

REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 12 MARCH 2020

PARTNERSHIP REVIEW – EMPLOYMENT CONNECT: ABERDEENSHIRE EMPLOYABILITY PARTNERSHIP

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The reason for this report is to facilitate a review of the Council's participation in the Employment CONNECT Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership (EC) in line with the Council's Partnership Policy.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 **Consider and endorse the partnership review of Employment CONNECT as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of this report; and**
- 1.2 **Agree that the Council continue to participate in the partnership for a further three years.**

3 Purpose and Decision-Making Route

- 3.1 Aberdeenshire Council's Partnership Working Policy requires that a short partnership assessment and a short risk assessment must be undertaken before joining a partnership and every two years thereafter.
- 3.2 The Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership was established in 2009 as a result of a Research Project looking at how Employability monies were used in Aberdeenshire. It was then rebranded as Employment CONNECT in 2017 and continues to be facilitated by Aberdeenshire Council with the purpose of providing an aligned approach to the provision of a range of employment services and opportunities for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and individuals living in both rural and urban areas. The partnership is comprised of representative stakeholder organisations from the private, third and public sectors and covers the whole of Aberdeenshire.
- 3.3 In April 2019 Scottish Government and Local Authorities [through COSLA] signed a Partnership Agreement to work jointly in the creation of a new Scottish Employability landscape as part of the newly created No One Left Behind initiative (NOLB). One of the key principles of NOLB is to merge a variety of employability funding streams into one single fund. In the first year of this arrangement, funding streams for employment subsidies and activity agreements have been merged. The EC partnership does not currently manage funding through NOLB, this is carried out by the Council via the Economic Development service's employability lead, but a commissioning sub-group will be formed as and when further sums are added to the NOLB employability fund ensuring equity and transparency. Further information on the partnership's activities can be found at <https://employmentconnect.org.uk/>

4 Discussion

- 4.1 Council participation in Employment CONNECT is important to facilitate the alignment of employability activity in Aberdeenshire and ensuring alignment with the Child Poverty agenda and for the exploration of cross-border working and joint funding applications. This report asks Committee to consider and endorse the partnership assessment and risk assessment set out at **Appendix 1** and 2 to this report.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 Participation in Employment CONNECT, Aberdeenshire's Employability Partnership, helps deliver on the following Council priorities by facilitating the skills alignment, development, implementation and generation of projects:

- Support a strong, sustainable, diverse and successful economy
- Encourage active lifestyles and promote well-being with a focus on obesity and mental health
- Work to reduce poverty and inequalities within our communities
- Protect our special environment, including tackling climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions

- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	X		
Staffing		X	
Equalities			X
Fairer Scotland Duty			X
Town Centre First			X
Sustainability			X
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X

- 5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required because the recommended actions don't have a differential impact on people with protected characteristics. Full Equalities Impact Assessments have been carried out on the Local Development Strategies delivered by the partnership.
- 5.4 Aberdeenshire Council presently employs staff who support the implementation of Employability throughout Aberdeenshire.
- 5.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a [Corporate Level](#).

- Budget Pressures
- Working with other organisations (partnership working)
- Reputation management
- Social risk
- (e.g. population changes, poverty & social inequality, demographic changes, crime, anti-social behaviour)

The following risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a [Strategic Level](#):

- Balancing the Books
- Supportive, Inclusive, Vibrant and Healthy Communities
- Economic Development

6 Scheme of Governance

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section F1.1b of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as this relates to policy issues and resource matters relating to Economic Development.

Stephen Archer
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Ewen Allardyce, Employability Co-ordinator – Economic Development

03 February 2020

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List of Appendices:

APPENDIX 1 – PARTNERSHIP REVIEW, EMPLOYMENT CONNECT
APPENDIX 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT, EMPLOYMENT CONNECT
APPENDIX 3 - PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

APPENDIX 1 – PARTNERSHIP REVIEW, EMPLOYMENT CONNECT

Areas for consideration	Assessment	Comment/Proposed Action
Is the partnership a statutory partnership?	No <input type="button" value="v"/>	
If yes, please state the legislation in the comment box. (Please continue to go through the assessment for best practice purposes, rather than to assess whether there should be participation in the partnership).		
The partnership has set outcomes or objectives to be achieved	Yes <input type="button" value="v"/>	To co-ordinate employability activity and interventions across Aberdeenshire.
The partnership's aims and any commitment of budget fit with the council's strategic plan and priorities (http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-plan)	Yes <input type="button" value="v"/>	
If yes or partly, please specify which priorities in the comment box		The partnership supports the following objectives: Support a strong, sustainable, diverse and successful economy; Encourage active lifestyles and promote well-being with a focus on obesity and mental health; Work to reduce poverty and inequalities within our communities
The partnership follows the Account Commission's Code on Following the Public Pound / financial regulations and agrees appropriate arrangements for allocating start-up and running costs (http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2004/nr_040311_following_public_pound.pdf)	Yes <input type="button" value="v"/>	
The partnership makes links to the CPP's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities where relevant (http://www.ouraberdeenshire .)	Yes <input type="button" value="v"/>	Connected and cohesive communities

