

OPPORTUNITIES FIFE PARTNERSHIP

COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK 2023 - 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Commissioning Framework sets out the Opportunities Fife Partnership's¹ (OFP) intentions, principles and priorities that will underpin local commissioning of employability and skills provision between 2023 and 2025.
- 1.2 The Framework was created in 2020 using the [Scottish Approach to Service Design](#). It is based on the findings of 16 Collaborative Conversations with 120 individuals and over 124 responses to our online survey held during 2020, including the voice of frontline staff, those who have used or are currently using employment services as well as those who have never used an employment service before and a wide range of stakeholders.
- 1.3 The Framework has been used to commission employment services in Fife under the banner of No One Left Behind in 2021 and 2022. It has been refreshed to reflect new funding priorities and the findings of an independent evaluation [Final-interim-report-Phase-1.pdf \(nihr.ac.uk\)](#)², and will be used to commission further employment support for the period 2023-2025.
- 1.4 This, 2023-25 version of the OFP Commissioning Framework, outlines existing commitments in Fife through No One Left Behind, and identifies priorities for further commissioning using resources such as (but not limited to) UK Shared Prosperity Fund, City Region Deals and Best Start Brighter Futures.
- 1.5 Fife's budget allocation for the above-mentioned funding streams for the 2023-2025 period has not yet been finalised, therefore activity will be commissioned with a flexible focus, providing scope for activities to be scaled appropriately once the financial situation has been clarified.
- 1.6 The Opportunities Fife Partnership (OFP) is a strategic decision-making partnership reporting directly to the Fife Partnership. The OFP is responsible for overseeing the delivery of aspects of the "Inclusive Growth and Jobs" priority within Fife Partnership's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP); "A Plan 4 Fife".
- 1.7 The OFP's Mission is:

"To influence and drive innovative approaches to skills and employability services that reflect the current and future needs of individuals and employers."

¹ Opportunities Fife Partnership includes representation from: Fife Council, Fife College, Fife Health & Social Care Partnership, NHS Fife, Department for Work & Pensions, Skills Development Scotland, Fife Voluntary Action, Developing Young Workforce and Fife Chambers of Commerce

² Weblink TO PHIRST NOLB Evaluation PHASE 1

- 1.8 This Commissioning Framework builds on co-production work done under No One Left Behind and has been refreshed to include current policy and funding context. The Framework includes:
- An updated outline of the current policy, economic and delivery context (Section 2)
 - OFP Employability Service delivery expectations: The principles which guide delivery (Section 3)
 - OFP Employability Service delivery expectations: Who services will be aimed at and what they will be delivering (Section 4)
 - OFP infrastructure that will support provision in Fife (Section 5)
 - Performance Management expectations and recording personal information (Section 6)
 - Outline Budget allocations (Section 7)
 - Outline timetable and criteria for commissioning applications 2023-25 (Section 8)
 - Outline assessment criteria (Section 9)

2.0 CONTEXT

National and Local Employability Funding Context:

- 2.1 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)** The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation via a funding formula rather than a competition. UKSPF aims to help places across the country deliver enhanced outcomes and recognises that even the most affluent parts of the UK contain pockets of deprivation and need support. UKSPF aims to invest in domestic priorities and targeting funding where it is needed most: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.
- 2.2 **Best Start, Bright Futures** is Scottish Government's strategy to tackle child poverty. It includes a commitment to supporting an integrated and different approach to supporting priority families in Scotland with specific resource allocated to Whole Families Wellbeing funding and integrated investment to help parents to enter, sustain and progress in work. The priority families most likely to experience poverty in Scotland are:
- Lone parents
 - Families living with disability
 - Families with 3 or more children
 - Minority ethnic families
 - Families with a child under the age of 1
 - Families where the mother is under 25 years old

- 2.3 **No One Left Behind** is the Scottish Government's policy framework and approach to tackling employment issues. It aims to ensure those who experience complex and multiple barriers to moving into work are not 'left behind'. No One Left Behind is supported through a **Partnership Working Agreement** which reflects shared principles and ambitions for improving outcomes for individuals between Scottish Government and local authority partners agreed with COSLA, with inputs and oversight through the Improvement Service, SLAED and SOLACE³. It signals a shift from top-down programme design approaches, where target groups and provision are set out at a national level, to one where local areas have the flexibility to use funding in line with the needs of their local community. NOLB allocation combines several former national employment-related funding pots⁴ into one coordinated fund which is flexible to local needs, takes a long-term approach to funding, adaptable to changing circumstances, and values the role of the third sector.

These commitments are designed to support services and Local Employability Partnerships, such as the OFP to create a system based on the following principles:

1. Promote dignity and respect, fairness and equality and continuous improvement
2. Provide flexible and person-centred support;
3. Be more straightforward for people to navigate;
4. Be better integrated and aligned with other services, particularly with health, justice and housing provision;
5. Provide pathways into sustainable and fair work;
6. Be driven by evidence, including data and the experience of users; and
7. Support more people – particularly those facing multiple barriers – to move into the right job, at the right time.

No One Left Behind in Fife:

