

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 8 August 2023

Mapping of Existing Provision and Stage 1 NOLB Co-Production

Executive/routine
Wards

Executive
All

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- 1.1.1 Approve commencing an open grants process for No One Left Behind (NOLB) Stage 1 provision for delivery over a three-year period from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2027, at an estimated cost of £300,000 per annum, subject to Scottish Government funding;
- 1.1.2 Note that additional preparation is underway to identify any expected gaps in provision which may be addressed by utilising NOLB Next Phase funding; and
- 1.1.3 Note that NOLB Next Phase funding is expected to be in place from April 2024 and, based on current funding levels and methodology, the Edinburgh allocation is anticipated to be around £890,000 per annum.

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Report

Mapping of Existing Provision and Stage 1 NOLB Co-Production

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report seeks approval for commencing an open grants process for No One Left Behind (NOLB) Stage 1 provision, for delivery over a three-year period from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2027 (subject to Scottish Government funding allocation), at an estimated cost of £300,000 per annum.
- 2.2 This report also provides an update on the Scottish Government's plans for NOLB Next Phase delivery and local-level co-production plans for service delivery to commence from 1 April 2024.

3. Background

NOLB Stage 1 – Activity Agreement Hubs

- 3.1 [No One Left Behind](#) (NOLB) is the Scottish Government strategy for placing people at the centre of the design and delivery of employability services. It promotes a strengthened partnership approach where the Scottish and Local Government work together with public, third and private sector partners to identify local needs and make informed, evidence-based decisions. NOLB Stage 1, the first implementation phase of this strategy came to Local Authorities for delivery in 2019, with the formal launch in April 2020.
- 3.2 Presently, the NOLB Stage 1 offer in Edinburgh is primarily via Activity Agreement (AA) Hubs. The Hubs aim to support 180 young people each year across the city, with an internal team of staff supporting the management of referrals with schools across Edinburgh.
- 3.3 The AA hubs support the hardest-to-reach young people, predominantly aged 16 - 19, at risk of a negative destination post-school (a summary of the outcomes for the programme in 2022/23 are included in Appendix 1 and further details of the programme are outlined in Appendix 2). The current AA Hubs grant agreement is worth £200,000 per annum.

- 3.4 On [1 December 2022](#), Committee approved an extension of the grants to the current AA Hubs for a 12-month period, until 31 March 2024, to allow for co-production alongside NOLB Next Phase.

NOLB Next Phase

- 3.5 The Scottish Government has not yet provided a specification for NOLB Next Phase, although they have confirmed that Fair Start Scotland will end. This is expected to lead to increases in the number of people needing employability support services via Edinburgh's Strategic Skills pipeline.
- 3.6 It has also been confirmed that funding will be allocated to Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs), with Local Authorities as the Lead Accountable Body, to utilise the grant funding to deliver the employability support required.
- 3.7 The current Fair Start Scotland contract is valued at £24m in 2023/24 but, due to contingent liabilities under the existing contract which will carry over for up to two years, it is likely that only £10m will come to Local Authorities in 2024/25. Based on the assumption that the funding allocation will follow the same methodology as other NOLB funding, Edinburgh is expected to receive approximately £890,000 per annum.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The current AA Hub grants are due to end on 31 March 2024 and, as detailed in the report to Committee on [1 December 2022](#), the ambition was to run a joint co-production exercise for NOLB Stage 1 and NOLB Next Phase. However, due to the delay in specification from the Scottish Government, this will no longer be possible.
- 4.2 Whilst the above provides challenges, the LEP's NOLB Next Phase Steering Group agreed that Stage 1 provision in Edinburgh remains vital in the local employability landscape (due to the impact of the pandemic on jobseekers and specifically young people).

