

# Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 2 September 2021

## Network of Employability Support and Training

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Routine All <a href="#">7, 31</a>
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### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee:
- 1.1.1 Note the co-production exercise and review undertaken in order to update, develop and realign the specification for the Network of Employability Support and Training (NEST) in Edinburgh to include No One Left Behind Phase 2 (NOLB2) provision;
  - 1.1.2 Approve the specification set out in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 for the future NEST provision;
  - 1.1.3 Approve that future NEST provision will consist of two elements, as set out in paragraph 4.5;
  - 1.1.4 Note that recommendations for funding from the proposed NEST small grants programme will be reported to Committee following completion of the grants commissioning process; and
  - 1.1.5 Approve, in principle, the direct award of funding to Capital City Partnership (CCP) for the vocational training programme. The funding allocation for this will be confirmed once the NOLB2 funding allocation for Edinburgh is known.

**Paul Lawrence**

Executive Director of Place

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## Network of Employability Support and Training

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report seeks approval to commission a replacement Network of Employability Support and Training (NEST) that will complement Edinburgh's current employability services and provide person-centred support for each of the individual target groups. Funding will focus on:
- 2.1.1 A third party grants programme for specialist employability providers to offer innovative solutions to gaps in employability provision in Edinburgh for specific target groups; and
  - 2.1.2 Employability and vocational training to complement current employability support provision. This will offer upskilling and progression opportunities for both those seeking employment and those in employment but facing insecure work or in-work poverty.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The No One Left Behind (NOLB) approach is intended to provide a more aligned approach to national and local employability provision in Scotland.
- 3.2 The first phase of NOLB was put in place in 2019 and funds Youth Employability Hubs and recruitment incentives for employers to create jobs for those with barriers to employment.
- 3.3 NOLB Phase 2 (NOLB2) involves the ending of two National Training Programmes (Employability Fund and Community Jobs Scotland) on 31 March 2022, with funding being transferred to local authorities for local employability delivery.
- 3.4 The Council funds third party employability services via grants, under the banner of NEST, supporting Edinburgh citizens to access and progress along the Employability Strategic Skills Pipeline with the goal of securing and sustaining training and employment. Currently, funding of £865,604 is allocated across 17 grants and is managed by Capital City Partnership (CCP). These are due to end on 31 March 2022.

## 4. Main report

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- 4.1 As reported to Committee on [3 June 2021](#), a joint coproduction exercise has been undertaken for both NEST and NOLB2 implementation. This has engaged with users, beneficiaries and other stakeholders to ensure that services funded in the future are fit for purpose, aligned to the requirements of both programmes, utilising current good practice, preventing duplication and identifying savings that can be made from the combining of both funding streams. This has also taken into consideration other recent employability coproduction for the commissioning of the new Edinburgh Blended Employability Services Contracts, as reported to Committee on [14 January 2021](#).
- 4.2 The co-production exercise found that:
- 4.2.1 The NEST should continue to offer support for those at all five stages of the employability pipeline;
  - 4.2.2 The NEST and employability programmes should be aligned with occupational growth sectors where there are workforce gaps;
  - 4.2.3 Services provided should follow the NOLB ethos and offer holistic, person centred and targeted employability services locally;
  - 4.2.4 Specific target groups that may need additional support from employability services, and especially in the earlier stages of the employability pipeline, include care experienced individuals, young parents, young carers, disabled people, members of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community, those aged 50+, school leavers and those requiring mental health support; and
  - 4.2.5 Consideration needs to be given to continued access to benefits, Education Maintenance Allowance or a training allowance for those participating in the employability programmes.
- 4.3 In addition, the following points were noted:
- 4.3.1 There is a continued need for vocational training programmes to complement existing employability delivery and support upskilling. This would ensure there are no gaps in provision following the ending of the Employability Fund programme in March 2022;
  - 4.3.2 Funding to support job creation in the voluntary sector, currently offered through Community Jobs Scotland, can be met through additional funding that is being provided from the Scottish Government for Employer Recruitment Incentives and the work being carried out by Edinburgh Guarantee; and
  - 4.3.3 There is still a need for a grants programme so that smaller specialist employability providers can offer innovative programmes that may not be delivered as part of the specifications of a training framework or core employability services delivered in Edinburgh.
- 4.4 Implementing the above will deliver the following outcomes:

