The Opportunities Fife Partnership has access to funding through an allocation from Fife Council (previously Fairer Scotland Funding). The OFP's priorities for investment are to ensure that activities are focused on the three core outcomes:

- Increasing access to employment for people with disability and health issues
- increasing youth employment (16-24)
- Supporting adults into work (25+).

Investment will be made in interventions which benefit people living in communities which experience higher levels of poverty as indicated through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation i.e. the most deprived 20% SIMD areas of Fife. To support the investment priorities of European Funding, activities will be focused at those who have multiple (two or more eligible) barriers to accessing sustainable employment.

2.5 Fife Employability Pathway – the pathway ensures that delivery partners only deliver activities at one or specific stages, where they have the relevant expertise. This means that individuals accessing the pathway receive the right support at the right time. Fife's Employability Pathway Review concluded that there were gaps in the following areas:

- More is needed at Stage 2 in terms of addressing the issues faced by people with mental health and disability issues, and these issues are likely to be more prevalent as Work Programme leavers grow in number. Some care needs to be exercised here as a significant proportion of Stage 2 provision sits inside mainstream provision in Fife Council, NHS, etc.
- Support for individuals to develop IT skills is particularly important, in part to help with general employability but also driven by the shift to online job search and job application, as well as the introduction of Universal Jobmatch. This is currently being provided for through the Digital Inclusion Programme but should also be embedded in all ESIF proposals.
- Support to sustain job entry and to help individuals progress in employment is generally seen as an area where additional investment is required. The most cost effective way to organise this is by building on the employer engagement effort at Stage 4 and the links already made by the staff involved with both clients and employers at the job entry stage. A Business Employability Support Service will engage with businesses to identify training, placement and employment opportunities that will be fed back to providers at the earlier stages of the Pathway, linking them in to relevant employers to meet these needs.
- A reconfigured service for residents of most deprived SIMD areas is needed which is organised around the concept of providers travelling towards the client rather than the client travelling towards provision. To work cost effectively this will need to maximise the use of existing local facilities and potential links with community based organisations.

2.6 Fife Council's Education and Children's Services - through its participation with the OFP has conducted a further study into the characteristics of the approximately 350 – 450 young people per year, that leave school in Fife to a negative destination. Of the 447 that make up the cohort from 2014, 31.8% were from SIMD decile 1 and 2. This figure rises to 46.4% with the inclusion of decile 3. In addition, 26.2% of these young people have at least one additional support need. Many of these young people come from families where their parents or guardians have their own additional support needs and multiple barriers to employment. Consequently, it is unlikely that these young people will receive the necessary support and encouragement to access, achieve and sustain employment or a positive destination.

2.6 In conjunction with the review of the pathway, the development of its approach to Fife Council (previously Fairer Scotland Funding) and the understanding of the additional needs identified by Education and Children's Services, the Opportunities Fife Partnership has identified strategic outcomes for its investment in Poverty and Social Inclusion intervention, to provide additional support to the Fife Employability Pathway:

- Support for participants who have multiple (two or more eligible) barriers to accessing sustainable employment
- Providing focused support for families at stages 1 and 2 of the Employability Pathway to ensure that each family member is able to progress to later pathway stages and essentially employment

- Engagement with clients to take place locally, within their own communities and to be focused on providing support in Fife's most deprived 20% SIMD areas.
- Tailored, co-ordinated support including a combination of intensive, general and specialist advice on money, welfare, fuel and financial services as well as improving financial capability and developing a preventative to financial problems. .
- Referrals, client assessments and their progression along the pathway will continue to be effectively managed through our online management system, FORT.