NOLB Stage 1

- 4.3 Therefore, NOLB Stage 1 co-production sessions were held in Edinburgh throughout March – June 2023 with the Joined Up for Jobs Network and wider stakeholders (including third sector partners and Council teams).
- 4.4 Co-production has highlighted the continued need for Stage 1 provision with specific requirements as below:
- 4.4.1 Locality based provision (with specific outreach to premises in smaller geographical areas, to align with the ambition of 20-minute neighbourhoods);
 - 4.4.2 Focus on young people, and especially those residing within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) decile 1 and 2 and/or with disabilities;

- 4.4.3 Enhanced referral routes, providing awareness and support for all ages through a coordinator team as well as existing provision;
 - 4.4.4 Trauma informed approach to delivery;
 - 4.4.5 Mental health support alignment and partnership working; and
 - 4.4.6 Links to youth work and Local Area Co-ordinator teams within the Council.
- 4.5 The LEP recommends proceeding with a NOLB Stage 1 Grants process, to reflect the requirements outlined above, with an estimated annual value of £300,000. The contract value may vary depending on confirmation of Edinburgh's allocation of NOLB funding for 2024/25. Delivery of the new grants would commence on 1 April 2024 for a period of three years.

NOLB Next Phase

- 4.6 In advance of confirmation of the arrangements for and in preparation for the successful implementation NOLB Next Phase, a mapping exercise (via further co-production) of Edinburgh's employability landscape will be progressed.
- 4.7 The mapping will focus on what Fair Start Scotland currently delivers in Edinburgh and identifying any gaps in provision when that ends.
- 4.8 To date, there has been an indication via the specification for Scottish Government Test and Learn Pilots (launched in Quarter 1 of 2023/24 as part of the Scottish Government's planning for NOLB Next Phase) that the NOLB Next Phase specification may include a specific ask around funds to be used for Supported Employment and Individual Placement Support.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If Committee approves the recommendations of this report, a Stage 1 grants process will open in August 2023 (following Council guidance for grants and established employability processes).
- 5.2 The LEP will submit an overview of the Grants Process and subsequent recommendations for preferred providers to Committee on 5 December 2023. If approved, awarded grants will commence on 1 April 2024 (subject to service need being confirmed and confirmation of NOLB funding).
- 5.3 The mapping will commence for NOLB Next Phase, reviewing the wider Strategic Skills Pipeline in Edinburgh, in preparation for the pending Scottish Government specification. This will continue to be led by a Steering Group made up of members of the LEP who have a strategic overview of employability delivery in the city.
- 5.4 All funding information will be published on the Joined Up for Jobs Noticeboard and posted on Public Contracts Scotland, as appropriate.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There is no financial impact to the Council as all estimated costs for the services identified in this report will be fully funded from the NOLB grant award from Scottish Government.
- 6.2 The quantum of total NOLB funding available in 2024/25 and beyond is still to be confirmed but Phase 1 funding has been consistent since 2019 and there is no indication that this will be reduced.
- 6.3 Based on officers' understanding of the funding available and the existing methodology, it is expected that the allocation of NOLB Next Phase funding for Edinburgh will be in the region of £890,000 per annum from 2024/25.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The current AA Hubs were originally awarded using a co-production methodology. The review and subsequent procurement and award of any replacement service specifications will again be co-produced. This will be undertaken through a fully consultative process that includes and takes into account input from key stakeholders, service providers, and service users.
- 7.2 An Integrated Impact Assessment and Data Protection Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the coproduction exercise for input into service specifications.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [No One Left Behind Delivery Plan.](#)
- 8.2 [Fair Start Scotland - Statement.](#)
- 8.3 [Fair Start Scotland – Employment Support.](#)
- 8.4 [Fair Start Scotland 3 Year Reports and Delivery Stats.](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Overall performance of the total Activity Agreement Hubs 1 April 2021 to the 31 March 2023.
- 9.2 Appendix 2 – Demographic Breakdown of the total Activity Agreement Hubs 1 April 2021 to the 31 March 2023.

Appendix 1 – Overall performance of the total Activity Agreement Hubs 1 April 2021 to the 31 March 2023.

2021-22:

New Engagements		Individuals Supported		Job Starts		Overall Progressions	
Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
164	174	220	249	22	30	110	118

2022-23:

New Engagements		Individuals Supported		Job Starts		Overall Progressions	
Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
180	136	240	209	24	27	186	119

Appendix 2 – Demographic Breakdown of the total Activity Agreement Hubs 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023.

No One Left Behind (NOLB) Activity Agreements

The Activity Agreement programme in Edinburgh supports young people aged 15.5-19 (and up to age 26 for those with multiple barriers) leaving school without a positive destination by offering a tailored programme of support. The programme is delivered across six hubs delivered by four Third Sector organisations: Canongate Youth (City Centre); Citadel Youth (North East); Barnardo's (North East/West); Dunedin Canmore (South East/West).

