

## Policy Framework

Currently national policy and agencies are under review by the Scottish Government and this will impact on how we deliver services in future. The Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015 will also have an impact as well as the Tay Cities Deal. In addition, the Brexit vote in 2016 may impact on ESF funded programmes. This strategy aims to be responsive to change and agile in response to the dynamics within this policy area.

Employment and employability contributes to many policy areas nationally and locally. This Strategy complements and addresses the following:

## National Frameworks

### Scotland's Economic Strategy

Scotland's Economic Strategy (2015) emphasises a "One Scotland Approach" with the public, private sector, third sector, universities and colleges working together to achieve the Scottish Government's vision for Scotland's economy and society.

The strategy aims "to make Scotland a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish, through increased sustainable economic growth".

The strategy focuses on two objectives, boosting competitiveness and tackling inequality and they will be achieved by focusing on four priorities (the four I's):

- **Investing** in our people and our infrastructure in a sustainable way
- Fostering a culture of **innovation** and research and development
- Promoting **inclusive growth** and creating opportunity through a fair and inclusive jobs market and networks
- **Internationalisation** to boost our trade and investment, influences and networks.

### The Employability Framework for Scotland ('Working for Growth').

This framework brings employability and economic development agendas closer, and encourages further alignment of employability services and skills for the benefit of both individuals and employers.

There is an emphasis on improving performance and joint employability outcomes within Single Outcome Agreements; skills pipelines; better quality national training programmes, community benefit policies within procurement, enhanced funding arrangements and the inclusion of third sector involvement and delivery models.

## **Developing Scotland's Young Workforce – Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy**

Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (DYW), was launched in January 2013. Its remit was to explore how we might develop a modern, responsive and valued system for vocational training and emulate the labour markets of the best performing European countries.

The Commission's final report was published on 3 June 2014 and set out 39 recommendations, all of which built upon the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy, the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence and the extensive reforms of Post 16 Education.

Implementing the recommendations of the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce to drive the creation of a world class vocational education system aims to reduce youth unemployment by 40% by 2021.

The Perth & Kinross regional employer led DYW Board was established in March 2016 and its Youth Employment Strategy aims to:

- Support employers to engage directly with schools and colleges.
- Encourage the recruitment of more young people, including through Modern Apprenticeships.
- Equip young people with the skills local business needs.
- Give young people access to better and more flexible work experience opportunities.
- Encourage more young people to set up their own business or become self-employed.
- Focus in particular on young people who need extra support, come from disadvantaged backgrounds, have a disability or face other barriers in getting into work.

## **Scotland's New Employability Service**

In one of the first exercises of devolved powers under the Scotland Act 2016, the Scottish Government will begin to deliver new employment support programmes from April 2017.

The two new services will provide employment support to disabled people and those with long term health conditions; Work First Scotland will deliver employment support for up to 3,300 disabled people, working with existing DWP providers of Work Choice in Scotland.

Work Able Scotland, managed by Skills Development Scotland, will ensure up to 1,500 starts for people with a health condition who want to enter work. These 12 month transitional arrangements are ahead of a full Scottish programme of employment support commencing from April 2018 and will provide continuity of support for those who need it most.

### **The Apprenticeship Levy**

On 25 November 2015, it was confirmed in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement that a mandatory Apprenticeship Levy for larger employers is to be implemented from April 2017. The levy will be set at a rate of 0.5 per cent of an employer's wage bill and be paid through Pay As You Earn (P.A.Y.E).

CoSLA estimates that the Apprenticeship Levy could cost local authorities £24m per annum (based on total wage bills 2015/16 including Teachers) and have agreed not to be supportive of a mandatory Apprenticeship Levy.

The Council employs 76 apprentices in 2016 at an approximate cost of £875,000 per annum in wages and training costs.

PKC has continued investing in apprenticeships in challenging financial times and increasing budget pressures.

The Council will pay around £680k per annum towards the apprenticeship levy. PKC and other local employers who are involved with the DYW remain committed to their Modern Apprenticeship programmes as a proven way to bring young talent into their businesses. There were 880 Modern Apprentices across Perth and Kinross in 15/16 with 77% 16-24 year old. The majority are with small employers.

### **Fair Work**

The Scottish Government is advancing their Fair Work agenda by producing the **Fair Work Framework 2016**. Fair Work is defined as work that offers **effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect**.

**The framework** aims to ensure there are more good quality, well-paid jobs at all levels throughout the public, private and third sectors.

Tasked with learning from national and international research and leading edge practice, the Convention will provide

- Independent advice to the Scottish Government on all matters relating to Fair Work, including:
- Progressive workplace policies which improve productivity and innovation
- Employee voice, engagement and lifelong learning
- Best practice in industrial relations to encourage constructive dialogue in a range of different sectors and workplaces
- Enhanced discussions between unions, employers, public bodies and Government departments
- Potential extension to collective and sectoral bargaining in Scotland
- Increased levels of gender equality and workplace democracy across the private, public and third sectors
- The Living Wage and other aspects of fair remuneration

The independent Fair Work Commission established by SG will develop the Framework and promote its implementation across all sectors within Scotland.

The Council is showing leadership in this area, taking early action to progress the Fair Work Agenda, consulting with staff and unions in PKC to assess the Council's employment framework against the Fair Work principles.

### **The Scottish Strategy for Autism**

The Scottish Government launched The Scottish Strategy for Autism in November 2011 with the vision that *"individuals on the autism spectrum respected, accepted and valued by their communities and have confidence in services to treat them fairly so that they are able to have meaningful and satisfying lives"*.

Perth & Kinross Council is implementing the 26 recommendations which are key to achieving the vision within the timescales of the Strategy. The goals are divided into three parts; Foundations (by 2 years), Whole Life Journey (by 5 years) and Holistic Personalised Approaches (by 10 Years). This will be achieved by supporting people with autism by assisting them through training, creating opportunities and improving access to the workplace.

The **'Autism Work Experience'** project provides appropriate transition from senior school age to adult life. The work experience programme covers every locality in Perth and Kinross. It provides work experience placements for pupils from all secondary schools, pupils are supported by the third sector and placement provided by Perth and Kinross Council.

The **'Easing the Move'** project will pick up on those unable to move into adult services, increase their skills over a period of one to two years, improve independent living skills, employment readiness skills, self-regulation skills and provide further education opportunities.