- 4.4.1 Enhanced employability services that complement national provision and minimise duplication of other local employability provision;
  - 4.4.2 Training opportunities that would provide progression for those seeking employment or in insecure work and offer routes into sustainable careers;
  - 4.4.3 Innovative employability programmes that are responsive to local needs and specific target groups and meet identified gaps in generic employability services being offered; and
  - 4.4.4 A focus on fair work, specific disadvantaged target groups and reducing inequality so that fewer people will face poverty or inequality.
- 4.5 It is therefore recommended that the Council brings together future NOLB2 and NEST delivery funding into a single NEST programme with of two elements:
- 4.5.1 A small grants programme for specialist employability providers, mainly focusing on barrier removal in stages 1-3 in the employability pipeline. It is envisaged that grants will be distributed to organisations working across the city, but that priority will be given to organisations delivering support in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas 1 and 2; and;
  - 4.5.2 A vocational training programme across all sectors which is focused on addressing skills gaps for those with barriers to employment and providing training in occupational growth sectors where there are (or it is projected there will be) workforce gaps, at stages 4 and 5 in the employability pipeline. It is proposed to directly award this funding to CCP, with strategic oversight for the programme being provided by the Local Employability Partnership (LEP).
- 4.6 Eligibility criteria will be in place so that the programme is targeted to those with barriers to employment and ensure that priority is given to the target groups identified in 4.1.4 of this report.
- 4.7 The amount of funding allocated to City of Edinburgh Council for NOLB2 provision is still to be confirmed. However, it is anticipated that funding for the small grants programme will be no less than the current funding available (£865,604) and that the overall future funding will be allocated with the greatest emphasis on the grant programme.

## 5. Next Steps

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- 5.1 If Committee approves the recommendations of this report:
  - 5.1.1 The service specifications for the replacement NEST grants programme and employability training which have been developed based on the criteria set out above will be used for the commissioning of the small grants programme;
  - 5.1.2 This grants commissioning process will commence immediately. A further report will be presented to Committee on the outcome of this process. It is anticipated that this report will come back to Committee in November 2021;

- 5.1.3 As part of the commissioning process, it is intended to allow applicants to submit draft proposals prior to final submission, in order for the assessors to provide comments and feedback on the strategic fit and appropriateness of the application; and
- 5.1.4 Officers will liaise with CCP to put the vocational training framework in place, coordinating with existing and new training providers. The Council's Procurement team have offered to support CCP in this process.
- 5.2 It is expected that the new NEST programme will be in place from 1 April 2022.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 While the funding allocation for NOLB2 has not yet been confirmed, the principle that this will be allocated to local authorities has been agreed.
- 6.2 The other costs associated with this programme will be met from the Council's revenue budget currently allocated for employability programmes.
- 6.3 The final allocation of funding for each element of the NEST programme will only be confirmed once the NOLB2 allocation of funding to City of Edinburgh Council is known. However, it is anticipated that the funding available for the small grants programme will be no less than is currently available (£865,604).

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 The current services were originally commissioned using a co-production methodology. The review and subsequent procurement and any replacement service specifications required are again being co-produced. This is being undertaken through a fully consultative process that includes and takes account of input from key stakeholders, service providers and service users.
- 7.2 For the coproduction, a Project Steering Group was established, made up of representatives from the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) including Skills Development Scotland, Department for Work and Pensions, Edinburgh College, Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council and City of Edinburgh Council, to oversee the co-production and any subsequent commissioning process. The Coproduction and Procurement plan is set out in Appendix 2.
- 7.3 Integrated Impact and Data Protection Impact Assessments are being completed to input into service specifications.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 [Council Commitments – Delivering an Economy for All](#)
- 8.2 [No One Left Behind: Delivery Plan](#)

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of Employability Contracts.
- 9.2 Appendix 2 – NEST and NOLB 2: Co-production Plan.

