

## **Assessment of the ‘Youth on the Move’ flagship initiative**

### **Introduction**

COSLA’s position on the EU youth programme was politically approved on 25th November 2010, following the launch of the EU2020 Flagship Initiative ‘Youth on the Move’ and its key actions. As the national and international representative voice of 32 Scottish Councils, we are working with our members to share knowledge on this issue and identify opportunities for young people and employability in Scotland through EU initiatives.

Please find below our response to the questionnaire and In the Annex you can find a list of best practices. We would be keen to include your Council’s latest activities as examples in our submission.

### **COSLA Position**

1. The EU Commission has included ‘non-formal learning’ as an issue in the future programme which would also help address a lot of the challenges that have been raised. This form of learning refers to learning which takes place outside the formal educational curriculum that involves young people on a voluntary basis to foster their personal and social development with a close link to their needs, aspirations and interests.
2. COSLA recognises that young people facing difficulties (e.g. due to poverty, educational problems, unemployment, disabilities, etc.) should remain a primary target group without excluding other young people. Therefore, we believe this programme can benefit local communities beyond their actual beneficiaries to provide added value.
3. COSLA believes that a European youth programme can contribute to providing more and better opportunities for young people to make their voices heard. COSLA also strongly believes that a European programme in the field of youth can be an excellent laboratory to test new approaches, which can inspire new practices at the national and local level. COSLA also believes that a European programme will bring added value and benefit local communities beyond the actual beneficiaries.
4. As a whole, COSLA intends to highlight the close link between poor attainment at school and socio-economic disadvantage which are key determinants to the number of young people neither employed nor in education or training. This is because breaking this cycle is a challenge for local and regional authorities across Europe and must be seen as a priority within any future initiative.
5. While this initiative may be an opportunity for local government to access new EU money, an initial reading of its key action raises some question. COSLA believes for example that local authorities would not wish to be monitored and would want to avoid potential duplication of existing Scottish initiatives e.g. Young Scot Cards.

## Policy challenges and responses at regional and local level

### 1) What are the main challenges currently facing your region/city in terms of employment, unemployment, education and international mobility of young people?

In Scotland, there is a concerning trend that the unemployment rate for young people is increasing at a higher rate than for any other age group. Most recent European statistics show that Scotland's overall unemployment rate (7.9%) laid below the UK (8.0%) and EU averages (9.6%) in 2011. However, youth unemployment (15-24 years old) is with 21.7% significantly higher even more so than the UK (21.1%) and EU (21.4%) averages. Since 2008 the youth unemployment rate has increased by 9.1 percentage points which indicates a larger increase than for any age group. At the same time, regional disparities in youth unemployment are persisting.

In July 2011, around 45,000 young people aged 18-24 claimed jobseekers' allowance in Scotland. While these figures always tend to rise in summer as some graduates and college leavers finish full time education and fail to find work this figure has been higher than in the previous two years.

Some of the barriers affecting a transition into employment include challenges emerging from the lack of experience, soft skills and life skills, transport, lack of opportunities, inequalities in volunteering (including displacement where volunteering becomes more mandatory), skills mismatching, aspirations incompatible with opportunities, limited local placements or apprenticeships.

Given the multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral background of youth employment problems, it is of utmost importance that youth policies be considered in an integrated manner, linking education and health concerns to macro-economic policies, issues of employment, social justice and participation, thus involving all stakeholders. It is also important to be aware that some challenges to youth employability differ not only between sectors but also between urban and rural areas due to labour market patterns and other factors that place a different emphasis on the above mentioned challenges.

### 2) Which of the aims of Youth on the Move are most relevant in view of the challenges currently facing your region/city?

COSLA finds that improving young people's education and employability and increasing the youth employment rate are inextricably linked. We also note that the Commission has identified 'non-formal learning' as an aspect which would also help to address challenges to young peoples' employability.

COSLA recognises that young people facing difficulties (e.g. due to poverty, educational problems, unemployment, disabilities, etc.) should remain a primary target group without excluding other young people. Therefore, we believe this programme can benefit local communities beyond their actual beneficiaries to provide added value.