3 COMMISSIONING PRINCIPLES

3.1 In line with the review of the Fife Employability Pathway as outlined above, the following overarching principles have been identified by the Opportunities Fife Partnership as governing our priorities for delivery Poverty and Social Inclusion activities in Fife. Service delivery should:

- Be focused on supporting vulnerable families to access employment
- Seek to address the multiple barriers faced by workless households living in Fife's most deprived 20% SIMD areas
- Supplement activity being delivered by Education and Children's Services, for young people in danger of disengaging from school / leaving school to a negative destination; but providing an all-encompassing service that will target the range of barriers being faced by other members of the household
- Include a combination of intensive, general and specialist advice on money, welfare, fuel and financial services, including preventative approaches to financial problems
- Be targeted against those furthest from the labour market and in particular focus on the strategic areas of intervention outlined at section 2
- Be tailored to include volunteering opportunities and work experience alongside employability and job search activities; as evidence reveals this as crucial to achieving successful outcomes
- Demonstrate innovative approaches; particularly around the role volunteering can play in improving clients' employment prospects, especially when focussing on the needs of people living in the most deprived areas of Fife
- Be located as close as possible to the client base and should be configured around the needs of the client rather than the provider
- Provide transformational change for families, by building a network of support for families living in the most deprived areas, to encourage and nurture their capacity to support their young people
- It is not the intention of this service to concentrate on activities specifically for the young people, but develop a family culture that will ensure that young people and their parents can fully engage in existing mainstream Pathway provision and have the best opportunity progress
- Include provision of client tracking and aftercare support for a minimum of 6 months.

- Fully utilise Partnership Resources, such as the Opportunities Fife Website, to advertise their activities and promote the Partnership through the posting of regular good news stories

4 SERVICE DELIVERY

- 4.1 Service delivery will engage and support workless households from Fife's most deprived SIMD 20% areas, with multiple (2 or more eligible) barriers to employment, with a focus on support for families with young people aged 14 - 19.

This will contribute to the Scottish Government priority of targeting young people furthest from the labour market, particularly those suffering from family disadvantage and poverty. Support to these workless households and the young people within them is crucial for the individual themselves as well as society as a whole. Our Poverty and Social Inclusion activity will contribute to the following European strategic aims:

- Support for active inclusion through the promotion of equal opportunities and active participation
- Increasing the financial capacity of the most disadvantaged individuals and households
- Increasing the number of disadvantaged participants from workless households into positive employment or training outcomes.

- 4.2 More locally, the overall direction of the Fife Partnership is set by Fife's Community Plan 2011/20. The Community Plan sets out 3 high level outcomes of reducing inequalities, increasing employment and tackling climate change. This activity will contribute to the reducing inequalities outcome and the long term outcomes that sit within this of:

- Reducing low income households
- Increasing the capability of Fifers to take action and make a difference to their communities
- Strengthening communities through regeneration
- Raising educational attainment and reducing educational inequality

It also contributes to the increasing employment outcome of "extending employment and skills opportunities"

- 4.3 The specific aims and objectives for the proposed activity were taken from the review of Fife's Employability Pathway in 2013, through the Opportunities Fife Partnership. Amongst other priorities, the OFP aims to:

- Increase the level of engagement and activities for clients living in the most deprived areas, with additional focus on the most deprived 20% SIMD areas.
- Increase the delivery capacity of the third sector in order to better engage the hardest to reach clients in their own local areas.

- 4.4 Service delivery will seek to address poverty and social exclusion by increasing the financial awareness, capacity and inclusion of the most disadvantaged households.

Anticipated results are:

- an increase in disadvantaged beneficiaries with improved money management skills
- an increase in the number of adults accessing mainstream employability provision at stage 3 and above