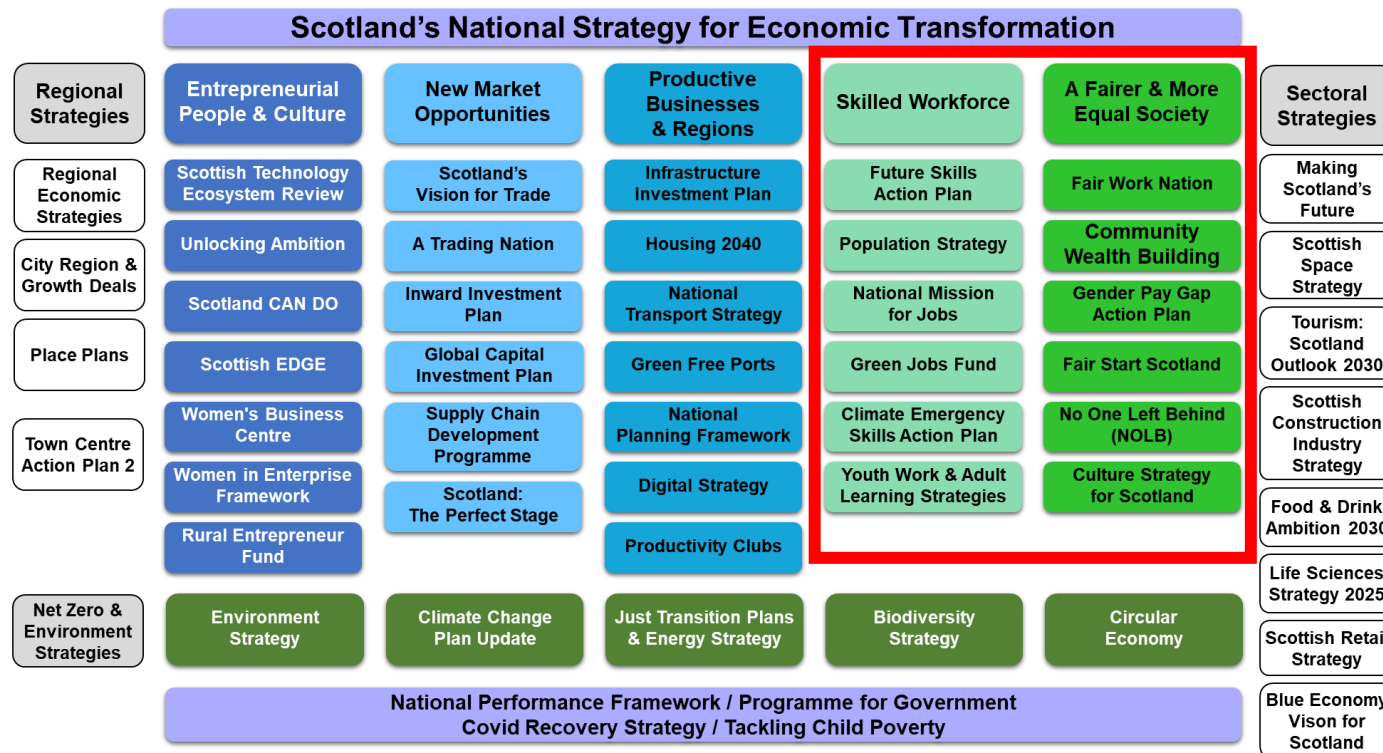
- 2.4 In 2022 the OFP commissioned activity through NOLB to provide Core and Specialist services that will support adults, young people and families, with the intention of delivering through to 2025, based on project performance and the continued need for the service. Any new programmes commissioned through the 2023-25 Framework will supplement and add value to the existing provision, not create competition or duplication that would confuse the existing landscape.

Wider national strategies relating to employability/employment:

- 2.5 The diagram below highlights the number of strategies, national, regional and local that the Commissioning Framework and the OFP's approach has to fit within, these strategies sit within an overarching context of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) and UK Government's Levelling Up Policy.

³ COSLA: Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, Solace: Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, SLAED: Scottish Local Authority Economic Development representative body.

⁴ No One Left Behind Funding strands will include: Activity Agreements, Young Person's Guarantee, Scottish Employer Recruitment Incentive, Parental Employment Support Fund (and PESF Boost). Community Jobs Scotland and the Employability Fund.



The highlighted section outlines those strategies that are most relevant to the OFP's delivery.

Other areas, such as the recent announcement of a Green Free Port in the Forth will have knock on effects regarding skills training and new vacancy opportunities that will support our ambition of a higher skilled, higher paid workforce in Fife.

The National Strategy for Economic Transformation [Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-national-strategy-economic-transformation/pages/introduction/) connects to, and is supported by, a number of wider Scottish Government policies relating to improving employment outcomes in Scotland. These include but are not limited to: No One Left Behind, Halving the Disability Employment Gap, Reducing the Gender Pay gap, Reducing the Race Pay Gap, Tackling Child Poverty, Scotland's commitment to becoming a [Fair Work Nation](#) and a human-rights based approach to policy development and delivery. The intention is that by 2025, people in Scotland will have a world-leading working life where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and society. Scottish Government is supporting this through the promotion of work places that support the real minimum wage, developing supportive working environments for women, those from black and minority ethnic communities. those with health or disabilities issues and those impacted the exit from the EU.

Community Wealth Building:

- 2.6 Fife is committed to a Community Wealth Building (CWB) approach, providing a holistic approach to empowering communities to actively participate in and benefit from economic growth. An anchor institution charter has been adopted by key stakeholders to deliver this change. CWB means more local employment and a larger more and more diverse business base, ensuring that wealth is locally owned and benefits local people. The five pillars of Community Wealth Building are:

1. Plural ownership of the local economy
2. Making financial power work for local places
3. Fair Employment and Just Labour Markets
4. Socially productive use of land and property
5. Progressive procurement of goods and services

The Community Wealth Building approach in Fife will link to OFP Employability provision through ensuring that fair and accessible work is embedded within delivery approaches, and successful providers will be expected to show how they are supporting the community wealth building agenda through activity such as progressive recruitment, community benefit approaches through procurement or plural ownership.

The impact of Covid-19 and other international factors

- 2.7 No One Left Behind was originally conceived and developed in a social and economic context where Scotland was experiencing relatively high employment rates and comparatively low unemployment. Since then, we have been significantly affected by a global pandemic, the implications of leaving the European Union and factors such as global conflicts (war between Russia and Ukraine) and the Cost of Living Crisis in Scotland. These factors have resulted in the displacement of people, an increase in people living in poverty or struggling with the rising costs of energy and food and the paradox of more hard to fill vacancies in key industry sectors, which are not necessarily attractive employment options for those with existing barriers to employment.
- 2.8 The full economic impact is still unclear and uncertain, but it is widely expected that we will still be facing significantly increased levels of unemployment and slow economic growth, particularly in key sectors such as culture, entertainment, tourism & hospitality, health & social care and in the respective supply chains for these industries. This will combine with fluctuating funding provision coming from both the UK and Scottish Governments to try and mitigate the worst impacts of this. Evidence from previous recessions suggests people affected by protected characteristics will be disproportionately negatively affected and therefore the work of the OFP and the wider employability provision will be even more important.
- 2.9 Across Fife the issues created by digital poverty have been significant. Whether this be through lack of laptops, tablets and computers, lack internet access, lack of skills or confidence, digital poverty has had severe impact on people's ability to access and interact with a whole range of services, including employability services and jobs. The national [Connecting Scotland](#) programme aims to address elements of this issue,

nevertheless it is crucial for employability provision in Fife to factor this into service delivery. Although the pandemic has resulted in many people embracing virtual interaction and online participation in learning and training, those that lack the technology and/or skills to engage in this way will be disproportionately disadvantaged due to the pandemic.