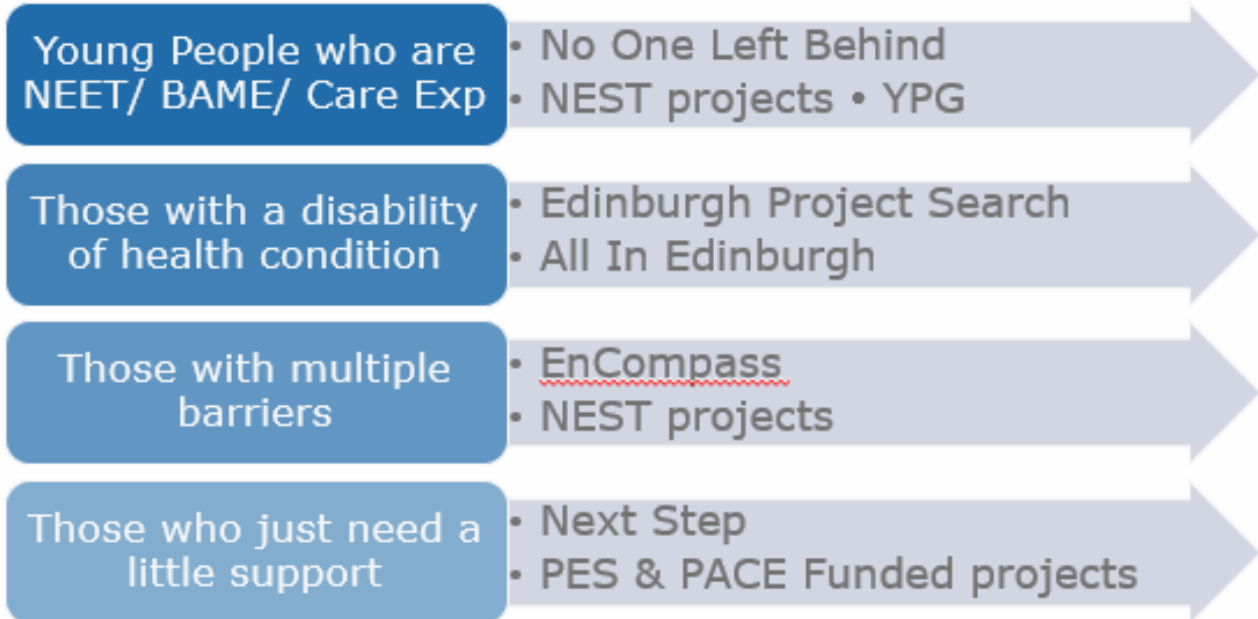
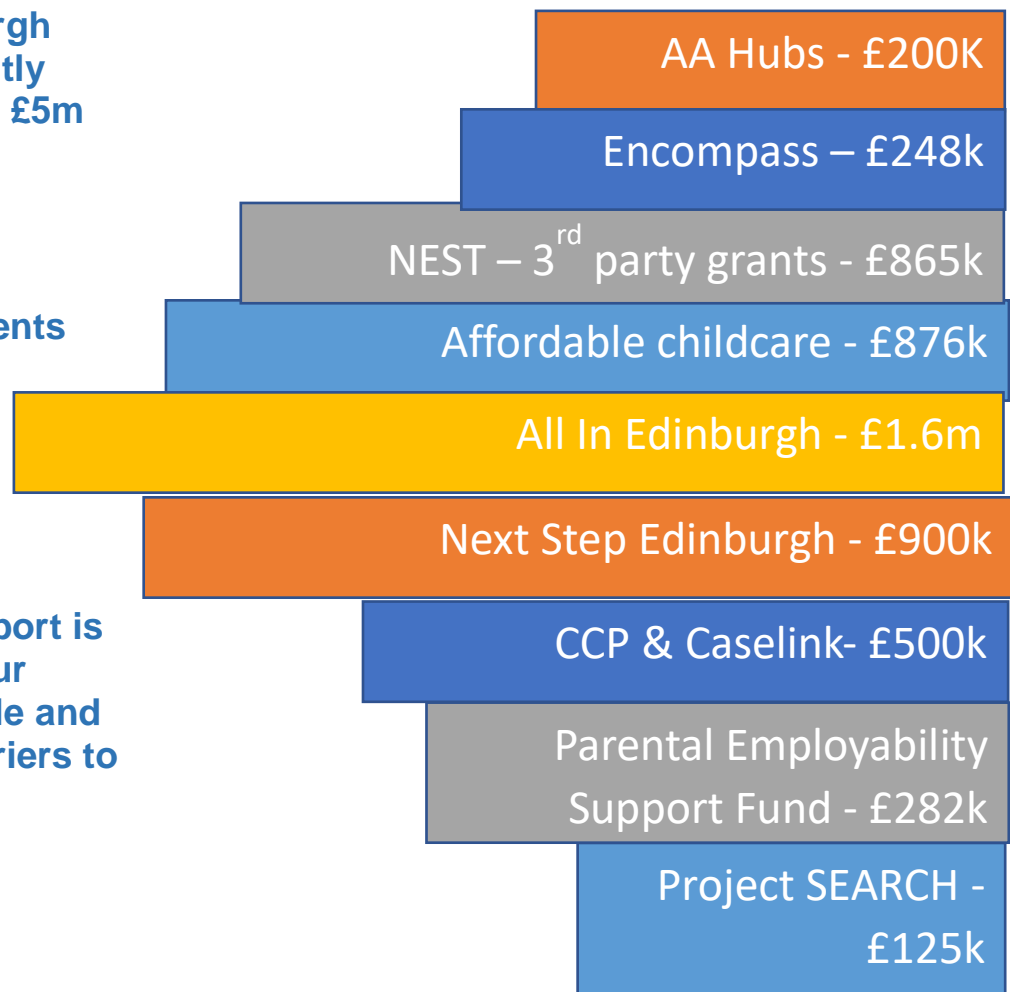
## APPENDIX 1 – Summary of Employability Contracts

