

Charter 2.4 Priority Groups in Public Sector Employment

Improvement Project Title: Priority Groups in Public Sector Employment
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Aim statement Increase the number of people from priority groups (care experienced young people, people with convictions, people with housing need) employed by public sector partners by 2021.
Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan: The refreshed LOIP, published in 2019, identifies 15 stretch outcomes to break down the overall vision and ambitions to reduce poverty into manageable, thematic programmes of work. This Improvement Project sits under stretch outcome 2 within the Economy theme: 90% of working people in Living Wage employment by 2026 This is also linked to two other Aberdeen Prospers projects: <i>Increase the number of Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships in priority and volume growth sectors by 5% by 2022</i> and <i>Increase the number of people from priority localities employed by public sector partners and in major capital projects by 2022.</i> This will also contribute to achieving: Stretch outcome 5: <i>Increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination by 25% by 2022.</i> Stretch outcome 6: <i>Increase the number of young people taking up foundation apprenticeships to 142 by 2021</i> Stretch Outcome 10: <i>Increase no. of individuals who are on a custodial sentence, CPO Supervision or Diversion from Prosecution are being supported to make progress on the Employability Pipeline by 2021</i> Stretch Outcome 10: <i>Increase % of non-statutory prisoners (aged 21+) who are offered relevant voluntary support on release from HMP Grampian by 2021</i>
Why is this important Many of the people in these priority groups face significant barriers to employment and the majority will need additional support and mentoring to help them achieve and sustain employment. The range of barriers faced is broad and can seem overwhelming. Significant interventions and support can be needed to get them to a position of being ready for employment and work-able. Some of these individuals are living in chaotic

lifestyles, significant numbers of them suffer or have suffered from mental health issues. Events in their pasts prevent them from accessing certain jobs or put them at a disadvantage, for example criminal records, can make securing employment particularly challenging, while for others a lack of family support and guidance, or indeed ongoing family issues can cause difficulties. Homelessness or housing need can make applying for or holding down a job near to impossible. And often, these three issues go hand-in-hand.

The combined challenges faced by all three groups are massive. Anecdotal evidence shows that care experienced young people are among the most likely in society to fall into the three categories mentioned here. It is known that a higher proportion of care experienced young people are likely to offend or to have a criminal record than those who are not care experienced. These young people are also at a higher risk of homelessness than those who have not come through the care system. It is also known that many care experienced young people will have lower attainment levels than those who are not care experienced. This is also true for many of those people who find themselves in the justice system. For the purposes of this exercise we will initially focus on care experienced young people.

It is also known that sustained employment is one of the key factors to people being able to maintain a tenancy and avoiding falling foul of the law. However, being homeless or at risk of homelessness, and/or being in the justice system can make securing or sustaining employment extremely challenging. There is a chicken and egg scenario. Information provided by the city's third sector partners make it clear that the first step is often to get a person secure and settled in a tenancy and that employability support should follow that, once circumstances are less chaotic.

The average cost to the state of an unemployed person claiming benefits, including housing benefit, council tax benefit and unemployment benefit – against cost of someone in employment earning circa £17k pa – is c.£6,827 exclusive of housing and council tax benefits. Care experienced young people do not pay council tax until they turn 26.

National Health Service Research found that a young person NEET in 2008 would cost an average of £56,000 in public finance costs before retirement age. This reflects the public finance costs of welfare payments, health and justice-related costs and lower tax and national insurance revenue. On the basis of this estimate, the Scottish Government (2012b) estimates the lifetime cost of a single cohort of young people failing to make the transition into regular employment to be in the region of £2 billion.

There are significant links between unemployment and poor physical and mental health, and associated health costs.

The average costs to the city of housing someone who presents as homeless is £9,000, however the cost for a young person will likely be much higher (potentially up to £45k) as if they are on that trajectory from an early age as the likelihood is that they will continue as repeat presentations.

Care experienced young people should not present as homeless, as they have other routes into the system, however, some do choose to present to the council as such and do not disclose their care experienced status.

