

1. Name of SOA case study

North Ayrshire Employability Continuum

2. What was the local need addressed by this SOA case study?

North Ayrshire continues to have one of the highest rates of unemployment in Scotland. Getting People into Work is the top priority for the Community Planning Partnership. A particular focus of our work is on supporting those furthest from the labour market to make steps towards employment, through personal development and confidence-building, volunteering, education, training etc.

3. What was done – and by which partners?

A strong multi-agency partnership has developed over time within the Community Planning Partnership – now known as the North Ayrshire Economic and Learning Partnership. Members include (in alphabetical order) the Councils for Voluntary Service (CVSs), Cunninghame Housing Association, Irvine Bay Regeneration Company, James Watt College, Jobcentre Plus, Kilmarnock College , Neighbourhood Compacts, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Marlene McMillan, Lead Public Health Practitioner, North Ayrshire Council (Economic Development, Welfare Rights, Community Learning & Development, Educational Services), Scottish Enterprise , Skills Development Scotland, Visit Scotland and the Volunteer Centre.

This Partnership has developed the Employability Continuum which maps the needs of those furthest away from the labour market, those moving towards and into employment, and those in work. The partners have used the Continuum to map current provision, identify gaps, reduce duplication and inform the development of new services.

The Continuum has also been used to attract additional funding for employability interventions, including the Fairer Scotland Fund (known locally as Fairer North Ayrshire), European funding (ESF, ERDF) and the Future Jobs Fund.

4. What is the evidence of the benefits for communities – or if the benefits are still to be delivered, what is the timeline for that?

The Employability Continuum has provided a strong framework for a comprehensive programme of employability support. It has a strong partnership basis, and has significantly impacted on the lives – and future life chances – of hard to reach groups who are often far from the labour market. It has effectively progressed clients into – or nearer to – education, employment and training opportunities.

In 2008/9, 2033 clients were registered with this Programme, resulting in (for example):

- 558 clients moving into employment
- 239 clients moving into transitional employment
- 533 clients moving into training/education
- 433 existing employees receiving support from Jobrotation to access further training and development opportunities
- 106 moving into volunteering opportunities
- 44 social enterprises being supported.

5. What added value has the SOA process brought to the delivery of these benefits?

Getting people into work is at the heart of North Ayrshire's SOA and its aims. This programme links closely into a number of core Outcomes, covering work and training, skills, lifelong learning, enterprise and positive destinations for young people.

6. What next steps are you taking to meet this local need?

Future Jobs Funding has recently been secured from the Department of Work and Pensions (£1.7million) to add to the provision and options already in place. Additional sources of funding are also being explored, including ongoing European funding. A new computerised tracking system (Meganexus) has been purchased to aid multi-agency intelligence about client progression



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