



## Strategic Plan to drive city employment

Glasgow is preparing to launch its City Strategy, subject to agreeing its final business plan with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The city is one of 15 pilot areas across the UK chosen to develop their own responses to the common challenge of helping many more people into work, particularly those on health-related benefits. Glasgow's proposals have met with broad support from DWP and Workforce Plus and set out how the city will align its collective resources and put the full weight of all partners behind the drive to bring about full employment in the city. A brief summary of the proposal is published on the Equal Access website. The Strategy comes at a time when, thanks to the city's dynamic economy, there is a wide range of job opportunities available through turnover as well as job creation. We intend to keep you updated on developments in future issues of the e-bulletin. A copy of the summary document can be downloaded at: <http://www.easglasgow.com/research.htm>



## In-work Mates relaunched

*On 22 February, Opportunites re-launched In-work Mates which is an innovative project aimed at helping the local community access employment. Inwork Mates is a regeneration project funded by the European Equal RE:Focus Programme operating in the Glasgow area.*

The aim of the project is to engage with employers of different sectors and match their staffing needs with the local community. The launch was organised and presented by Douglas Chiwocha, Project Co-ordinator. The event kicked off with Calum Graham, Chief Executive of Opportunites giving a short presentation and this was followed by an information lunch. Other guest speakers included Joe Dowd, RE:Focus Mainstream Co-ordinator and Jim King of the Volunteer Centre, responsible for the delivery of mentoring training to employers.

In-work Mates is a fantastic and extremely flexible project. It can be tailored to meet the specific needs of individual organisations depending on time available, staffing levels and resources. Employers participating in the Inwork Mates Project can additionally contribute to their own corporate citizenship and staff development by incorporating a mentoring programme within training plans.

**In order to find out how you can be an Inwork Mates partner, please contact Douglas Chiwocha, Project Co-ordinator on 0141-949-4898 or email [douglas.chiwocha@opps.org.uk](mailto:douglas.chiwocha@opps.org.uk)**



### OPPORTUNITIES

We could help you achieve your goals through:

- Training and employment advice
- Help in getting a job
- Information of what learning is available
- Computer and ICT training
- Childcare support and information
- Advice of self-employment
- Personal development
- Services and support for businesses
- Support to help businesses and organizations



## Employability Training

*The employability training pack developed by Glasgow Homelessness Network, Blue Triangle Housing Association, Glasgow Simon Community - BUDS Project, Move On and Equal Access will be delivered to frontline staff in each of the 5 Community Health & Care Partnerships (CHCP) areas. This pack was designed for frontline staff and aims to give an understanding of the pathway into employment and the services available on the pathway. As part of the mainstreaming of the RE:Focus Development Partnership, Glasgow Homelessness Network (GHN) were awarded further funding to roll out the Employability Training within the 5 Community Health and Care Partnerships areas.*

The training pack is part of the response by partners to key findings from the Equal Access Front Line Staff Survey and the GHN Employability Research.

The Staff Survey identified that while frontline housing, health, social work and social care staff often see the importance of employability they highlighted that they required more support to be in place before they would feel confident about discussing and signposting clients to employability services.

In 2006 a GHN research project funded by RE:Focus provided information on the employability background, status and aspirations of people affected by homelessness. From those who responded 68% expressed an aspiration to gain employment in the future with only 8% currently in work at the time of the survey.

The report recommends that homelessness, social care and health care should develop a better understanding of employability issues, and should at least be able to signpost people experiencing homelessness to the appropriate employability services. The report also identified that staff working in employment and employability services should develop a greater awareness of homelessness issues.

The training will go some way to addressing concerns frontline staff have about discussing employability and in outlining the range of services available to support clients move towards employment.