City of Edinburgh Council currently spends almost £5m every year on employability.

This complements mainstream provision by DWP and SDS.

Specialist support is provided for our most vulnerable and those with barriers to employment.

### Priority Groups



## **Employability Services managed in-house**

### **Edinburgh Guarantee (For All)**

Engaging with SMEs, corporate organisations and the public and voluntary sectors, providing free recruitment support to help diversify their workforce. Earlier provision was focused on school leavers/young persons but as a result of Covid-19, this is being expanded to support any person with barriers to employment.

### **Edinburgh Project SEARCH**

A structured internship and college training programme for young people aged 16-29 with a recognised disability who want to move into employment.

### **Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships**

Support for young people to move into careers within the Council and partner organisations by managing the Council's Modern and Graduate Apprenticeship agenda.

### **No One Left Behind Phase 1 – Activity Agreements**

Early engagement and intervention provision for young people who are disengaged from work and training. A model comprising joint casework with partners as well as managing and supporting delivery of one-to-one support and groupwork through third-party contracted Hubs.

### **No One Left Behind Phase 1 – Edinburgh Employer Recruitment Incentive**

The recruitment incentive aims to support unemployed people with the greatest barriers to employment to find meaningful jobs, including Modern Apprenticeships (MAs). It offers an employer a tiered grant over a period of 52 weeks to employers to take on eligible jobseekers.