<i>org.uk/our-priorities/local-outcomes-improvement-plan/)</i>		
All other appropriate bodies have been invited to participate in this partnership	Yes	The Employment CONNECT partnership involves partners from the 3 rd sector, private and public sectors
The partnership ensures equality of opportunity for all and complies with statutory duties (equalities, socio-economic, town centres first principle) as required	Yes	
The partnership has a document such as an agreement, remit or memorandum of association to define its role, powers and how it carries out its business	Yes	Local Development Strategies and Constitution
The partnership makes a formal annual report that includes annual accounts and performance to its members and other bodies if necessary	Partly	There is an annual report which is jointly reported via Tackling Poverty & Inequalities to the CPP, but this does not include annual accounts which are part of Aberdeenshire Council's accounts.
Appropriate status and voting rights are accorded to the council in the partnership	N/A	
Members of the partnership's top-level decision-making group can be recalled by their nominating bodies	N/A	
The risks faced by the partnership are shared between partners	No	Aberdeenshire Council acts as Lead Partner with the requirements of this role being administrative
Routine sharing of personal data will take place within the partnership	Partly	Information is primarily shared through HANLON (Employment Support Team MIS). Privacy notices are in place.
If yes or partly, please consider if a Data Privacy Impact Assessment, an Information Sharing Agreement or a Privacy Notice is required. All guidance and templates can be found at this link https://aberdeenshire.sharepoint.com/sites/Arcadia/services/Pages/Business%20Services/ICT/Information%20Management%20and%20Record%20Man		

agement/Data%20Protection/Data%20Protection.aspx		
The partnership has a complaints process or agrees to adopt the complaints process of a member organisation	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	
Meetings of the partnership's top-level decision-making group are open to the public	N/A	
The public is entitled to see reports considered by the partnership's top-level decision-making group	N/A	
Minutes of the partnership's meetings are made publicly available	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	Minutes are publicly available,
The partnership's top-level decision-making group has a quorum for meetings	N/A	
Members of the partnership's top-level decision-making group are appointed for a limited period of time	N/A	
There are agreed arrangements for dissolving the partnership	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	The partnership
There are clear arrangements for the council to exit the partnership	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	The partnership is reviewed annually to ensure it is still fit for purpose.
There is a procedure for ensuring members who declare conflicts of interest take no part in decision	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	
The partnership recognises the obligations placed on Elected Members due to the Code of Conduct and has a procedure for ensuring members who declare conflicts of interest take no part in decision.	<input type="text" value="No"/>	Elected Members do not participate in the partnership
Cost / Benefit Analysis	Response	

<p>Please detail the staffing and financial implications of running the partnership, including those on other council services and partners</p>	<p>As Lead Partner, Aberdeenshire Council employs employability co-ordinator, attendees such as Employability, criminal justice, work placement, looked after children, Opportunities for all, CL&D, education, financial inclusion.</p>
<p>Please state the source of any funding received by the partnership</p>	<p>None at this time.</p>
<p>Please describe the benefits of council participating in the partnership</p>	<p>The Council is able to ensure alignment of provision, reduce duplication, secure additional resources through joint funding applications. It can influence the further development of client focussed services, it has a voice at SLAED and Scottish Government when developing policy and a shared goal with other LAs.</p>
<p>The partnership is sustainable and is the best way of achieving its aims and outcomes</p>	<p>Yes <input type="button" value="v"/></p>

APPENDIX 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT, EMPLOYMENT CONNECT

Partnership Name:		Completed by:			Date:	
Employment CONNECT, Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership.		Ewen Allardyce			03/02/2020	
All partnerships must be recorded in the Register of Partnerships on Arcadia						
This table assesses whether your partnership should be recorded as a significant partnership requiring a Risk Register (from the Risk Management Team).						
Please enter the score in the last column for the statement which most closely represents your partnership.						
Im pac t No.	Description	Minor (Score 1)	Important (Score 2)	Significant (Score 3)	Major (Score 4)	Scor e
1	The Council contributes to the partnership by direct funding and/or indirectly through staff resources, work done etc.)	< £10K per annum	£10K to < £50 k per annum	£50K to < £100k per annum	> £100k per annum	1
2	The partnership's success is critical to the achievement of one or more of the Council's Strategic Priorities.	Not directly linked to a strategic priority (this needs to be flagged up to the policy committee in this case)	Linked to a strategic priority	Significant contributor to success of a strategic priority	Essential to the achievement of a strategic priority	4
3	Failure of the partnership would have an impact on the Council's reputation.	Threat of adverse comment in local press or the equivalent that Corporate Communications consider to be of material concern to the Council.	Actual adverse comment in local press or the equivalent that Corporate Communications consider to be of material concern to the Council.	Individual press reports in national media that Corporate Communications consider being of material concern to the Council.	Concerted, widespread or recurrent critical coverage of the Council or for a specific event in the media	1
4	The extent to which partnership expenditure is controlled by the Council.	The Council has full control over expenditure decisions.	The Council has veto on expenditure decisions.	The Council is a party to expenditure decisions.	The Council has no control over expenditure.	1
5	The partnership takes decisions on behalf of or which are binding on the Council.	The Partnership does not take decisions on behalf of the Council	The Partnership does not take decisions on behalf of the Council but representatives with decision-making authority attend the partnership and consider and influence	The Partnership does not take decisions on behalf of the Council but representatives with decision-making authority attend the partnership and agree to be bound by its decisions.	The partnership has decision-making responsibilities directly delegated to it from the Council.	2

			its recommenda- tions.			
6	The Council has set up the partnership in order to receive additional funding and/or meet Statutory or Regulatory requirement.	Not required by law or to receive funding.	Indirect or limited links to successful achievement of funding.	Direct links to successful achievement of funding.	The Council is required to participate in this partnership by law or to receive specific funding.	1
Total Score						10
Maximum Score	Possible					24
Impact %						41.6 %
Evaluation					Not Significant	

APPENDIX 3 – PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

Aberdeenshire Council
Aberdeen Foyer
Enable Scotland
NHS Grampian
Barnardos
Social Enterprise Academy
NESCOL
Department for Work and Pensions
Scottish Prison Service
Skills Development Scotland
Princes Trust
Momentum
Tre-Life
SHMU
Grec