COSLA believes that a European youth programme can contribute to providing more and better opportunities for young people to make their voices heard. COSLA also strongly believes that a European programme in the field of youth can be an excellent laboratory to test new approaches, which can inspire new practices at the national and local level. COSLA also believes that a European programme will bring added value and benefit local communities beyond the actual beneficiaries.

3) To help meet these objectives, your country has set its own corresponding targets, which you can find at [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/targets\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/targets_en.pdf). To what extent are the targets set by your country appropriate to your local situation? Please explain.

While the UK Government has not set specific targets in its National Reform Programme (NRP), the Scottish NRP includes a section on supporting employability and tackling youth unemployment. COSLA contributed its position which was reflected in the final version submitted to the UK Government and Commission. It makes specific reference to the competences of Scottish local government in education and the actions related to the 'Youth on the Move' initiative. Scottish Local Authorities are given the opportunity to tackle local issues linked to youth unemployment through their work in Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs).

4) Please briefly describe what kind of policy programmes/actions are being implemented in your city/region to tackle the challenges addressed in Youth on the Move.

Scottish Councils have been working closely with their communities to tackle youth unemployment and to increase skills and employability for young people. Scottish local government is in fact engaging in a variety of activities including local employability partnerships, activity agreements, and participation as employers in national programmes (e.g. 'Get ready for work').

Since 2006, **Local Employability Partnerships** ('Workforce Plus') led by Councils with key stakeholders and local employers have worked to identify potential opportunities and future skills needs. Several Councils have developed a complementary strategies to improve circumstances for young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs), as their areas were identified as those with the largest numbers in this group (North Ayrshire, Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire, East Ayrshire, Dundee, Clackmannanshire and Inverclyde).

In January 2012, the Scottish Government has launched its Youth Employment Strategy to which COSLA contributed. It provides Scottish Councils with an additional £4 million for **Activity Agreements** targeted at those young people furthest from the labour market. An Activity Agreement is an agreement between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity to become ready for formal learning or to achieve sustainable employment.

At the same time, Scottish local authorities are deemed to be in the process of developing **Youth Employment Actions Plans** jointly with stakeholders in order to identify priority groups, geographical dispersion, support available to young people and set up referral arrangements between partners.

Councils also participate in **16+ Learning Choices** which as part of the Curriculum for Excellence framework supports young people in advance of their school leaving date to ensure that each has an appropriate, relevant and attractive perspective on learning and skills development after their formal school education. In a broader context, the **Curriculum for Excellence** focuses on equipping young people with skills and education for further learning as well as work, creating links to increasing youth employability and reducing early school leaving.

5) In the policy programmes/actions mentioned above, have you introduced additional

indicators/targets? If so, please explain which ones and why they were necessary.

Scottish local government is committed to delivering on national performance targets via Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs). Programmes and activities by Councils, whether delivered through CCPs or in other forms, are accountable to the relevant outcomes and are measured according to specific indicators. In relation to young people, Scottish local authorities are in particular contributing to improving the proportion of school leavers in positive and sustained destinations and increasing the proportion of young people in learning, training and education.

## How is "Youth on the Move" relevant to your city or region?

Youth on the Move focuses on four **main lines of action**:

- a. Supporting **lifelong learning**, to develop key competences and learning outcomes in line with labour market needs. Actions recommended to Member States include, among others, tackling early school leaving, validating non-formal and informal learning, promoting apprenticeship-type vocational training and high quality traineeships;
- b. Raising the percentage of young people in **higher education or equivalent**, by reforming and modernising higher education in order to make it more attractive and open to the rest of the world. Among other measures, this should be done by benchmarking university performances and by adopting an EU strategy to make European higher education and academic cooperation more attractive worldwide;
- c. Supporting **learning mobility**, by removing obstacles that prevent young people from spending part of their **educational career abroad**, creating a scoreboard to monitor progress in this regard and directly supporting young people's access to employment opportunities through the intra-EU initiative Your first EURES Job;
- d. Improving **young people's employment prospects** through actions at EU and national level aimed at facilitating the transition from school to work, reducing labour market segmentation and facilitating self-employment and entrepreneurship by young people. Public Employment Services are to play a key role in this regard, contributing in the form of a Youth Guarantee ensuring that all young people are in a job, in education or in training within four months of leaving school. Specific actions support young entrepreneurs.

