

Child Poverty: Parental Employment Inquiry

Submission by Falkirk Council – Employment and Training Unit

18 July 2022

Information about your organisation

Falkirk Council's Employment and Training Unit manages and co-ordinates a wide range of National and Local Employability Support and Training Programmes.

The Employment and Training Unit engages with individuals who are disadvantaged and excluded from participating in the labour market. These individuals require additional support in order to obtain, sustain and progress in employment, via the development of a range of support measures including work-based core skills and SCQF to an appropriate accredited level.

The Unit currently manages a diverse range of employment and training initiatives including National Training Programmes. The aim of this engagement is to ensure that there is a diversity of quality training opportunities available to Falkirk residents within the identified priority client groups, who require additional support in accessing and sustaining employment.

We deliver a holistic employability intervention creating a seamless learner journey. Each participant has a named Employment and Training Coordinator (ETC) working with them managing their journey into sustained employment. The need for training and employment rarely stands in isolation; therefore, we implement whole council person centred approach to our delivery.

This ranges from bespoke interventions to the more traditional employability programmes and pre apprenticeships where Participants work, on their own or as part of a group, on their employability, core and vocational skills.

The focus is on ensuring we provide support to participation and progression and all Participants undertake vocational profiling allowing them to identify their skills and strengths.

What employability services are there in your area that currently provide support targeted at parents, particularly parents in the 'priority groups' set out in the Child Poverty Delivery Plan?

- Parental Employment Support Fund (PESF) includes ERI (Employment Recruitment Incentive) for in work parents
- Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) – ERI for young parents aged under 25 - Project Search, supporting learning disabled young people to engage in an internship
- No One Left Behind (NOLB)- ERI for unemployed parents aged over 25
- Long Term Unemployed funding (LTU)
- European Social Fund (ESF)

- Fair Start Scotland – Scottish Government Statutory Employability Programme, lone parents are a priority group

How do these projects link to other relevant services, for example, local childcare providers, local training providers, and local employers?

Partnership work undertaken with local Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and wider childcare providers regarding securing places for children either to enable parents to attend training or returning to employment. Advice and guidance and support to secure funding for childcare is also available.

Dedicated financial advice and guidance is available regarding childcare costs, income from employment, debt and money management and income maximisation.

Qualifications, certificated training, soft skills/personal development and health and wellbeing support delivery through procured – third, private and public sector. Close working relationships established with support services regarding referring into for additional support for participants.

Employer engagement activity presents opportunity for employment and work experience placements, work trials, community benefits in procurement opportunities, employer recruitment incentives, supported employment ongoing in work support activity for participants and employer.

Partnership work is ongoing with Schools and Community Hubs to expand reach and accessibility to local parents without stigma.

What specific challenges does your local employability partnership face, for example, because of geographic area or levels of poverty?

- Covid restrictions – lack of access to parents now lifted with access to schools- Transport links from outlying areas to central areas challenging re frequency, inability to support parents with push chairs
- Unconfirmed participation rates for young people remain high at 5%
- SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) gap 16-19 is 13.1%
- No Qualification rate 10.3%
- Less than Scottish average number of local people employed in SOC 1 occupations
- Child poverty higher than Scottish average 24.8%, Children in low income families 18.9%
- Annualised funding reduces opportunity for greater impact and reach

How do you expect employability service delivery in your area will change in response to the second Child Poverty Delivery Plan?

There may be greater opportunities to innovate and develop services that are more long term in nature, better meeting needs of communities.

Greater flexibility in the use of local funds to best support participants and service providers locally.

Increased development of partnerships with Schools, parent groups and Community groups to design and deliver gateway, occupational and vocational provision and in work supports, this will include both part- time and evening delivery to support parental needs.

How will you integrate the requirements of the Child Poverty Delivery Plan into your broader approach to employability?

The chair of the Local Employability Partnership sits on the local Child Poverty Action Planning group, regularly reviewing alignment and integration with the local and National Child Poverty Plan to ensure operational activity aligns with expected outputs and outcomes and also monitors the wider impacts.

Child Poverty is also included within the LEP Delivery Plan, reviewed and updated on a 6 monthly basis to ensure local services are designed and delivered around a continuous improvement ethos, evidence base and participant input.

Having achieved the SUSE Inclusive Workplace Award (IWA), a person-centred holistic approach to employability is inherent in our approach to supporting parents. Falkirk Council have commissioned a range of supports including SAMH, IPS, Occupational Health and NHS condition management, Financial Capability, Income Max and Debt Supports as well as a range of soft skill provision, qualifications and certificated training to support both unemployed and in work parents.

What support does your employability partnership need from the Scottish Government to implement the second Child Poverty Delivery Plan?

Early awareness of grant offer terms, scope and restrictions etc in addition to earlier communication regarding funding allocations to enable planning and service design that aligns with the Scottish Approach to Service Design in that research and codesign is undertaken with parents and other partnership organisations/ stakeholders.

What does your data collection tell you about what is needed in your area to support employability amongst the priority groups set out in the Child Poverty Delivery Plan?

In preparation for phase 2 of NOLB (2022/23 delivery) the LEP undertook a wide-ranging evidence-based needs assessment, including collation of data, service mapping and participant evaluation. One area of this work compared local areas in relation to child poverty levels, SIMD, and low participation 16-19 areas. This data was then cross referenced and as a result of this assessment three key geographies were also identified to target provision as local level with particular focus on the 6 priority groups of the SG CPAP:

- Falkirk North: Bainsford and Langlees & Camelon East
- Grangemouth: Kersiebank & Town Centre
- Denny & Banknock
- Carse, Kinnaird and Tryst

Is there a suitable project in your area that focuses on people we know are at higher risk of poverty that you think we might be able to visit?

1. Gateway Parents Programmes – This part time commissioned programme encourages contacts with parents from across all the priority groups, who may be harder to reach introduce them to Employability and other whole council supports. The programme includes soft skills; health and wellbeing; fire safety awareness; short courses such as Managing stress and anxiety and Building confidence and self-esteem; Healthy eating on a budget and REHIS (Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland) intro to food hygiene certification (meal prep), NHS Keep well and life coach support; Fire Safety; Financial Capability officer supported BOIWC and how to manage your money; 'How to support your child with homework' forms part of Digital inclusion sessions, Childcare first aid and Moving on - Employability overviews. . Chrome books are allocated to all participants if required with one-to-one Digital Champion support.

Or

2. Falkirk Council's Early Learning and Childcare Centre, Langlees and Employment and Training Unit (ETU) partnership approach to support Eligible parents across all the priority groups. ETU offer a range of supports, programmes including Gateway programmes, modular as well as a range of health and wellbeing, financial and other supports.