Local experience shows that for some care experienced young people maintaining a tenancy is overwhelming and they are not initially capable of doing so. The result can be homelessness and damaged properties, with repair costs sometimes running into thousands of pounds, while the local authority has a duty to rehouse these people.

However, pockets of work are being carried out across Aberdeen to support care experienced young people into public sector employment. A fact-finding exercise was carried out to try to establish what mechanisms already exist to support people from these priority groups into employment in the public sector.

Aberdeen City Council

Talent Acquisition is in the process of expanding its guaranteed interview scheme for, amongst others, care experienced young people who fit the person spec/job profile for the role who are applying for apprenticeships;

Children's Social Work ties in with a number of initiatives and awareness-raising activity, including DYW, ACC modern apprenticeships, Family Firm, Virtual School and Virtual Headteacher programme, Children's Rights Development Assistants (care experienced young people employed by ACC via external funding to support work of the Champions Board and participation, specific targeting of care experienced young people to raise awareness of job opportunities. Westburn Centre is becoming a hub for care experienced young people and will become a co-located workspace and one-stop-shop for activities, advice and support;

Aberdeen Guarantees (via No One Left Behind) - provides employability training and support, with a view to supporting young people into a positive destination, including preparing for interview and job application situations and promotes apprenticeship opportunities. This support is available to a broad group of people and is needs-led;

Housing – recognises links between employment and homelessness/ability to maintain a tenancy. Team includes a number of people with lived experience of homelessness and provides training which supports individuals to secure a qualification NB this is not specifically targeted at care experienced young people.

Skills Development Scotland

Skills Development Scotland works with our care experienced young people before leaving school, coming back into the city and into learning, training or employment. Work coaches. Will offer one Modern Apprenticeship for care experienced person.

NHS Grampian

NHS Grampian collaborates with several organisations, including Barnardos, Princes Trust, SHMU and Project SEARCH to deliver work experience placements and in past year Aberdeenshire Council work experience unit specifically for secondary school-aged care experienced young people. Some pre-application coaching including interview preparation and interview techniques is provided in certain programmes. Barnardos programme includes SVQ qualification - Certificate of Work Readiness. Guaranteed interviews provided for those who have undergone programmes and who meet the person spec.

Police Scotland

Police Scotland are reviewing recruitment process to allow information to be provided and easier access to apply for positions in the organisation, including police officer,

special constable, and support staff roles. Job opportunities promoted to care experienced young people within the Police Scotland Young Volunteer (PSYV) project. Work with foster carers to promote opportunities to care experienced young people in PSYV project. Pre-application and interview support available to all candidates, regardless of background.

Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Enterprise (nationally) support young people through programmes such as Career Ready and graduate and apprentice programmes. Provide work experience opportunities for school students through School Engagement programme, all driven by overarching Youth Strategy. Work with public-sector partners to share best practice and find ways to work together on our activity to support young people. We place a premium on learning and development for all staff and provide focused CPD opportunities (mentoring, coaching, supervising) as an integral part of our youth activity. Through our Youth Strategy we have developed links with a diverse range of schools and colleges across Scotland. Not specifically targeted at care experienced young people.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have a FireSkills initiative which has a flexible delivery model depending on the need of the target audience. If the full course is delivered it includes an employability award which is externally verified by Police Scotland. Initial suggestion is to identify and work with a group of care experienced young people, some of whom may have convictions, some of whom may have housing need, some of whom may sit within all three brackets.

Scottish Children's Reporter

A project with Scottish Children's Reporter seeks to provide an internship opportunity for a care experienced young person in an office junior-style role for up to six months, providing tailored support for that young person. There may be potential for this to develop into a modern apprenticeship, but would be dependent on funding, suitability of young person to continue in role, and willingness of that young person to do so.