Climate Change and the move to Net Zero

- 2.10 Climate change and the climate emergency are anticipated to be significant drivers of change in investment and public policy with related strategies underpinning the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (see 2.5 for further details). These strategies will drive change in both the economy and skills arenas both of which are highly relevant to employability providers. Fife has a Climate Emergency Action Plan [ClimateActionPlan2020_summary.pdf \(fife.gov.uk\)](https://www.fife.gov.uk/media/10123/ClimateActionPlan2020_summary.pdf)

Existing employment funding & support in Fife:

- 2.11 Commissioning new activity must be placed in the context of the existing employability provision and support available in Fife. Adding value and introducing additional opportunities where there are gaps in provision is the priority. Existing provision includes (but is not limited to):
- **No One Left Behind:** The OFP commissioned employment support services for April 2022 – March 2025, delivered by third sector and public sector partners. See section 4.3 and 4.4 for more detail.
 - **Community Renewal Fund:** Commissioned in January 2022 by the UK Government as part of their Levelling Up activity as a precursor to the UKSPF. There are two programmes currently delivering enhanced volunteering opportunities, but where volunteers are learning valuable rural skills for future employment.
 - **Fair Start Scotland:** Scottish Government funded provision delivered at 'regional' level focussing on all ages with multiple barriers to employment. In Fife, this is delivered by FedCap, working across the Edinburgh & South East Scotland city region with a small element sub-contracted to Triage. The funding for this has been extended but will conclude in March 2024.
 - **Department for Work & Pensions and Job Centre provision:** DWP is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. It administers a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits. With UK and locally funded provision, Jobcentre Plus helps people move from benefits into work and helps employers advertise jobs. It also deals with benefits for people who are unemployed or unable to work because of a health condition or disability. In 2023 older workers (50+) are a key priority for DWP with specialist Champions, Mid-Life MOT services and specialist support offers in place in across Job Centres. DWP also commission Sector-based Work Academies (SWAPS) through partnerships with individual businesses and use the Flexible Support Fund to commission additional support where appropriate.

- **Skills Development Scotland:** Offer Career Advice and Guidance and employability support to people of all ages in Fife. SDS have public centres across Fife and advisers in each secondary school and in Fife College. SDS also fund Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships as well as developing and sharing local and national labour market insight data.
- **City Region Deals:** Fife is an active partner in two city region deals; Tay Cities [Home | Tay Cities Deal](#) and Edinburgh & South East Scotland [The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal \(esescityregiondeal.org.uk\)](#). The latter includes an Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) Programme with a focus on industry targeted Skills Gateways, disadvantaged families, growth sector pathways, workforce mobility and more.
- **Fife College:** Careers advice and skills development, including apprenticeship activity, a Flexible Workforce Development Fund and new programmes aligned to priority groupings and funding streams identified to support economic recovery.
- **Fife Council employment support:** Internal provision focuses on delivery of foundation and modern apprenticeships, Administration of Employer Recruitment Incentive's through the Fife Jobs Contract, Supported Employment Services and other employability initiatives which are funded through Local Authority Covid Economic Recovery Fund (LACER), Fife Council also supports community learning and development (Welfare Reform Provision) and local area funded provision varies according to locality and includes a variety of valuable partnership projects⁵
- **Developing Young Workforce:** Plays a key part in the delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee. DYW are employer led and their priority is to make it easier for employers to connect with young people in Fife's schools and college. The total allocation for 2022/23 was £694,975, which includes a Core DYW Allocation of £251,455 and allocation of £443,520 to support School Coordinators. The budget for 2023/24 has still to be confirmed.

⁵ such as the FEAT and Coalfield Worx programme

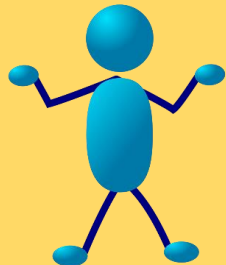
3.0 OFP EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES: THE PRINCIPLES AND DATA WHICH GUIDE DELIVERY

The OFP will commission employability provision in a way which supports services to adapt to:

- the unique needs of individuals with a specific focus on those who tend to be 'left behind',
- the dynamic and rapidly changing economic and employment context in Fife and beyond

Employability is complex

3.1 In Fife we understand that 'employability' is a complex concept which is affected by factors relating to an individual's personal strengths and capacities and the social and economic context in which they live. These two contexts inter-connect with each other but broadly can be divided as follows:⁶ This means that no two individuals' journeys to work will ever be the same.

Internal: Personal context		External: economic/social context
Motivation & determination		The economy
Confidence		Job opportunities
Hope		Stigma & discrimination
Resilience		Educational opportunities
Emotional wellbeing		Social & family context
Abilities (learned and innate)		Transport
Knowledge & skills		Access to health care
Experience of trauma		Access to housing or other support services

Delivery providers will be expected to demonstrate how their staff, and the provision they deliver, will support people to navigate both internal and external barriers, so they are more likely to achieve healthy, sustainable employment outcomes⁷.

3.2 Meaningful involvement (co-production) of people who use services, frontline staff and employers in planning, design and delivery is crucial to developing services which are complexity friendly. This includes targeted efforts to engage with people affected under the Equalities Act 2010. This is in line with the Scottish Human Rights PANEL principles of: Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Engagement and Legality

Delivery providers will be expected to demonstrate how they have engaged, and will continue to engage with, people who use services, staff and employers to inform and support service delivery in line with the PANEL principles outlined above.

⁶ The list in this table has been updated since 2022. The internal and external factors that affect someone's employability is infinite, unique and continuously changing

⁷ Healthy and sustainable work characteristics are defined in the [Marmot Principles of Fair work](#)

OFP Principles for Employment Service Delivery

3.3 **How** services are delivered is as important as **what** they do. The following principles were developed through the process of establishing our No One Left Behind delivery and the OFP has adopted them as the basis for all employability service delivery. They connect with the National Charter for No One Left Behind (which can be found: [publication-customer-charter.docx \(live.com\)](#)).