**For further details contact Angie Black on 0141 949 4911**

**You can download the Frontline Staff Survey at:**

**<http://www.easglasgow.com/EqualAccessandFrontlineStaffBriefingPaperJune2006.htm>**

**For information on the GHN Research: [www.ghn.org.uk](http://www.ghn.org.uk)**



## Encouraging Diversity

*Two RE:FOCUS Projects with the aim of encouraging diversity within the workplace have joined forces to commission a Literature Review on Employer Attitudes to employing those distanced from the labour market and produce a Myth Buster DVD to support employer engagement.*

The objectives of the literature review were to identify any commonality or differences between large and small employers and between different sectors. In addition, the review has identified the common and different attitudes towards barriers to employment of core employability groups. These groups included people with:

- **Mental Health problems** • **Drug Addictions** • **Physical Disabilities** • **Visual Impairments**
- **Learning Disabilities** • **Ex-offenders** • **Black and Minority Ethnic groups** • **Lone Parents**

The Myth Buster DVD provides a positive message to employers that people who are unemployed can and want to work if the opportunities are provided. It has views from both employers and employees which dispel some of the myths surrounding difficulties some people with additional barriers face when moving into work, staying in work and progressing in the job market.

**If you would like any further information on the Literature Review or Myth Buster DVD, please contact: Margaret Linton on 0141 429 2518 Or download a full copy of the report at: <http://www.easglasgow.com/Literaturereviewofemployersattitudes.htm>**



## Equal Access and Service User Involvement

*Last month the Bulletin stated that the recommendations listed in the service user report centred around five areas but only four were listed. It should have read:*

- **Access to information** • **Welfare benefits and returning to work** • **Employers** • **Ongoing engagement with service users** • **Capacity building around service user involvement**

This month, benefits and returning to work will be highlighted.

The report revealed that people were not clear about coming off benefits and what entitlements and incentives to access. They did not trust the process of coming off benefits citing examples of how the process has let them down. It also noted the significant problem with high rents/housing costs for some people.

Consequently, the report recommended that the process of coming off benefits when returning to work should be clarified. It also suggested flexibility around housing benefit need to be explored, building on work already carried out by Glasgow City Council.

Just after the conclusion of the report, the City Strategy bid was being developed and a consultation took place asking for details of flexibilities that would make work more of an option. These recommendations were fed into this process. In time, the DWP will consider the flexibilities received from all 15 City Strategy areas in the UK. It is not possible to predict at this stage which the DWP will be in a position to progress or the timescales involved as some will involve changes in legislation. However, the Glasgow plan does include suggestions on the duration and conditions for housing benefit run on. In the meantime, Jobcentre Plus in Glasgow is working with Housing Benefit to streamline the process of finishing claims.

**For further information please contact: Alison McCrae on 0141 429 2581**

## Working for a Healthier Life

*The Working for a Healthier Life Project is funded by the Centre for Population Health in Glasgow and is being carried out by the Training and Employment Research Unit at Glasgow University (TERU). It has two principal aims.*

- **To investigate how key services have been instrumental in moving people with health issues towards and into employment and helping to sustain and progress them once in work.**
- **To assess the impact of employment on the health of these individuals and the subsequent demands on health and other services.**

There are two critical elements of the study. It is a qualitative study where the focus is on the processes and the perceived broader impacts of moving into work – the aim is to develop a much deeper understanding about clients' feelings about processes and the meaning of work through in depth interviews with 100 individuals who have used a range of health and employability services.

- **It will focus on people who have moved into work and who have been in employment for at least 6 months. This will help us to increase understanding about the factors which help people to sustain employment, an area which is under-researched in this field.**

The study will aim to improve our understanding of how people perceive and use services and the impacts on critical aspects of their lives, including employability and health. The research will make a valuable contribution to the knowledge which is already being developed in Glasgow about how to work with more disadvantaged client groups to move them into work. It will help organisations identify the key factors which promote engagement in employability services as well as developing an understanding of what sustains involvement in the employability process, and indeed how that process can be improved.

**We are looking for organisations who want to be part of the research and work with clients who have claimed Incapacity Benefit and have moved into employment. For further information please contact: Lynne Macdougall on 0141 330 5988  
E: [macdougall@bss.gla.ac.uk](mailto:macdougall@bss.gla.ac.uk)**

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