- a reduction in the number of young people from workless households in the most deprived SIMD 20% areas leaving school to a negative destination.
- 4.5 Families in workless households are the key target group and as such service delivery should support:
- The family will be linked with a support worker to agree an action plan that is additional to the general support work required.
 - The young person(s) will be linked with a youth worker for tailored motivational support and connections.
 - Further enhancement to the family package will be through money advice and financial inclusion training enabling both adults and young people to develop the skills to reach a position of financial stability and make informed financial choices.
 - Where appropriate childcare support will be sourced and financed to ensure this is not a barrier for the adult or young people to engage with recognised progression routes through education, training or even employment.
- 4.6 The approach will consist of one- to-one support, home visiting and group work and will follow a pathway of engagement, skilling up and progression. This approach recognises the need to change methods of engagement to ensure maximum impact on each member of the family as well as the family unit as a whole. Activities will go beyond traditional employability activities, and will look at further barriers to employment such as unhealthy relationships, lack of family routine/structure, low aspirations, risk taking behaviours, disengagement with formal education and financial difficulties.
- 4.7 The families will be identified and engaged through a partnership approach through a variety of sources. Key to this will be Jobcentre plus in order to identify families living on benefits. This will be in close conjunction with the Family and Community Support Teams (FACST) within Education and Children's Service in order to ensure that those families most in need are identified. Once identified workers would make contact with the families and would liaise with them to agree what support mechanisms are required. There will also be scope for other third sector projects working locally to make referrals or for self-referral in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.8 **For Adults** activities will include practical family support with housing, health and debt. Parental skills will be explored and capacity developed. Financial advice and debt management training will be essential with support provided to open a basic bank account, to access affordable credit, to put in place home insurance and open savings accounts and to access affordable, essential household items. Courses on budgeting and money management skills will be developed and will introduce a preventative approach to financial education reducing the likelihood of ill-informed financial decisions. Innovative projects will be tailored to support participants in overcoming their individual barriers and to broker access to mainstream, affordable products and services in order to address the "poverty premium" and the associated debts and resultant social exclusion.
- 4.9 **For Young People** relevant activities from above will also be offered. Dedicated youth support will offer a mix of one-to-one and group activity aiming to build confidence and self-esteem. Particular attention and focus will be dedicated to sexual health, safe and appropriate internet use and the impact of social media on young people's sense of value, worth and place in local peer groups and community. Education on cyber abuse will help provide a preventative approach to mental health issues arising as a result. Where the young person is in danger of leaving school to a negative destination, support will be put in place to ensure they are attending and engaged with guidance staff within

the school or accessing keyworker support through Skills Development Scotland or other specific training provision for young people through Fife's Employability Pathway.

4.10 **Monitoring and Tracking:**

It is intended the Fife Online Referral and Tracking (FORT) CRMS will be developed to create 'family records' so we can record progress of individuals within the project and at the same time understand the relationship, and therefore the complexities, within the family.

4.11 All Programmes commissioned must operate under the banner of the Opportunities Fife Partnership, display the Opportunities Fife Partnership and European Commission Logo on all materials and adhere to all guidance, publicity requirements and documentation relevant to European funding.

4.12 Proposals for commissioning will be assessed by the Opportunities Fife Partnership Executive Group.

5 **CHALLENGE FUND PROCESS**

5.1 The following timescales apply to the Challenge Fund Process:

Activity	Date
Challenge Fund Commissioning Framework uploaded to OFP Website and circulated to wider network.	23/09/2016
Submit Expressions of Interest and Possible Meeting with OFP Manager: Providers <u>should not</u> necessarily wait until this date to express interest or request a meeting. Meetings will be arranged as early as is convenient. Expressions of interest should be emailed to Julie Stark: Julie.stark@fife.gov.uk with a brief indication of which target group(s) the provider would be proposing services for.	07/10/2016
Meetings completed and any final questions answered by:	14/10/2016
Proposals should be submitted to Julie Stark by email: Julie.stark@fife.gov.uk using a standard proforma which will be provided.	28/10/2016 *
Proposals will be assessed and scored:	04/11/2016 *
Recommendations will be made to OFP Executive Group for approval	08/11/2016 *
Successful Provider contacted and Contract Awarded	By 15/11/2016 *
Programme Start Date	01/12/2016 *

* Should approval for our Operation be received from Scottish Government.

Timescale maybe subject to change, based on approval and a deadline for return will be given with template.

5.2 For further reference a full list of the 20% SIMD areas in Fife is available from:
http://www.fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk/downloads/Fife_SIMD_Areas_2016.pdf

5.3 Proposals will be assessed according to the following sample criteria. A full scoring matrix, will be provided to all those submitting expressions of interest.

Sample Scoring Criteria
Previous Experience
Programme Delivery Details <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target client group(s) • Delivers a preventative approach • Provision of employability and job search activities • Inclusion of work experience / volunteering to gain skills and experience necessary to access employment • Links to pathway partners
Delivery Location <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on SIMD areas • Delivers localised services that are easily accessible
Programme Management / Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of registrations • Number of positive progressions along pathway stages • Job outcome targets • Other Positive Outcome targets
Budget and match funding
Project Staff
Added Value