Equal and Fair	• People accessing the service will be treated as equals, they will feel respected, trusted and listened to .
Strength Based	• Provision will focus on helping people to identify and grow their own strengths rather than solving problems for them. This also means giving people responsibility and allowing them to make mistakes and take risks.
Non-Judgemental	• People will feel able to open-up without risk of judgment, staff will bring humility and an open mind to understand people's individual situation and challenges
Discreet	• Services will be provided in a way that respects people's need for privacy and the vulnerability associated with accessing support services
Collaborative	• Services will work together to ensure people get the support they need when they need it. This includes warm handovers or working alongside one another, with clearly identified progression options and support pathways.
Time Unlimited	• Services will balance consistency and dependability with energy, momentum and challenge at a pace that works for the individual and which maintains momentum towards improved employability
Continuously Improving	• Services will actively gather feedback from people who use their services, reflect on delivery and demonstrate a willingness to adapt and learn
Hopeful	• Provision will hold the hope for everyone who comes through the door, (and those who don't), <i>and support people to recognise, voice and progress their individual hopes. Knowing that the right work is out there for them, and we are all on a journey.</i>

Delivery providers will be expected to demonstrate how they will ensure provision supports the OFP's Principles outlined at Section 3.3 and how their internal monitoring and evaluation of their provision will reflect them.

Providers will be held accountable for delivering in line with these Principles and must have clear systems for people to raise concerns or complaints regarding delivery.

The demographics of unemployment and inequality in Fife

3.4 The table below outlines the (currently available) data for Fife for people with key protected characteristics and relevant life experiences which may affect their journey to work. It is important to acknowledge that this data is not complete and there will be under-reporting in many categories. Many people will be affected by more than one of these issues so there is going to be cross-counting and intersectionality between these groups.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010	Population data for Fife	Those with experience of:	Population data for Fife
Unemployed age: 16- 24	3,600 ⁸	4+ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)	34,777 ⁹
Unemployed age: Over 50	3,200 ¹⁰	Looked After Young people	81/year ¹¹
Unemployed from a minority ethnic background	4,300 ¹²	Accessing criminal justice support services	2669 ¹³
Unemployed with (physical or mental) health conditions or illnesses lasting more than 12 months	3,200 ¹⁴	Drug and alcohol use	4,089 (Substance) ¹⁵ 34,768 (Alcohol) ¹⁶
Common mental health problems (employed and unemployed)	32,785 ¹⁷	Long-term unemployed	6,600 ¹⁸
Sexual Orientation (LGB and Other) (employed & unemployed)	12,700 ¹⁹	Homeless	2,630 ²⁰
People undergoing Gender Reassignment (Trans men and Trans women) (employed & unemployed)	Estimate:17-34 ²¹	Carers and young carers	53,500 adult carers (16+) ²² 6,785 young carers ²³

⁸ Source: Annual Population Survey, NOMIS (accessed 22/09/2023)

⁹ Those with four or more ACEs far more likely to have low qualifications and be in lower paid/manual jobs [Scottish Health Summary 2019](#)

¹⁰ Source: Annual Population Survey Apr 2020 – Mar 2021, NOMIS (accessed 30/01/2023)

¹¹ [School Leaver Destination Return 2018/19](#)

¹² Source: Annual Population Survey, NOMIS (accessed 22/09/2023), as above – small sample sizes mean this figure need to be treated with caution. Unemployment rates for minority ethnic females are high in Fife: 65% compared to 36% nationally. For males this is 29.4%, compared to 18.6% nationally. Male: 3,000 & Female: 3,500

¹³ 2022 data provided via email from Fife Criminal justice team

¹⁴ 2.4% of people who had a health condition or illness lasting more than 12 months were unemployed in Fife. 2.6% in Scotland as a whole. We estimate a further additional 22.8% (44,200 people) were economically inactive in Scotland, many of whom may wish to gain or return to employment with appropriate support. Source: Annual Population Survey, NOMIS (accessed 22/09/2023)

¹⁵ [Prevalence of problem drug use in Scotland](#), June 2020 (2015-16 estimates) -this includes all forms of problem drug use from cannabinoids to opiates

¹⁶ [ScotPHO profile tool \(2014-17\)](#)

¹⁷ ¹⁷ [ScotPHO profiling tool](#). (2014-17) common mental health problems, defined as score of 4 or more on the General Health Questionnaire (12 item version) (GHQ12). Does not include undiagnosed MH problems

¹⁸ Source: ONS Jobseeker's Allowance by age and duration; Department for Work & Pensions statxplare

¹⁹ Scottish Survey Core Questions 2019 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-surveys-core-questions-2019/documents/>, Published 19 Jan 2021 (Table 4.4)

²⁰ This data does not include the hidden homeless which are more likely to be affected by other complex barriers listed here. [Homelessness in Scotland 2019-20](#)

²¹ <https://centreforequalities.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/EQUALITY-IN-FIFE-JULY-2019-3b.pdf>

²² Based on figures from Fife Carers Centre: 17% of the adult population (16+). The figures for adult carers are estimated to have increased by at least 25% since lockdown, and higher than this in some areas.

²³ Will have a caring role at some point in their life, [Fife Young Carers Report 2018](#)

Economically inactive women who wish to work	6,000 ²⁴	Lone parent households	11,900 ²⁵
Unemployment rate aged 16-64 - not Equality Act 2010 core or work-limiting disabled	10,000 ²⁶	Children living relative or absolute poverty	13,238 ²⁷
Refugees / Migrants	750 ²⁸	'Employment deprived', living in 20% most deprived area of Fife	9,071 ²⁹
Families living with a disability	6,789 ³⁰	Minority Ethnic Families	3800 ³¹
Families with 3 or more children	5,480 ³²	Families where the mother is under 25 years old	579 ³³
Families with a child under the age of 1	3,157 ³⁴		

3.5 OFP has a commitment that all services should be universally accessible. Based on the data above it is clear that the following populations are of such a significant size that *ALL* employability provision funded by the Opportunities Fife Partnership should be skilled and resourced to support people from the following communities:

- Adults with caring responsibilities (53,500)
- Those with four or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) (34,777),
- People with issues relating to alcohol misuse (34,768),
- People who experience common mental health problems (32,785),
- People who define themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or other (12,700)

In addition, OFP funded provision will also be targeted at people living in areas of multiple deprivation (9,071) see section 3.7 below for further information.