### **European Social Funding**

The European Social Funding programme provides over £1million p.a. in support of employability programmes in Edinburgh, with strict rules around eligibility that must be monitored closely. Funding is added to outsourced services but the overall monitoring and submission to Scottish Government for reclaim is managed in-house.



## Services outsourced

### **Encompass (Complex Needs Employability)**

An employability service to assist those with a history of substance misuse, homelessness, offending, psycho-social issues, or complex trauma to move towards employment.

### **Next Step (Targeted and Integrated Employability)**

Locally-based outreach facilities across the city, supporting people to move into work or to retain and progress in work.

### **All In Edinburgh (Supported Employment)**

A supported employment service to help people with a disability or long-term health condition find a suitable paid job, support them to sustain that job and, when appropriate, progress further. They also assist employers to help them support employees in the workplace.

### **Subsidised Childcare for Working Parents**

Subsidised childcare services for parents who want to work but the cost of childcare prevents them from doing so or pushes them into poverty.

### **No One Left Behind Phase 1 – Activity Agreements**

Early engagement and intervention provision for young people who are disengaged from work and training. A model comprising joint casework with partners as well as managing and supporting delivery of one-to-one support and groupwork through third-party contracted Hubs.

### **Third Party Grants (NEST)**

A programme of niche employability activity to address gaps in provision from other Council contracts and national funding. It supports projects to deliver support for inclusion groups within disadvantaged communities.

### **Parental Employability Support Fund**

A grants programme to provide support to address parental job insecurity or unemployment. The aim is to align employability and skills delivery with emerging growth sectors and contribute to the success of the IRES City Region Deal ambitions.

**For our outsourced services, CCP acts as performance managers, ensuring all contracts and grants deliver good value.**

## Edinburgh's Blended Employability Services (EBES)

The Council is currently in the process of commissioning EBES with the new services due to begin on 1 April 2022, subject to Finance and Resources Committee approval in October 2021.

EBES has been developed to complement NEST and other national provision and provide a range of localised options for those who require support.

This has been split into four contract requirements to replace three current employability services provided by Encompass, Next Step and All in Edinburgh:

- **Targeted Employability Service** – an intensive service that upskills unemployed and workless individuals with barriers to employment to help them secure and sustain employment;
- **Supported Employment Service** - a pan-disability service or for those with a long-term health condition, looking to secure, sustain and where appropriate, progress in employment;
- **Complex Needs Employability Service** – for those in recovery from substance misuse, previous offending behaviour, homelessness and other complex issues looking to access and sustain education, training or employment; and
- **In Work Employment Support Service** – for those who are employed but are facing in-work poverty and want to upskill and progress into better and more sustainable employment.

It is anticipated that European Social Funds (ESF) or any equivalent replacement funding, such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, will be able to partially fund the EBES provision.

## APPENDIX 2

### Network of Employability Services and Training / No One Left Behind Phase 2: Co-production Plan

#### PROJECT STEERING GROUP

A Project Steering Group was identified and includes members of the Local Employability Partnership (CEC Business Growth and Inclusion, Capital City Partnership, Edinburgh College, The University of Edinburgh, Skills Development Scotland, The Department for Work and Pensions, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce (also representing Developing the Young Workforce), Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council, IRES City Region Deal)

#### TIMELINE

The timeline for the co-production and procurement are as follows:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Research</b>	April – June 2021
<b>Co-production</b>	May – July 2021
<b>Reporting of Co-production finding</b>	September 2021
<b>Procurement</b>	September - November 2021
<b>Implementation</b>	January – March 2022

The timeline is based on having the new programme in place to begin on 1 April 2022

#### CO-PRODUCTION

Alongside desk research and an evaluation of the economic landscape, Covid-19 impacts, the Poverty Commission findings and analysis of the previous contract performances, surveys were developed to gather the views of citizens, employability providers and stakeholders.