Specific initiatives at EU level include:

- The **Youth Opportunities Initiative**, to fight against early school leaving by getting young people back into school or training and giving graduates their first work experience;
- Your First EURES Job, to help young Europeans find work in other EU countries;
- Youth@Work, an awareness-raising campaign involving the EURES network and the national public employment services, to help young jobseekers find jobs in SMEs or become self-employed or set up their own business.

6) Which of the lines of actions shown are most relevant to you, in the sense that they have encouraged you to set more ambitious policy goals at regional/local level? Please explain your answers.

Scottish Councils are active in supporting lifelong learning for young people by taking action against early school leaving and supporting early school leavers in training and

employability. Additional to the first line of action, Scottish local government activities target parts of the fourth line of action in particular to facilitate the transition from school to work.

**7) Overall, what are the points of strength and the points of weakness of "Youth on the Move", as seen from your regional/local standpoint?**

COSLA welcomes the Commission's reference to 'non-formal learning' as an issue to be included in the future programme and which would also help answer a lot of the challenges that shall be tackled by this initiative. 'Non-formal learning' refers to the learning which takes place outside formal educational curriculum. Activities involve people on a voluntary basis and are carefully planned, to foster the participants' personal and social development and ultimately to increase their employability. Non-formal learning is complementary to the formal education and training system; they have a participative and learner-centred approach, are carried out on a voluntary basis and are therefore closely linked to young peoples' needs, aspirations and interests. By providing an additional source of learning and a route into formal education and training, such activities are particularly relevant to young people with fewer opportunities.

COSLA would like to see that young people facing difficulties (e.g. due to poverty, educational problems, unemployment, disabilities etc.) should remain a primary target group but without excluding other young people. In terms of added value of the flagship, COSLA believes that it can benefit the local community beyond its actual beneficiaries.

As a whole, COSLA would like to highlight the close link between poor attainment of school education and socio-economic disadvantages (in urban as well as rural areas) which are key determinants to a large number of young people neither employed nor in education or training. Breaking this cycle is a challenge for local and regional authorities across Europe and must be seen as a priority within any future initiative.

**8) Would you recommend **any specific changes** to the "Youth on the Move" flagship following Europe 2020's mid-term review in 2014?**

While the 'Youth on the Move' actions that are proposed and in parts implemented may be an opportunity for Scottish local government, some of the key actions raise questions. COSLA believes for example that local authorities would not wish to be monitored and would want to avoid potential duplication of existing Scottish initiatives e.g. Young Scot Cards.

In a broader perspective, COSLA would like to highlight demographic change (ageing population, changing intergenerational relationships), youth unemployment and the changing needs of the labour market (new skills for new jobs) as the highly relevant challenges that need to be addressed by the EU youth programme post-2013. There must also be recognition of discriminatory, racist, xenophobic behaviours among young people, recognition of social exclusion of disadvantaged young people and the declining levels of youth active participation in democratic life.

**Are your country's policies relevant to your city or region?**

9) Does your country's 2012 (current) **National Reform Programme<sup>1</sup> (NRP) for Europe 2020 adequately respond to your regional/local needs** in the following areas: improving youth education and employability, increasing the youth employment rate, and reducing youth unemployment?

Unlike the UK NRP, the Scottish NRP includes a section precisely on supporting employability and tackling youth unemployment. It makes specific reference to the competences of Scottish local government in education and the actions related to the 'Youth on the Move' initiative.

10) Did you have an **opportunity to contribute** to the drafting of your NRP in this specific policy field, even if only indirectly by way of the organisations representing cities and regions in your country? If yes, please state briefly how.

COSLA contributed to the discussions in the drafting of the Scottish National Reform Programme (NRP) including a section on supporting employability and tackling youth unemployment which was submitted to the UK Government and the Commission. We also welcome that the Scottish Youth Employment Strategy highlights the key role that local partnerships play in delivering training and employability projects for young people assisted by the ESF.

11) Looking forward to next year, would you suggest **any changes in your country's NRP for 2013?** If yes, please state briefly which changes.

In respect to the new Youth Employment Strategy, it will need to be cross-referenced with the Europe2020 commitments in education and social inclusion and specifically how this strategy would be related to the next NRP. In any case, it is supported that the Scottish and UK NRP have a more clear interface with the Common Strategic Framework and its Thematic Objectives.