All OFP employability providers are expected to demonstrate the necessary skills to support people affected by these issues as well as an awareness of stigma and discrimination and how to address it.

²⁴ Annual Population Survey Jun 2019 - July 2020, accessed via NOMIS 20/11/20

²⁵ [Child Poverty in Scotland: priority groups - lone-parent families \(healthscotland.scot\)](https://www.healthscotland.scot/child-poverty-in-scotland-priority-groups-lone-parent-families)

²⁶ Source: Annual Population Survey Apr 2020 – Mar 2021, NOMIS (accessed 22/09/2021). Rate of 7.7% in Fife compared to Scotland (4.3%)

²⁷ [LCPAR-4-report.pdf \(fife.scot\)](https://www.fife.scot/lcp4-report.pdf)

²⁸ Fife Centre for Equalities

²⁹ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 & 2020

³⁰ [LCPAR 2020 - DRAFT \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/lcp2020-draft)

³¹ [LCPAR 2020 - DRAFT \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/lcp2020-draft)

³² [Child Poverty in Scotland: priority groups – larger families \(healthscotland.scot\)](https://www.healthscotland.scot/child-poverty-in-scotland-priority-groups-larger-families)

³³ [Births Time Series Data | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/births-time-series-data)

³⁴ [Fife Council Area Profile \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/fife-council-area-profile)

Where and when do we want services to be working?

- 3.6 Through the existing NOLB activity, the OFP have established a network of delivery in **each of Fife's 7 localities, but with a particular focus on supporting those living in areas of multiple deprivation and the Mid-Fife area** (See Annex B). Provision must be easily accessible from anywhere in Fife, such as within a single bus journey, or provision for alternative delivery available online. In reality, this may involve prioritising provision in areas with highest levels of systemic unemployment OR where the local transport connectivity is a predominant barrier for effective access to services.
- 3.7 The Tay Cities Region Deal's Skill Programme will allocate funding for the Targeted Pockets of Needs project for North-East Fife. This is to develop a holistic, whole family support service to help parents and young people from lone parent, low income and workless families in North-East Fife to move towards employment. The projected cost of the service is approximately £30,000 per annum, over the seven years. Planning and the commissioning process for services will take place in 2023-24 with the delivery of activity running from April 2024 to March 2029.
- 3.8 The type of delivery should be focused on the needs of the individual or family. This means providing a flexible approach to engagement is essential. Face-to-face delivery should be available wherever possible but it is critical that **online, hybrid and remote approaches**, including the tools for people to use these, are considered as an essential part of delivery. The use of online platforms developed in recent years has given greater flexibility for many people to engage with provision when at home.
- 3.9 Delivery providers will be expected to offer reasonable support out with traditional Monday to Friday, 9-5 office hours as appropriate, especially for people who have moved into work, with clear rationale for how this will be delivered and when.

Delivery providers will be expected to demonstrate where services will be physically located to ensure local availability in priority areas; state which online platforms they will use and their commitment to out of hours provision where necessary.

4.0 OFF SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL:

4.1 Employability services commissioned by the OFP will have the aim of actively reducing barriers for people with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as for those with certain life experiences who are significantly more likely to struggle, in order to improve their employability and successfully gain and sustain employment. These characteristics and life experiences often interact with each other (also known as intersectionality) meaning that people are often affected by more than one issue at a time which can have a cumulative impact on person's journey to work.

4.2 Services commissioned by the OFP cover:

- **Core provision** which aims to be as inclusive as possible, offering support across all 5 stages of the employment pathway and with a presence in all seven localities of Fife. See Annex C for details.
- **Specialist provision** for people where additional, specialist skills are required (Section 4.7)

It is our hope that provision be delivered within Consortia or in Partnership to build on the principles of collaboration outlined at section 3.3.

Existing OFP Commissioned Employability Services in Fife

4.3 NOLB Core and Specialist provision activity was commissioned for one year (April 2022 – March 2023) but with the intention for activity to be extended, for a second (2023-24) and possibly third year (2024-25), subject to budget availability, performance review and continued evidence of need. This continues to be the way forward subject to confirmation of budget from Scottish Government.

4.4 The provision funded through NOLB currently supports:

Type of Provision	Number of clients targeted in 2022-23
Core:	
• Unemployed / Economically Inactive Adults (25+)	300 Adults
• Young People aged 16 – 18	200 Young People
• Young People aged 19 – 24	500 Young People
Specialist:	
• Unemployed Adults with Health Problems & Disabilities	100 Adults
• Unemployed Adults with Mental Health Challenges	60 Adults
• Unemployed Migrants	50 Adults
• Young people with specialist requirements	50 Young People
• Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Families	145 Families

For more information about existing provision, commissioned by the OFP [click here.](#)

NEW Employability Service Commissioning Priorities for 2023-25

- 4.5 For the period 2023-25 relevant to this Commissioning Framework, the OFP are seeking to commission provision for the following priority communities who are not well served by the existing provision outlined above.
- 4.6 Specialist provision takes a different role and is not expected to be involved in delivering end-to-end employability services. Specialists will vary activity to reflect the needs of the community being supported. Key elements of all Specialist Provision will include:
- Acting as an **early engagement partner** with individuals from the relevant community, helping them to gain confidence to access mainstream (or relevant specialist) employability services whether through group activities, outreach or 1:1 work.
 - **Supporting individuals** while they are accessing mainstream (or relevant specialist) employability services (either within the OFP's network or elsewhere) and liaising constructively with the relevant services in terms of any specific support needs (e.g. language issues), barriers and opportunities affecting that individual
 - Actively **engaging with employer engagement** teams and employer recruitment incentives in Fife to ensure that they are both accessible and being accessed by the individuals they are looking to support.
 - Providing **in-work support** where necessary to help people to maintain or progress in employment and to address in-work poverty.
 - Delivering **awareness sessions** co-produced and co-delivered with the voice of experience, targeted at frontline staff, employers and the employer engagement team about their area of expertise.