References

[https://www.celcis.org/files/9314/8552/6130/Modern Apprenticeships Updated 27jan 17.pdf](https://www.celcis.org/files/9314/8552/6130/Modern_Apprenticeships_Updated_27jan17.pdf)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/life-chances-young-people-scotland-evidence-review-first-ministers-independent/pages/6/>

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2018/12/one-left-behind-review-employability-services/documents/research-user-provider-journeys/research-user-provider-journeys/govscot%3Adocument/research-user-provider-journeys.pdf>

https://www.staf.scot/?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI383vzPuV5AIVDLdtCh3pAQjtEAMYASAAEglAcfD_BwE

<https://www.whocaresscotland.org/who-we-are/blog/care-experienced-people-statistics/>

<https://www.becomecharity.org.uk/care-the-facts/the-big-issues/employment-and-training/>

<https://www.celcis.org/our-work/key-areas/throughcare-and-aftercare/our-throughcare-and-aftercare-work/>

Measures:

• **Outcome measures**

- Number of care experienced young people (CEYP) in public sector employment
- Number of people with convictions in public sector employment
- Number of people with housing needs in public sector employment
- Number of people from identified priority groups in tailored apprenticeships
- Number of people from identified priority groups undertaking work experience in public sector organisations

• **Process measures**

- Number of CEYP being interviewed for apprenticeship
- Number of CEYP applying for apprenticeships
- Number of CEYP engaged through tailored employability workshops / training days etc.
- Number of CEYP engaged in pathway planning programmes

• **Balancing measures**

- Number of CEYP in non-public sector employment
- Number of CEYP in positive destinations
- Number of CEYP engaged in employability programmes
- Number of other vulnerable people in employability programmes failing to secure work

Change ideas

Test how a tailored internship opportunity, with SCRA, for a care experienced young person can assist them to develop the skills needed to secure and sustain employment

Test how the introduction of tailored internships for care experienced young people, within ACC, can provide positive and meaningful work experience opportunities to help develop the skills needed to secure and sustain employment

Test how the introduction of a guaranteed interview scheme for ACC apprenticeships for care experienced young people (who fit the person spec) can encourage and support them to secure public sector work

Test how Pathway Planning Meetings for care experienced young people in school can support them to continue to engage and reach a positive destination

Test how increased promotion of support available to care experienced young people for training, employment including workshops, info sessions etc can support them to apply for roles in the public sector

Test how a tailored induction into work for care experienced young people can support sustained employment

Potential risks and/or barriers to success & actions to address these

Lack of engagement by individuals and agencies

Inability of young person to maintain employment – personal circumstances may be too chaotic, or situations may arise which could be particularly challenging for young person who may not have same support available to young person from a more settled background.

Lack of resource - several improvement project team members are time poor. No budget has been allocated to this improvement project. Basic costs, eg travel/transport, clothing, childcare may be an issue for individuals.

Inability of managers, or lack of time/lack of understanding of challenges facing young people to enable them to properly support young person in internship/work experience/employment situation.

Scope of project - The scope of this project and challenges associated with it, and the subjects of it, is enormous. The three priority groups have a wide range of varying challenges not only to employment, but also to housing, mental and physical health, family, substance-related issues, education, literacy, criminality, and much more. Changes put in place for some to support their employment in the public sector will not be suitable for all. It may be more realistic to split this project. This is being raised at board level by interim chair of Aberdeen Prospers group.

Some challenges in engaging public sector partners, partly as a result of staffing/recruitment being a national issue; partly as a result of lack of/very limited engagement. This has been partly addressed in the information gathering exercise via the circulation of a questionnaire.

Gathering of baseline data – this may be tricky to determine. There is data available specifically about employment of care experienced young people, less so about those employed in the public sector or numbers applying for public sector roles. There is very limited data for the other priority groups. The broader information is not generally gathered by employers.