## Managing and funding Youth on the Move

12) Are any of the actions you have taken to implement **Youth on the Move** (stated in response to question 4) being carried out **in partnership by different tiers of government?** If yes, please explain briefly.

Scottish Councils work closely with their communities to improve youth employability through Community Planning Partnerships (CCPs). Local Employability Partnerships are best placed to understand and respond to challenges specific to their areas. Partnerships work hard to ensure that their provision is aligned to the needs of local labour markets and to reduce duplication between the support they offer young people and that offered by national agencies such as Jobcentre Plus. In this sense, they have been essential in developing projects close to the local populations needs and implementing these with assistance of the European Social Fund.

13) Was any **multilevel-governance agreement** adopted? If yes, please describe briefly.

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<sup>1</sup> All available here: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm)

COSLA advocates that the European Union should fully incorporate into its policy development and implementation process a multi-level governance approach. We believe that the Scottish model or Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) between the Scottish local government and the Scottish Government could be helpful in developing a European approach in similar areas of shared competences.

Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) are intended to address common problems and establish mutual accountability among the Scottish Councils and the Scottish Government. In respect to youth employment and employability, the relevant indicators are increasing the proportion of school leavers (from Scottish publicly funded schools) in a positive and sustained destination; and increasing the percentage of Scottish domiciled graduates from Scottish Higher Education institutions in positive destinations.

**14) With respect to your actions on Youth on the Move (stated under question 4), how are they funded?**

All of the above mentioned activities are funded by the Scottish public sector. Scottish Councils are responsible for CCPs and their youth employability partnerships and receive funding from the Scottish Government to implement Activity Agreements and 16+ Learning Choices. In addition, Glasgow, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire Councils will use £9m additional funding to tackle areas with the highest level of local youth unemployment. In the current funding period, CCPs have played a crucial role in developing and implementing projects assisted by the European Social Fund.

**15) Are you experiencing difficulties in funding these actions due to fiscal consolidation policies?**

There is no doubt that the financial challenge locally is considerable, particularly when national funding streams are not committed beyond this financial year.

**16) What is the role of the EU Structural Funds in funding actions related to Youth on the Move objectives?**

At the local level Community Planning Partnerships (CCPs) have a crucial role to play in delivering the Scottish youth employment strategy, one that builds from existing experiences. COSLA would like to highlight that CCPs have been playing a crucial role in the development and implementation projects targeted at young people and co-funded by the European Social Fund.

In particular it is important that training and education aimed at young people remains part of an integrated local development bringing together EU funding streams and but broadening access to ESF to support youth employability and social inclusion while complementing for instance with support to SMEs and youth entrepreneurship through ERDF. An integrated approach delivered in partnership with the community has every opportunity to enhance coordination across sectors and services, to prevent duplication and to provide a better service for clients.

In 2012, the Scottish Government launched its Youth Employment Strategy. COSLA

welcomes the strategy which makes clear reference towards working closely with Local Authorities, COSLA and CCPs and to options for a cohesive and flexible employability fund to support local skills outcome agreements. Most crucially, it highlights the key role that CCPs and local authorities play in delivering community-led local development programmes financed by the ESF to support employability and skills development among young people.

**17) How should education and youth employment issues be addressed in the forthcoming Partnership Contract to be signed between your national government and the European Commission for the management of the Structural Funds under a Common Strategic Framework 2014-2020?**

COSLA welcomes the fact that the Scottish Government Youth Employment Strategy precisely recognises the central role that Community Planning Partnerships (CCPs) and Scottish local authorities play in delivering community-led local development programmes, where in some areas education and youth employment issues are currently financed by EU funding. We strongly support that the proposals on integrated local development are put into place in Scotland so that local authorities can bring together the several EU funding streams for the benefit of local communities whilst still allowing regional strategic partnerships to be developed.

**18) Please make here any further comments you might wish on the matters dealt with in this questionnaire.**

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## Annex

### Good Practice Examples Featuring Scottish Local Authorities

#### Young Scot Card

Scottish Councils are issuing the Young Scot Card, a short title for the Young Person's National Entitlement Card. It offers young people (11-26 years) free access to certain council services such as library, school lunches or leisure centres as well as travel discounts and other offers. It functions as an identification card that can be used in domestic flights and for opening bank accounts. Young Scot is part of the European Youth Card Association.

