

SHEN

Scottish Homelessness and Employability Network

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Welfare Reform and Employability: current issues

SHEN/Aberdeenshire/Aberdeen Foyer

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Aims

- Outline emerging policy context
- Consider the implications for the homeless client group and their service providers



Homelessness and Employability – the Background

- Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2001 – prevention and alleviation of homelessness
- Homelessness Task Force recommendations (50-54)
- Homelessness Strategies reviewed by the Scottish Executive and HMG
- Workforce Plus
- Transfer of NFFI to CPPs
- Regeneration – People and Place
- Welfare reform
- Cities strategy
- Leitch review
- Freud report



What Workforce Plus establishes:

- National Workforce Plus Partnership of DWP/JC+, Scottish Executive, Communities Scotland, NHSS, Enterprise boards, Local Government, SPS, SFHEFC, learndirect Scotland.
- Local Workforce Plus Partnerships: key agencies – JC+, Communities Scotland local offices, local enterprise companies, LAs NHS boards
- Three year local action plans
- Recognition of link to Homelessness Strategies
- Applied in all CtOG areas and recommended as model to all LAs



UK-wide policy factors

- Welfare Reform – 80% employment rate
- Cities Strategy – DWP
- Freud report – management of “worklessness”
- Leitch Review of Skills



Welfare Reform

- Royal Assent 3 May
- Will introduce Employment and Support Allowance to replace Incapacity Benefit
- Supported by Pathways to Work roll-out
- Lone parents and older workers



Cities Strategy

- Dundee Edinburgh and Glasgow are Pathfinders
- Special flexibility – can cover Housing Benefit issues?
 - Dundee: flexibility of benefits
 - Edinburgh: flexibility on 16 hr rule; benefit runs for CT and HB on transfer to JSA
 - Glasgow: high rental levels make HB part of the generic benefits trap



Freud report

- Moving claimants off benefit and into work
- Proposes agency to deal with those at a distance from the labour market
- Risk of “cherry picking” as financial rewards will accrue at point of employment.
- Risk of further exclusion of “hard to reach” clients
- Excludes voluntary sector from all but sub-contracts because of capital investment needed



Leitch Review

- Prosperity for all in the global economy
- Higher skills necessary
- Proposes commitment to train to level 2
- Shift balance of skills to level 3
- Gloomy future for the low-skilled – exclusion from prosperity?



Questions we need to ask:

- How will the employability needs of homeless clients be dealt with?
- How will providers be evaluated?
- What about the supply side?



Dealing with the Employability needs of those at risk of Homelessness

- Providers of services with experience of supporting those facing homelessness
- Links into generic services
- Advocates for those facing homelessness to employers/trainers etc.
- Capacity building for advisers
- Support for employers, including external and internal support systems
- Partnership/specialist/consortium approach



Evaluation

- Soft skills need to be valued and measured
- The timescale for the “journey to work” has to be realistic
- Outcomes (especially hard outcomes) have to be shared



The supply side

- Local economic conditions have to be taken into account
- Training for real jobs
- Employers input needed at an early stage
- Employers needs/concerns need to be addressed
- Workplace support – social networks model



What are you doing to make employability an effective route out of homelessness?

Copies of this presentation can be obtained :

By email from geraldine@scsh.org.uk

From our website www.shen-scotland.org



The employability pipeline

Step 1 - structuring chaotic lifestyles --->