- 4.7 Providers are invited to apply for funding to support the following communities affected by unemployment in Fife. Details of the funding available under each intervention are given in the table in section 7.4. Details of targets associated specifically with UKSPF interventions can be found at Annex D:
- 4.8 Support for key target client groups could align with interventions as outlined below. It is understood, however, that some of the proposed provision could be relevant to multiple Intervention themes. To simplify the process of reporting the OFP's scoring team will attempt to fund activity, where possible, through a single Intervention.

Target Group	Possible Intervention Themes
People from Minority Ethnic Communities in Fife	UKSPF S31 / S33 / S39 / OFP
Young people with a physical or mental health problem or disability	UKSPF S39 / OFP
People with physical or mental health problems or disabilities (particularly in-work/job retention support)	UKSPF S31 / S36 / S39 / OFP
Young carers	UKSPF S39 / OFP
People experiencing housing issues, including at risk of homelessness	UKSPF S31 / S33 / S39 / OFP
People with a history of drug or alcohol misuse	UKSPF S31 / S33 / S39 / OFP
People with a history of offending	UKSPF S31 / S33 / S39 / OFP
People for whom their sexual orientation or gender identity is acting as a barrier to work	UKSPF S31 / S33/ OFP
Looked after young people	UKSPF S39 / OFP
Activity which helps support people towards and into 'green jobs' ³⁵ in Fife	UKSPF S33 / S37 / OFP
Locality specific activity / ERI activity that supports local businesses to recruit local employees.	UKSPF S36 / OFP
Locality specific activity which helps generate jobs in SIMD areas of Fife	UKSPF S36 / OFP
Families living with a disability	Parental Employability Support Fund / Best Start Brighter Futures/ OFP
Families with 3 or more children	Parental Employability Support Fund / Best / OFP Start Brighter Futures
Families with a child under the age of 1	Parental Employability Support Fund / Best Start Brighter Futures / OFP
Families where the mother is under 25 years old	Parental Employability Support Fund / Best Start Brighter Futures / OFP
Minority Ethnic Families	Parental Employability Support Fund / Best Start Brighter Futures / OFP

³⁵ Green Jobs can be defined as completely new jobs relating specifically to climate change; current jobs that require new skills or existing jobs for which there is an increased demand. See [Green Jobs in Scotland report](#) for further information.

- 4.9 Specialist provision will be commissioned on a Fife-wide basis to reflect the spread of people affected by these issues. Providers are expected to develop effective working relationships with existing Core providers, work closely with community-based provision in each area as well as other provision in Fife that is relevant to their specialism.

Providers delivering Specialist services must evidence what experience, knowledge and skills they have relating to the specialist provision they have proposed. They must demonstrate experience of existing partnership working and commitment to working pro-actively with both Core providers and wider relevant partners in Fife.

5.0 OFP GOVERNANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Opportunities Fife Partnership provides core infrastructure services relating to employability to improve both accessibility and outcomes for individuals they support. The infrastructure services will be coordinated through the OFP and will be available to all employability services as well as other employment-related services in Fife.

- **Tackling Stigma and Discrimination** – OFP partners will support a programme of training for frontline staff in employability services and employers to understand the impact of stigma and discrimination in services and the workplace. They will also support training on Employment Law and the Equality Act 2010 for people who use services.
- **Staff training** – OFP partners will continue to support a programme of staff training relevant to employability colleagues and beyond. This will include elements such as strengths-based coaching, basic employment law, understanding stigma and discrimination, emotional resilience & employability, understanding the Fife landscape of employability services, housing and more. This will also raise awareness with key partners in Fife of the support on offer within the employability landscape.
- **Marketing** – OFP partners will support the development and maintenance of an accessible public-facing, searchable database of employment-related services in Fife and beyond. This will also be produced as a hard copy directory and promoted to staff in related sectors every 2 years. All providers will be expected to display the OFP logo on marketing of commissioned provision.
- **Collaboration** – OFP will continue to support strategic partnerships and Forums which promote networking and collaboration such as: Know Your Network and the Fife Employability Forum.
- **Employer Recruitment Incentives (ERIs)**– Fife Council deliver a coordinated approach to Employer Recruitment Incentives in Fife. Job application, interview and job outcome equalities data will be monitored and reviewed, and provision adapted as necessary. Employers using ERIs in Fife will need to demonstrate how they are working to create good and healthy working environments, pay the living wage and tackle stigma and discrimination. Any provider wishing to include an element of wage subsidies or Employer Recruitment Incentives should work in partnership with Fife Council's Fife Jobs Contract Team to ensure a single message and offer to Fife's businesses.

Delivery providers must contribute to the support of this infrastructure by promoting services on shared platforms, actively participating in relevant networking events and training and optimise use of ERIs for the individuals they support.

6.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, GATHERING OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

All provision commissioned by the OFP will need to comply with certain data gathering requirements in line with the expectations of Scottish and/or UK Governments and the principles outlined below.

6.1 **Personal information** will be gathered and recorded for the following purposes:

- To provide quantitative data on registrations, progressions and positive outcomes to inform service delivery adjustments and improvements (e.g. Are people getting healthy sustainable jobs? Are services mainstreaming equalities provision? Are people 'stuck' in the system?)
- To provide qualitative data in the form of case studies and surveys to inform how services are performing in relation to the OFP's Principles for Service Delivery outlined at Section 3.3
- To contribute to the national Employability Shared Measurement Framework.

6.2 **Providers** will be expected to use the Fife Online Referral Tracking (FORT) system or alternative Client Management System as identified by the OFP to record all personal and service-related information for people who use their services. Tracking and aftercare support must be recorded for a minimum of 12 months.

6.3 **Equalities** data will be recorded separately and anonymously at point of registration for *all* participants in services commissioned by the OFP. Equalities monitoring information will be coded anonymously so that outcomes can be tracked and linked to personal characteristics, such as age bracket, or locality area, but not to specific individuals.

6.4 Information relating **to personal barriers** to work will be allowed to emerge as trust builds with someone's keyworker and recorded on the system only when relevant/appropriate. The **Fife Mental Health & Work Indicator** should be used as appropriate to guide conversations where mental health has been identified as a barrier.