Usually, a number of workshops and co-production sessions would take place in physical spaces with service providers and stakeholders but due to Covid-19, this could only be held virtually. A virtual consultation event was held in May, with a recording of the event being made available on the Joined Up For Jobs (JUFJ) noticeboard and publicised to all stakeholders. This was then supplemented with a service provider survey.

Co-Production has been affected by Covid-19 and has limited the ability to reach out to the wider community, especially in terms of citizens. As meetings have to be virtual, there has

been concern around digital exclusion. For that reason, we asked service providers to also support completing surveys with clients in whatever form they are using to support them at present.

Using Caselink, our Management Information System, we have analysed existing service use and demand and highlighted any other useful findings.

<b>Communication Plan</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Current Contract Holders</b>		
Third Party Grants (TPG)	All TPG recipients were invited to the 26 May Co-Production event and all other elements of the co-production process. In addition to this, as part of the ongoing contract management, all TPG recipients have discussions with their contract manager.	26 May 2021
Employability Fund and Community Jobs Scotland	Awaiting further guidance from Scottish Government but all EF and CJS providers were invited to the Co-Production event on 26 May and to take part in all elements of co-production. Meetings with contract holders will take place once Scottish Government guidance is finalised.	26 May 2021
<b>Elected Members and Committees</b>		
Initial committee report to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee	An initial briefing was included to inform Elected Members of the NOLB2 implications and the need to look at the future of the Third-Party Grants	June 2021
Virtual meeting with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee	Virtual meetings have taken place to discuss the future of NOLB2 and Third-Party Grants.	May 2021
Committee Report to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee	The report will provide details of the emerging themes from co-production and an overview of the potential plans. Approval will be sought to proceed with the plans for NOLB2 and TPG.	Sept 2021
Committee Report to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee	This report will outline the results of the grants process and the preferred delivery partners identified.	Nov 2021

<b>Stakeholders</b>		
Steering Group	<p>Key stakeholders were included to inform the process and outcomes, including development of an Integrated Impact Assessment. The Steering Group includes all members of the Local Employability Partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City of Edinburgh Council</li> <li>• Capital City Partnership</li> <li>• Edinburgh College</li> <li>• The University of Edinburgh</li> <li>• Skills Development Scotland</li> <li>• The Department for Work and Pensions</li> <li>• Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce (also representing Developing the Young Workforce)</li> <li>• Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council</li> <li>• IRES, City Region Deal</li> </ul>	May 2021
Focus group with the End Poverty Edinburgh Group	An offer was made to facilitate a focus group with members of the End Poverty Edinburgh Group to gain their opinions and insight. Unfortunately, this didn't take place.	June 2021
Virtual meeting IRES City Region Deal group	An offer was made to host a meeting with IRES members to discuss their strategic input to NOLB2 and TPG to help shape the process.	June 2021
<b>Service Providers</b>		
Information notice on the JUFJ noticeboard	This provided a brief overview of plans and invited interested parties to attend a consultation event on 26 May.	4 May 2021
Email to JUFJ network with link to JUFJ Notice	This provided the same information as the JUFJ notice but broadened the reach.	May 2021
Virtual consultation event with JUFJ network, Employability Fund providers and Community Jobs Scotland	<p>This included a presentation of the current situation and the options for the future, a rough outline of the services required and the potential procurement options. There was also a presentation from Chris Adams around the wider Council strategies. The session included smaller focus groups to have discussions around set questions.</p> <p>30 people signed up to attend on the day.</p>	26 May 2021

