



10 August 2023

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

Through No One Left Behind, we are transforming the employability system to be more responsive in meeting the needs of people and adapting to rapidly changing labour markets.

These are difficult times, and this journey of transformation is crucial. We know individuals, households, businesses and communities have been affected and continue to adapt with growing concern to the implications of a deepening cost of living crisis and uncertainty in the economy. We are doing all that we can, at both national and local level to respond. Part of that response is No One Left Behind and the progress it continues to make towards a simplified, more joined up and person-centred employability system, where people can get the right support at the right time to help them towards and into work.

The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET)¹ and its associated Delivery Plans² set out with clarity an ambitious plan to support those who face inequalities and those at risk of long-term unemployment. In partnership, we will continue to flex and adapt our approach, embracing through NSET a new culture of delivery where partners come together as 'Team Scotland' and focus on making a difference to people's lives, ensuring employability support is available to help individuals achieve their goals and their potential.

Together, we remain committed to tackling poverty and inequality, as evidenced by the recently signed Verity House Agreement. Helping people into fair and sustainable jobs is central to achieving that ambition. We can't do this alone and will continue with our shared commitment to collective leadership and collaboration as the No One Left Behind approach matures. By working across organisational boundaries to design and deliver place-based, flexible and tailored support we can make a real difference where it is needed, based on the demands of the local labour market and the needs and aspirations of service users.

As the Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy and the COSLA Spokesperson for Community Wellbeing, we share a commitment to continue to build on the progress already made through the delivery of No One Left Behind and to move into the next phase of delivery focused on our shared priorities of collective leadership and evidence-based improvement and innovation. This includes exploring opportunities to scale up employability support for parents, in recognition of the key role that employability can play in eradicating child poverty.

It is encouraging to see the strengthening of local partnerships in action and improving access to services and support whilst working collaboratively for the benefit of people who want help to find and remain in work. The All in Dundee partnership of organisations are bringing their collective expertise together to deliver person-centred support to unemployed people who face barriers to employment in Dundee City and in the Western Isles, work is underway to integrate and align support with other

¹<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-strategy-economic-transformation/>

² [Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation - Delivery Plans October 2022 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-s-national-strategy-for-economic-transformation-delivery-plans-october-2022/)

services supporting parents through the employability pipeline. These are only two examples, and we know there will be more.

We have made significant progress since No One Left Behind commenced in April 2019, with 39,632 people receiving support to March 2023.³ However, there remains much to do in realising the crucial role that employability has in delivering a wellbeing economy and in supporting people to achieve their potential.

As we enter a new stage of development, **looking ahead to further implementation of No One Left Behind from April 2024 when Fair Start Scotland referrals end**, we would welcome your commitment to continue to support the transformation that is underway. We have a real opportunity to bring to bear our collective expertise and resources to maximise the offer, transforming not only the employability system but the lives and outcomes of people and communities across Scotland.

Learning and evaluation must continue to underpin our longer-term ambitions. We jointly welcome the evaluation on implementation of No One Left Behind published today which offers valuable insight on how we continue to work together to build upon the strengths of local delivery and good practice.

The pace and scale of change in the wider economy requires continued flexibility and creativity in how we collectively respond to support people and deliver results. Together, in respecting the strengths available across sector and organisational boundaries, which exists across the employability landscape and working collaboratively to achieve the flexible, tailored and responsive services people in Scotland deserve, we'll contribute to creating and sustaining an economy that works for all.



Neil Gray



Maureen Chalmers

³ [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: Statistical Summary July 2023 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2023/07/Scotland's_Devolved_Employment_Services_Statistical_Summary_July_2023.pdf)