6.5 Successful providers must follow OFP's guidance and provide **evidence that supports compliance**. Any delivery partner(s) failing to maintain acceptable performance or compliance standards will be removed from the OFP's provider list and their funding will be withdrawn.

6.6 Service delivery will include on-going **monitoring and reporting of progress**: through statistical data uploaded to FORT; qualitative reporting at scheduled meetings; case studies; monitoring of equalities data and external user-led evaluations. This will allow the real-time evaluation of each project's current levels of achievement and facilitate any actions required to address any performance issues. Providers will also be required to produce evidence of financial spend, statistics and case studies for quarterly reports to Scottish and/or UK Government, compiled by the Fife Council NOLB Co-ordinator.

- 6.7 **Service activity reports** and performance against the OFP's Principles for Service Delivery will be provided to OFP, as required and published so that all partners understand their own progress against performance profile, but also in relation to the other delivery partners.
- 6.8 All provision must demonstrate how it will uphold the OFP's Principles for Service Delivery, as outlined at Section 3.3 as well as applying a Human Rights-based Approach to service design and delivery using the key principles of PANEL: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination and equality, Empowerment and Legality³⁶.

Delivery providers must ensure staff abide by the expectations outlined above and that they are gathering the necessary information and paperwork to inform in-year reviews of provision. Providers will be expected to evidence how they will use data as a tool for reviewing, informing and where necessary adapting provision within contract if necessary.

³⁶ <http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/>

7.0 BUDGET AND PAYMENT PROCESS

7.1 It is our intention that payment for service delivery will be as follows:

- The first payment will be made after delivery providers return a signed grant offer letter and service level agreement.
- Second payment will be made between during the second quarter of delivery (October to December 2023).
- Subsequent payments will be made quarterly in arrears, subject to compliance with service delivery commitments.
- Full details of the payment schedule will be confirmed through a grant offer letter and service level agreement with successful providers.

7.2 The compliance arrangements for successful delivery partners will be outlined in the grant offer letter and service level agreement. Examples of non-compliance include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to maintain appropriate client records and supporting evidence.
- Failure to complete the required reporting obligations.
- Failure to deliver services that promote OFP's principles.
- Inability to deliver on agreed target outputs or outcomes, without acceptable reasons.

7.3 The table below outlines indicative funding amounts for the total anticipated employability budget for Fife for 2023-24 and 2024-25. The table includes funding already allocated 'in principle' through previous No One Left Behind Fife commissioning and the UK Community Renewal Fund, as well as new and additional funding coming to Fife through UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Parental Employment Support Fund/ Best Start Bright Futures..

Provisional allocation for activity 2022-2025:

Funding Source	Intervention	2022-23 (allocated)	2023-24 (allocated in principle)	2023-24 (available for commissioning)	2024-25 (allocated in principle)	2024-25 (available for commissioning)
UKSPF People & Skills	S31: Employment support for economically inactive people	£300,000	£300,000	£30,000 - £50,000	£300,000	£150,000 - £200,000
UKSPF People & Skills	S33: Enrichment & volunteering activities	£140,000	£140,000	£70,000 - £90,000	£140,000	£200,000 - £260,000
UKSPF People & Skills	S36: Local areas to fund local skills needs	£37,050	£55,000	£200,000 - £255,000	£96,076	£500,000 - £550,000
UKSPF People & Skills	S37: Green skills courses	£0	122,500	£100,000 - £125,000	£237,500	£200,000 - £230,000
UKSPF People & Skills	S39: Education & skills targeting the vulnerable leaving school	£197,037	£250,000	£0	£250,000	£150,000 - £200,000
Parental Employment Support Fund/ Best Start Bright Futures**	Provision for families	£606,473	£2,295,000	£900,000 - £1,300,000	TBC	TBC
No One Left Behind**	Core and specialist provision for those furthest from the labour market	£1,120,551	£1,435,00	£0	TBC	TBC
Young Person's Guarantee	Support for young people leaving school	£1,192,118	No further funding	No further funding	No further funding	No further funding
Long Term Unemployed	Employer recruitment incentive for long-term unemployed	£1,460,000	No further funding	No further funding	No further funding	No further funding
Opportunities Fife Partnership*	Additional Match	£650,000	£150,000	£300,000 - £500,000	TBC	TBC
TOTAL		£5,703,229	£4,747,500	£1,600,000 - £2,315,000	£1,123,576	£1,200,000 - £1,440,000

** NOLB and PESF Budgets are provisional at this time and could be subject to change.

* OFP Budget for 2023-24 is provisional and is awaiting confirmation.

8 CHALLENGE FUND PROCESS

The following table outlines the timescale for commissioning the new activity:

Activity	Date
OFP Commissioning Framework Published	March 2023
Information Session – Potential Delivery Providers	7 March 2023
Commissioning Period	Up to 28 April 2023
Bids assessed, Scoring Panel to meet	May 2023
Scoring Panel Recommendations Prepared	May 2023
OFP Executive to consider commissioning recommendations	28 May 2023
Delivery Partners notified, in principle	June 2023
Fife Council Cabinet to approve grant allocations	29 June 2023
Grant Offer Letters issued and Service Level Agreements finalised	July 2023
Delivery Partners commence activity	July 2023

Proposals will be assessed according to the following sample criteria. Percentage allocations will be marked against the different elements of the bid.

Applicants should note that all bids are scored by a panel of assessors including representatives from the voice of experience panel.