#### North Lanarkshire Council

##### **Activity Agreements**

A number of different departments across the Council provide support through this activity including Community Learning and Development staff, Employability Key Workers, Youth Workers, Social Work, Health and Housing. The level and type of support is continually reviewed to ensure the correct interventions are provided to support the young people through whatever barriers to participation and progression they face.

- Future Jobs Fund - North Lanarkshire Partnership submitted a consortium bid to DWP in 2009. By 2010, 450 vacancies have been created and 333 young people have started on the Future Jobs Fund across the public, private and voluntary sectors. Approval has recently been received to create a further 700 work placements for young unemployed people in North Lanarkshire.
- An Employer Engagement guide was produced to give businesses and practitioners information and details of the kind of support that North Lanarkshire Council's Employer Engagement Service provides. Over the last year, the Service has worked with over 250 businesses to help support North Lanarkshire residents into employment.

##### **Xtra Hands**

The Xtra Hands programme has been developed and funded through the Employer Engagement Team at North Lanarkshire Council in partnership with selected contractors. The programme offers young people a six month temporary contract with one of North Lanarkshire Council's contractors and employers that are already engaged through Regeneration Services. All positions are entry level, but are crucial first steps towards securing a job with local growing companies. Individuals who are successful in achieving a placement are paid a wage which is equivalent or greater than the minimum wage. The placements are also a possible step towards an apprenticeship. By 2010, 250 young

people (16-18 year olds) have been supported through Xtra Hands, with 230 achieving employment, 12 entering education or training and 20 achieving an accredited qualification. Of those entering employment, 44 (20%) have sustained their job for six months or more.

## Perth and Kinross Council

### **Employability Initiatives**

The Future Jobs Fund has to date placed 34 young people in jobs. Placements are within the Council and Partner organisations/voluntary sector. An additional 14 places are currently at the recruitment stage. A support employment project has been developed with Job Centre Plus with the first project in 2009 achieving a 75% jobs rate. The second one in early 2010 had a 60% job rate. A business support group has developed an innovative programme for pre and post leaving school age and the PACE programme has been instigated in 3 redundancy cases. An Insurance hub has been developed with Aviva, a major local employer, other insurance companies, schools and Perth College. The aim is to promote the industry and develop strong school – industry links. Other initiatives being considered are a retail academy enhancing the SDS employability grant initiative and a training for work business scheme.

### **Rural Regeneration**

Since 2008, we have supported the Rural Tayside LEADER programme which has been particularly effective in supporting innovative local projects contributing to economic recovery. For example, the programme jointly with the Council has supported a social enterprise development fund providing start-up and development grants to social enterprises. Through income generation activities, these enterprises have contributed to social or environmental improvement such as providing job development opportunities to disadvantaged groups. The programme has also supported the development of community-led business support services via Growbiz providing mentoring and peer support to local entrepreneurs in rural Eastern Perthshire. In addition, the programme has injected funding into the local economy through capital/revenue projects supporting demand through contracts to local businesses.

## South Ayrshire Council

### **Local Employability Partnership (Workforce Plus)**

Our Workforce Plus Group created 87 job opportunities for young people in South Ayrshire in both public and voluntary sector organisations. 69 of these jobs were created within the Council spanning a variety of services including youth work, community safety and neighbourhood services. These are real jobs which have given young people the chance to gain experience in a broad range of skills areas.

### **Community Learning and Development in the Ardler, Charleston and Lochee Areas**

Young people had been fully involved in the design and development of the Twa Semis project. It catered for children and young people, including unusually, young adults aged 18 to 21. Young people of secondary school age had produced a high quality video on the dangers of drug misuse. They had engaged effectively with older people in the community to produce a play based on local history. A recently opened Internet facility in the premises had been funded from a range of sources including a local technology company. Young people had a strong sense of pride in "their club" and very good relationships with youth workers. They reported significant gains in their ability to work with others and improvement in their self-confidence and communication.