Promotion of presentations and recording of event to JUFJ network	Following on from the consultation event on 26 May, all presentations and recordings from the event were posted on the JUFJ Noticeboard for those who were unable to attend and to allow closer reading of all presentations.	27 May 2021
Active promotion of consultation opportunities to BAME network	Following the event on 26 May, a link to the presentations and recordings and some information on the co-production was emailed to contacts in the BAME network to encourage participation in the co-production process.	31 May 2021
Service Provider and Stakeholder survey to JUFJ network	A service provider survey was circulated to the JUFJ network via the JUFJ noticeboard and emailed to other interested parties. It included the same questions used at the consultation event and was available in Survey Monkey and Word document formats. Email also sent specifically to Council contracted services and Employability Fund providers.	1 June 2021
Survey to wider audience of employability services	The survey was disseminated by the Steering Group members to each of their networks.	June 2021
Survey to peripheral services and out with JUFJ	<p>The Service Provider Survey was emailed to the wider service provider audience to get a more complete picture and help inform the specification. This include contacts through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EVOC</li> <li>• Advice Services and Advice Agency Forum (through Mark Upward)</li> <li>• Edinburgh Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (through David Williams)</li> <li>• Health and Social Care Partnership (through Susan Dalglish, Susan Shippey and Stuart Morrison)</li> <li>• Community Justice (through Victoria Kerr)</li> <li>• Housing and Homelessness (through Nikki Rutherford)</li> <li>• Nick Croft for Employability subgroups of Localities</li> </ul> <p>In total, seven survey responses from service providers were received. While</p>	1 June 2021

	this number is low, a presumption is made that the majority of interested parties fed into the co-production through the consultation event.	
Social Media to promote the Service Provider survey	The JUFJ Twitter account promoted the survey to service providers to encourage wider uptake.	1 June 2021
Emerging Themes event	An event will take place to provide an overview of the emerging themes from all of the co-production.	August 2021
Bidder Briefing event	After the grants or alternative delivery method are published, an event will take place to provide information and answer questions.	Sept 2021
<b>Citizens</b>		
A service User subgroup has been set up to take forward the client engagement and ensure co-production opportunities are maximized.		
Citizens' Survey	<p>A survey was promoted through the JUFJ network, Steering Group, Service User Subgroup and wider network to provide insight and experience from citizens around the employability services. This includes current service users and those who are not currently accessing employability services. It was available for completion on Survey Monkey, a Word document and in printed format.</p> <p>Email also sent specifically to Council contracted employability services and Employability Fund providers.</p> <p>The survey was also emailed to the wider service provider audience to get a more complete picture and help inform the specification. This included contacts through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EVOC</li> <li>• Advice Services and Advice Agency Forum (through Mark Upward)</li> <li>• Edinburgh Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (through David Williams)</li> <li>• Health and Social Care Partnership (through Susan Dalgleish, Susan Shippey and Stuart Morrison)</li> <li>• Community Justice (through Victoria Kerr)</li> <li>• Housing and Homelessness (through Nikki Rutherford)</li> </ul>	1 June 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nick Croft for Employability subgroups of Localities</li> </ul> <p>There were 56 survey responses received.</p>	
Citizen focus groups	<p>The Service User Subgroup is actively developing opportunities for focus groups with service users and citizens as an ongoing engagement strategy but specific offers were made in relation to this co-production. In addition to this, the request to host focus groups was publicised widely to encourage uptake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JUFJ network</li> <li>• Local Employability Partnership</li> <li>• Joined Up For Young People network</li> <li>• End Poverty Edinburgh</li> <li>• EVOG</li> <li>• Low Income Families Together</li> <li>• WHALE Arts</li> <li>• Scran Academy</li> </ul> <p>To ensure citizens felt able to share their comments, we requested that these were facilitated by individual organisations with set questions and prompts provided.</p> <p>Focus groups were completed by LINKnet, Cyrenians and Citadel Youth Centre, with many other organisations encouraging citizens to complete the survey where it wasn't possible to host focus groups.</p>	June 2021
Social Media to promote the citizens' survey	<p>The Council twitter account promoted it weekly  Edinburgh Guarantee twitter promoted it  JUFJ twitter promoted  JCP Lothian and Borders tweeted  SDS posted it on their Edinburgh Facebook page</p>	1 June 2021