The six hubs monitor the activity of all young people using a management information system called Helix (introduced in March 2022, Caselink was used prior to this). The information on Helix has been used to provide a breakdown of all young people supported from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. The information is based on No One Left Behind (NOLB) data requirements of Scottish Government, with some data having options of "did not respond" or "not recorded" to ensure registration does not become a barrier for some clients.

Client Breakdown

A total of 362 young people have been supported by Activity Agreements since 1 April 2021.

Age

Activity Agreements support young people from 15.5 – 19 (26 for those with additional barriers). Upon registration, the clients date of birth is captured and entered into the Helix system, allowing the following data on the age range of clients to be provided:

Age	No. of Clients	% of overall clients
Under 16	1	0.28%
16-18	237	65.47%
19-25	123	33.98%
26-49	1	0.28%

As the data shows, it is predominantly those 18 and under who are supported by an Activity Agreement, but there are still participants aged 19 and over.

Gender

Upon registration, the young person is asked their gender and the information is entered into Helix. In recent years, this has become a more challenging ask. Caselink (the previous Management Information System (MIS) was set up to follow European Social Fund (ESF) data requirements, which only classified gender as male/female. As such, young people identifying as trans had no option on the system to reflect this.

After the introduction of Helix, the option of “Trans Status” was added to the registration form. There is limited data on this at the moment, but as more young people are registered on the system and providers utilise this option, the hope is more data being provided through the system. At the moment, caseworkers are advised only to ask questions on gender (and any other sensitive issues) if they feel it is appropriate for the young person or if the young person self-declares this without the need to ask.

As such, of the 362 young people supported, 155 (43%) are female and 207 (57%) are male. However, there were also 55 young people who identified as trans, indicating that 15.19% of Activity Agreements young people do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Ethnicity

During the registration process, young people are asked about their ethnic origin. The dropdown options for this question are taken from the Scottish Government’s NOLB data requirements and includes options for “not known” and “prefer not to say”. Below is a breakdown of the ethnic origin of all young people supported by Activity Agreements:

Ethnic Origin	No. of Clients	% of overall clients
African - Other	2	0.55%
African, African Scottish, African British	2	0.55%
Asian - Chinese, Chinese Scottish, Chinese British	1	0.28%
Asian - Other	1	0.28%
Asian - Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish, Pakistani British	1	0.28%
Black, Black Scottish, Black British	1	0.28%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish, Caribbean British	1	0.28%
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	3	0.83%
Not Known	56	15.47%
Other ethnic group	1	0.28%
White - Gypsy Traveller	1	0.28%
White - Irish	1	0.28%
White - Other	11	3.05%
White - Other British	24	6.65%

Ethnic Origin	No. of Clients	% of overall clients
White - Polish	2	0.55%
White - Scottish	254	70.36%

This shows that the vast majority (278) are white Scottish/British, with a further 84 (23.76%) coming from ethnic minority background.

SIMD

When looking at areas of deprivation, officers have considered those in most deprived areas (SIMD Areas Decile 1 and 2 – the bottom 20%). Of the 362 young people supported by Activity Agreements, a total of 149 (41.16%) reside in SIMD areas 1 and 2, indicating that the service is reaching a significant number of young people living in areas of deprivation.

Barriers

When clients are registered on the system, caseworkers carry out an assessment of the client's needs based on the barriers faced, with the barriers in the system. There are a total of 29 barriers which can be ticked in the current system, with further barriers pulling for clients who have had support logged on the previous system (so pre-March 2022). The most common barriers among Activity Agreement young people are as follows:

Barriers	No. of Clients	% of overall clients with this barrier
From Employment Deprived Areas	100	27.62%
General motivational issues	50	13.81%
Lack of confidence	94	25.97%
Lack of reliability/Time keeping	40	11.05%
Lack of work experience	89	24.59%
Literacy and Numeracy	44	12.15%
Living in a jobless household	55	15.19%
Low Communication/Interpersonal Skills	70	19.34%
Low Skilled	173	47.79%
Mental health issues	135	37.29%
No or Limited work experience	215	59.39%
Poor interview skills; CV presentation	42	11.60%

These barriers show that the work undertaken by Activity Agreement providers (building motivation/confidence, improving literacy/numeracy/ communication skills, providing mental health support, creating work experience opportunities) is what young people require most.