Young people had developed websites for YES and The Corner. These website provided ready access to information and links to other relevant sites. Internet access at local youth venues empowered young people to obtain information about a wide range of youth issues including drugs and alcohol awareness, bereavement advice, information on career, employment and training, and dealing with homelessness. Overall, ICT was being used very effectively to promote learning and inclusion for young people.

The Corner and The Shore provided very good learning opportunities in an accessible city-centre location. The Corner offered sexual health advice and information to over 9000 young people in 2003-2004. 70% of who came from priority areas. The Shore provided a dynamic youth venue for 11-18 year olds. It offered alternatives to exclusion and risk-taking behaviours through an exciting and diverse programme. Both projects provided a very effective foundation for other initiative with young people throughout the city.

South Lanarkshire Council's delivery of the Future Jobs Fund, has made, and continues to make a significant contribution to addressing unemployment, particularly amongst young people locally. To date (August 2010) some 664 jobs have been filled with an expected total of 1200 being achieved by March 2011. This has contributed to the ongoing reduction in the number of 18 to 24 years old JSA claimants in our area over the past few months.

In recognition of the current economic circumstances the Council has added to the provision of opportunities for school leavers by establishing the Youth Jobs Fund, modelled on FJF, which provides subsidised work placements for approximately 180 16 and 17 year olds for up to 50 weeks. Again this will have contributed to the reduction in JSA claimants in this age group which has seen a fall of 43% over the past year.

The Council's wider employability programmes which have been refocused to ensure support can be provided to those made redundant as well as long term unemployed residents, assisted some 4,731 people during 2009/2010 of whom 1,257 moved on into employment, training or education.

In Angus Council, with regards to youth unemployment there are currently 735 young people aged between 16 and 24 classed as unemployed (March 2012), this is 6.6% of that age group. Throughout 2011 and into 2012 the peak was August 2011 where 7.3% of this age group were claiming unemployment.

A key area of success has been to improve the employability skills of young people and give them the skills they need to work in today's labour market. This is being done through youth academies and modern apprenticeships. As part of the Angus Employability Partnership there is a clear link into the Opportunities for All and curriculum for excellence. In addition to this the Towards Employment Team is supporting opportunities across all Departments which link to the Youth on the Move priorities as it focuses on a range of Modern apprenticeships including- Business Administration; Horticulture; Greenkeeping; Motor Vehicle; Childcare and Leisure.

In addition to Modern Apprenticeship opportunities SVQ delivery is still available in:

Customer Service – levels 2, 3 & 4

Administration – levels 2, 3 & 4

Management – levels 2, 3, 4 & 5

Professional Development Awards in Management

This additional service has bridged the gap in the employability pipeline and ensures that there is a streamlined service for local people. Other modern apprenticeship providers in the area include Angus College and the Angus Training Group who are focusing on engineering

### **Community Learning and Development in Brechin and the Angus Glens**

The authority was committed to enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their involvement in projects such as youth councils. Eight councils had been established, each of which contributed three members to the Angus Youth Congress. The CES had trained young people in the use of PowerPoint to improve their presentation skills. Youth councils used videoconference facilities to facilitate communications. These facilities had enabled young people to be involved in a national youth summit and to plan an international exchange.

Angus Youth Congress and members of Angus Council had made a successful bid to establish the dialogue Youth Project. This ambitious project had already secured premises in Forfar for a one-stop youth base. It gave young people access to computers and the internet. Satellite units were planned so that each youth council area would have on-line access to the base in Forfar and to the national Young Scot website. The project's links with the Young Scot initiative were intended to provide every young person from 12-18 years with access to information and to discounts at local stores.

Members of youth councils gathered votes of young people across Angus. They used methods including questionnaires, graffiti walls, video boxes and interviews. The information collected was forwarded to the Angus Youth Congress. The congress set up sub-groups to address the most prominent issues, which were lack of facilities, link with the police, transport and drugs including alcohol. The alcohol sub-group worked in partnership with the police to organise and alcohol-free evening at a local night-club. The youth congress made a

presentation on the initiatives to the Young Scot conference in Edinburgh. This resulted in Angus being selected as the rural pilot area for the smarter Young Scot card.