Project Team:

Angela Taylor, Business and Skills team, ACC

Ruth McDermott, DWP

Nicola Graham, SDS

Scott Symon, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Colin Wright, ACC

Lesley Strachan, ACC Talent Acquisition

Darren Buck, ACC Talent Acquisition

Opportunities for All manager (post vacant)

Maggie Cruickshank, ACC social work

Ishbel Greig, Lead Contact, Aberdeen Prospers

Larissa Gordon, virtual head teacher, ACC

Kay Diack, Housing, ACC

Roma Bruce Davies, SCRA

Sheila McDermott, Police Scotland

NESCol – to be nominated
 Graham Duncan, ACC
 Tracey MacMillan, Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership
 Rozanne McCurroch, SPS
 Elspeth Winram, Culture team, ACC

**Outline Project Plan - Set out your initial plan about the timeline for your project.
 (This should be reviewed regularly)**

SCRA internship – aiming for late January start
 ACC guaranteed interview scheme – immediate start with ongoing monitoring and review
 ACC internships – aiming for late spring/early summer start with ongoing monitoring and review
 Pathway Planning meetings – starting mid-January 2020 with ongoing monitoring and review.

Project Stage	Actions	Timescale
<p>Getting Started 2</p>	<p>What initial activities are required to get started? Establishment of team (restricted meantime to public sector organisations but will later be extended to take in support and training organisations). Development of charter. Agreement of scope of the project (see barriers). Gathering and understanding of baseline data. Identification of change ideas and current activity.</p>	<p>December for Feb board</p>
<p>Designing and Testing Changes (Project Score 4-7)</p>	<p>What activities are required to start testing changes? SCRA internship – aiming for late January start ACC guaranteed interview scheme – immediate start with ongoing monitoring and review</p>	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage? July 2020 This will be ongoing, but with a review following next significant tranche of jobs which fit guaranteed interview scheme being advertised – anticipating summer 2020.</p>

	<p>Creation of ACC internships for CEYP – aiming for late spring/early summer start with ongoing monitoring and review</p> <p>Pathway Planning meetings – starting mid-January 2020 with ongoing monitoring and review.</p> <p>Engagement with colleagues and partners across all of the above is ongoing. The identification of participants/potential participants will be a natural, but integral, part of the process for each of the above, and will continue on a rolling basis.</p>	<p>Autumn / Winter 2020</p> <p>This will continue, subject to success and ongoing review. Testing phase likely to take a year, so Jan 2021.</p> <p>Ongoing basis</p>
<p>Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement (Project Score 7-10)</p>	<p>What actions would be required to implement and sustain the changes that have resulted in improvement?</p> <p>Promotion of opportunities and schemes, training of managers, especially for internships, and continued engagement with colleagues and partner agencies. Additional funding is likely to be required, and there may in some cases be staffing implications, however this cannot be determined at this stage.</p>	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage?</p> <p>2021/22 for implementation. Sustaining change will take longer, but initial estimate of a year to 2023, with ongoing review</p>
<p>Spreading Changes (Project Score 9-10)</p>	<p>What actions are required to reach the full scale of the project?</p> <p>Identification of CEYP and promotion of opportunities to CEYP, as well as demonstration of success of change to other organisations.</p> <p>The project team includes partners from a significant</p>	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage?</p> <p>By its nature, this will have to be ongoing. In the testing phases the timelines will be as detailed above.</p>

	<p>number of public sector organisations, which will learn from this as we proceed and will, hopefully, be able to learn lessons and implement changes based on activity carried out as part of this improvement project.</p> <p>Engagement of training providers and support agencies will be essential. It is also essential that the voice and experience of CEYP are heard and so efforts should be made to have ongoing presence of at least one CEYP on the project team. Also key to gather case studies from CEYP who have participated in these projects, as this can be used to promote the benefits to hiring organisations.</p> <p>Funding will require to be identified to support ongoing efforts, particularly to support CEYP to afford items they may need for work, which other young people's parents may be able to support them with.</p> <p>Training and support for hiring managers to ensure they can appropriately support CEYP entering and sustaining work.</p>	<p>This will vary depending on the tests of change pilots and levels of improvement achieved. However, changes could potentially be put in place within a matter of months of dates detailed above.</p> <p>Spring/summer 2020 and then ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing. Initial funding identified via No One Left Behind scheme and social work care leaver funds.</p> <p>Ongoing, to account for ongoing staff turnover/management changes.</p>
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