### **Youth Employability Academy**

Through the Third Sector Challenge fund a Youth Employability Academy is being delivered (2 cohorts – 20 beneficiaries) targeting 16-24 year olds in Angus and its outlying areas. The Academy will work with individuals to help move them in to a range of employment; training and volunteering opportunities. These opportunities will be pre-determined before the Academy begins across a number of key sectors and vocational areas, as supported by the local economy. The success of this project depends greatly on employer participation. As such, employers are to be involved throughout the academy starting from the initial selection phase of clients. This will ensure that clients are matched to the most suitable option before the academy commences.

Whilst on the course clients will undertake a two week period of training; consisting of behavioral change and client motivation. Key Workers and support agencies will also work alongside clients to ensure that they are supported throughout the process.

Following on from this, for those that are entering employment (including modern apprenticeships) it is intended that employers will be able to access a £2,000 incentive. This will be paid once the individual has been in employment for more than 4 weeks.

For those that require additional support a period of work experience will be built into to their personal development plan and/or practical skills training that will get them closer to employment (e.g. forklift truck training). This plan will be developed and updated as the programme is delivered. Work experience may also include a period of volunteering and working towards an appropriate award e.g. SALTIRE (youth awards).

## **Dumfries and Galloway Council**

### **Employability Initiatives**

Dumfries and Galloway Council is not only the lead partner on the Employability Partnership but also directly supports a number of initiatives specifically, these include the following.

#### **Young people with specific barriers to progress**

Partners in Dumfries and Galloway have agreed the ambitious target of ensuring that 100% of our young people achieve a positive destination on leaving school. This vision has been supported by the Director for Education and has been encouraged by the Scottish Government. Via the Council, one to one support is available for young people aged 16-19 (and over) who are not ready or able to access formal learning. They may face multiple barriers to participation; need support to build their confidence and social skills, or need opportunities to develop team-working skills and self-esteem. A programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment is developed by the young person with advisor support. The Council also delivers on Activity Agreements on behalf of partners and is currently supporting 60 young people in progressing towards employment. Dumfries and Galloway Council is also delivering on a partnership pilot programme called Workforce 18 whereby Jobcentre Plus, SDS and the Council work together to support all 18 year olds who make a new claim for Jobseekers Allowance. Originally piloted in the Dumfries area, it is now at the point of being rolled out across D & G

and South Ayrshire Council has taken the model and is implementing it there.

### **Key Worker Service**

In 2011/12 financial year – the service supported over 250 people with barriers to employment to cease their benefit claim and start work. At the time of writing (6 month point) of 2012/12 financial year, 135 people have already ceased benefit claims and started employment. There are a number of additional positive developments for the additional 250 – 300 people who continue to make positive progress towards work.

### **Developing Work Placements in the Public Sector**

This initiative has been designed to develop public sector work placements in support of young people's employability at a time when they face particular challenges to gaining employment and when resources available in the further education sector are reducing. It aims to enhance both the number and type of work placements that are available in the Council and the NHS as well as developing the opportunities available in the Fire and Police departments. This will require the public sector to be more aware of where opportunities to offer a work placement opportunity may be created and also requires efficient coordination of all activity. Once an enhanced number of opportunities have been identified, it is planned that access to them will be facilitated through a web based portal. This initiative maximises the impact of available resources by sharing and improving coordination in a number of ways and provides young people with a much needed live work setting in which to develop their practical employability skills.

### **School / Business Pilot**

This pilots an employer / community / school programme in one school where the central aspect of the initiative is the development of relationships between the school and its pupils, the community and local employers culminating with a paid 6 month work placement. It is intended that the pilot will be rolled out in summer to an additional school and extended further if successful.

The programme will fit with existing school activity around preparation for the world of work with added value being provided by guest speakers coming into the school to offer additional perspectives. To develop community links and partnership local employers will be involved in delivering a session on their expectations, participating in the recruitment process and sessions will also benefit from input from other agencies including Youth Business Scotland, and Rathbone.

### **MA Plus**

Over the next 5 years , D & G Council will employ a minimum of 250 Modern Apprentices and offer them three years temporary employment with a structured approach to the experience they gain. As part of the programme, young people will work towards nationally recognised qualifications supported by a Core Training Programme using the Skills Development Scotland MA funded places. They will also be assigned a mentor to support and guide each apprentice to make the successful transition to the world of work.

**Aberdeen City Council**

Youth unemployment rates in Aberdeen are amongst the lowest in Scotland with 2.8% of 18-24

year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance compared to 7.6% nationally (September 2012). This is due to the city having a buoyant labour market which is maintained by a strong oil and gas sector which in turns ensures high demand for Hospitality, Retail and Finance & IT services.

Angus Council has produced a report on Youth employment in the area which was circulated through the Community Planning Partnership in order to develop more opportunities for young people.

### **Opportunities for All**

Local partners are committed to taking forward the national policy of 'Opportunities for All' which guarantees every young person between 16-19 a place in learning or training. The local successful transitions to adulthood outcome group is the community planning group which takes forward this guarantee within the city. The delivery of this guarantee is to be achieved by having a continuum of provision available that is necessary to meet the individual needs of young people in Aberdeen.

### **Redesign of Secondary provision in line with Curriculum for Excellence**

Aberdeen City Council are currently developing a 'City Campus' senior phase model which will allow pupils from secondary schools across the city to access subject choices which would not be delivered within their own secondary schools. Developments are currently underway to ensure that all schools offer a common timetable and provides pupils in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence the opportunity to access learning through travel afternoons.

Schools across the city are also committed in the delivery the national '16+ Learning Choices' policy which guarantees all young people a '16+ Offer' between 16-18. Young people who are at risk of moving into a negative destination are highlighted prior to them leaving school at a 16+ meetings which have input from guidance staff, careers advisor, Educational Psychologists, CLD staff and representatives from relevant ngo staff.

### **Development of Youth Employment Action Plan**

In line with national policy, local partners are currently developing a local Youth Employment Action Plan which will profile the range of services which are available for young people between 16-19. Examples of available services within the city are:

#### **Activity Agreements**

Activity Agreements are offered to young people who are 16-19 years old and furthest away from learning. The purpose of Activity Agreements is to provide young people with new experiences which will allow them to think about their next steps. Young people are provided with an opportunity to engage with a range of activities based on their interests which has included sessions in Art, Cooking, Dance, DIY, Digital media, Drama, English, Extreme sports, Music, Outdoor Education, PC lessons as well as being supported to attend work or voluntary placements within Childcare, Mechanics, Park Rangers, Retail & Streetsports.

#### **Personal development programmes for young people (16+)**

Young people who are ready to engage with more structured employability programmes have

the opportunity to do so through participating in personal development courses which run at various stages throughout the year. There are currently a number of excellent examples of programmes for young people who are 16+ and who require support to progress into employment further education or training:

#### **Aberdeen Foyer 'Princes Trust TEAM' programme**

The Prince's Trust Team programme supports young people aged 16 to 25 to develop their confidence, motivation and skills and to get into education, training and employment. The 12 week programmes are delivered by Aberdeen Foyer and offer personal development opportunities that bring tangible and lasting benefits to both young people and the communities in which they live. Team members can also obtain nationally recognised qualifications.

#### **Inspire 'Café Academy'**

The Cafe Academy is delivered locally by Inspire and seeks to engage any individual from the age of 16+ who has an additional support need (mental health, physical disability and learning disability of any scale included). Young people will work towards achieving 3 units towards a City and Guilds award in Hospitality which is accredited by Banff and Buchan college.

#### **SHMU 'Positive Transitions programme'**

Positive Transitions is a 12 week employability & skills development course which is delivered by Station House Media Unit which incorporates community radio training to increase core skills and support young people (16-19) into education, employment or training. Radio and video are used to engage and motivate young people, as well as help to develop confidence, communication and team work skills. Employability sessions cover job search skills, CV's, industry sectors, body language and interview skills.

#### **Transition Extreme 'Alternative Academy'**

The Alternative Academy is delivered by Transition Extreme and is an innovative voluntary training programme for young people aged between 15 and 18 who are currently, or at risk of becoming, disengaged from traditional education. Participants' passion for sport is used as platform to increase their confidence, motivation, personal and employability skills and assisting them in moving on to a positive destination. Young people are coached in one of the Transition Extreme sports (i.e. climbing, BMX and skateboarding), as well as assisting participants in developing skills and gaining qualifications, such as the Youth Achievement Award and the John Muir award, through a range of modules.