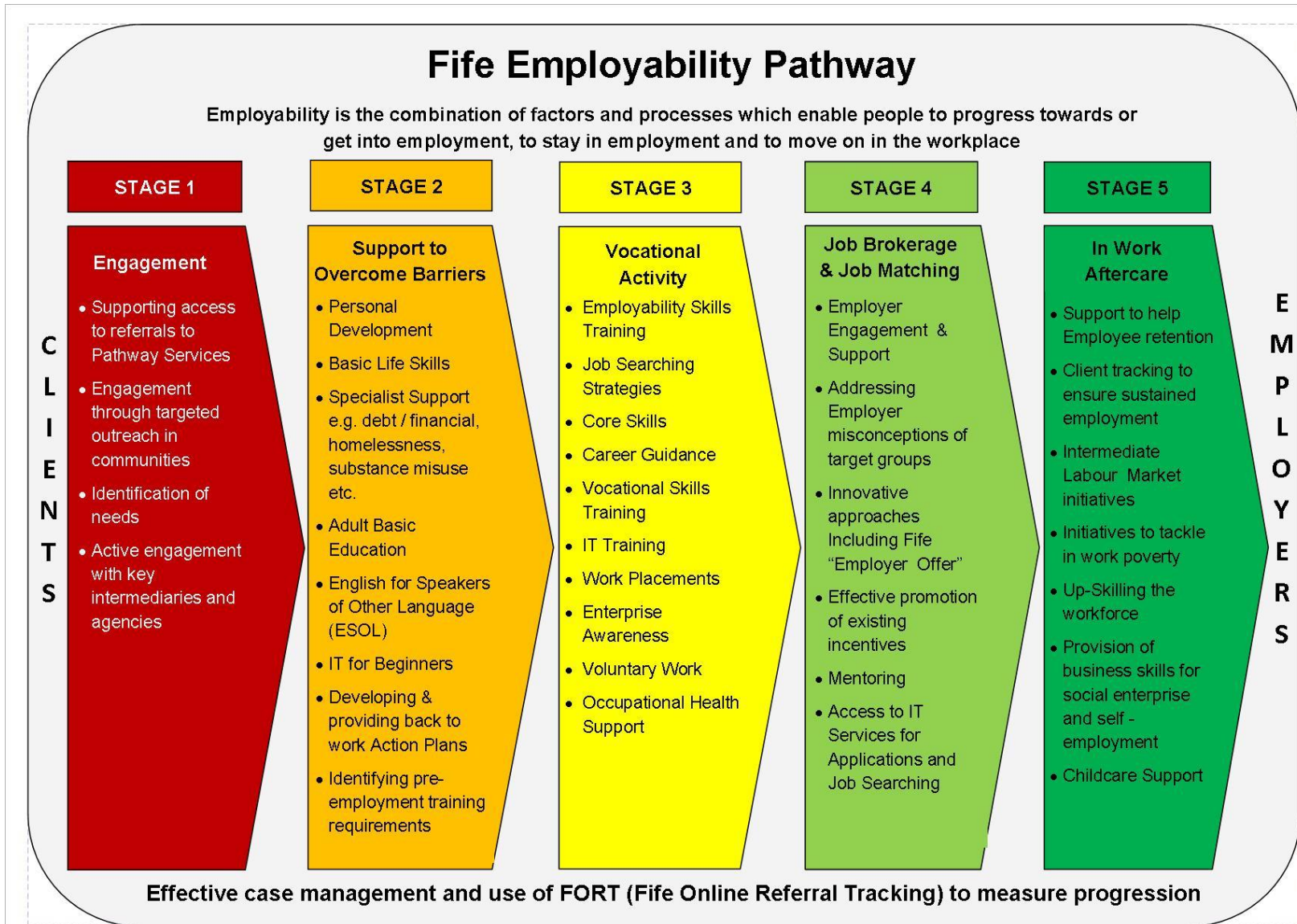
To help our assessment panels all bids must be written in plain English and ensure that content is accessible and included in the appropriate section to the application form.

Outline Scoring Criteria	% Score allocation
<p>Project Outline</p> <p>This section should outline what the project intends to deliver, the client group they are focusing on, and how the project will incorporate the OFP Principles for Service Delivery (Section 3.3). Including a clear overview of the client journey from referral to exit point. Diagrams may be embedded in the document if that is helpful to illustrate the activity being proposed.</p> <p>Support people for to navigate internal and external barriers to work (3.2 of Framework)</p> <p>Delivery of a strengths-based approach and ensure staff have time to deliver reflective practice.</p> <p>Tools offered to help people see their own progression and journey and support reflective practice for staff.</p> <p>Commitment to partnership working: outline key relationships, principles working together and rationale for the partnership</p> <p>Commitment to working with the OFP Infrastructure (Section 5.0 of the Framework)</p> <p>Applicants must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which specialist community they wish to support including evidence of need and how the people they are supporting have been and will be involved in the development/design of the proposed activity • How they will create and deliver early engagement opportunities • How they will support people to engage with mainstream employability services • Their ability to work with existing employer engagement teams to improve uptake of opportunities for the people they support • How they will provide <i>specialist</i> in-work support and will work with mainstream in-work support to avoid duplication of effort • Proposals for specialist awareness sessions for frontline staff, employers and employer engagement staff. 	<p>50%</p>
<p>Programme Delivery, Performance and Previous Experience</p> <p>Outline their internal systems for governance, review and continuous improvement to ensure activity can achieve the performance management expectations outlined at Section 6.0 of the Framework</p>	<p>15%</p>

<p>Evidence of how the programme will monitor and report on the OFP's Principles for Service Delivery (Section 3.3 of Framework). This should include how training, supervision, internal monitoring and evaluation processes will ensure these standards are maintained.</p> <p>Expectations in terms of number of people worked with, as well as anticipated outcomes and outputs.</p> <p>Evidence of previous experience that supports the organisation or partnership's ability to achieve these outputs and outcomes.</p> <p>Reporting processes for evaluation and activity updates.</p> <p>How they will monitor and evidence activity in line with the OFP Principles of Service Delivery.</p>	
<p>Programme Management, Partnership Structure and Project Staff</p> <p>Provide an outline of their Partnership structure, governance arrangements, project management, including ongoing engagement/co-production with people who are using the services, infrastructure, delivery roles and reporting lines.</p> <p>Details of delivery partner roles, and relationship.</p> <p>Rationale for and outline of keyworker caseloads.</p> <p>Number and experience/skills of personnel involved in delivery and the role each person will perform in delivering this contract: Contingency plans to cover holidays, absence, sickness etc</p> <p>Summaries of the relevant qualifications, competencies and experience for staff intended to be involved in delivering this contract.</p>	15%
<p>Delivery Location(s)</p> <p>Which localities in Fife covered, and evidence of why this location has been selected for their delivery.</p> <p>Details of venues in which services will be located and their suitability in terms of privacy and accessibility.</p> <p>Which online platforms and tools will be used to support digital delivery and why?</p> <p>What skills and resources will be in place to ensure digital accessibility for the people being supported.</p>	5%

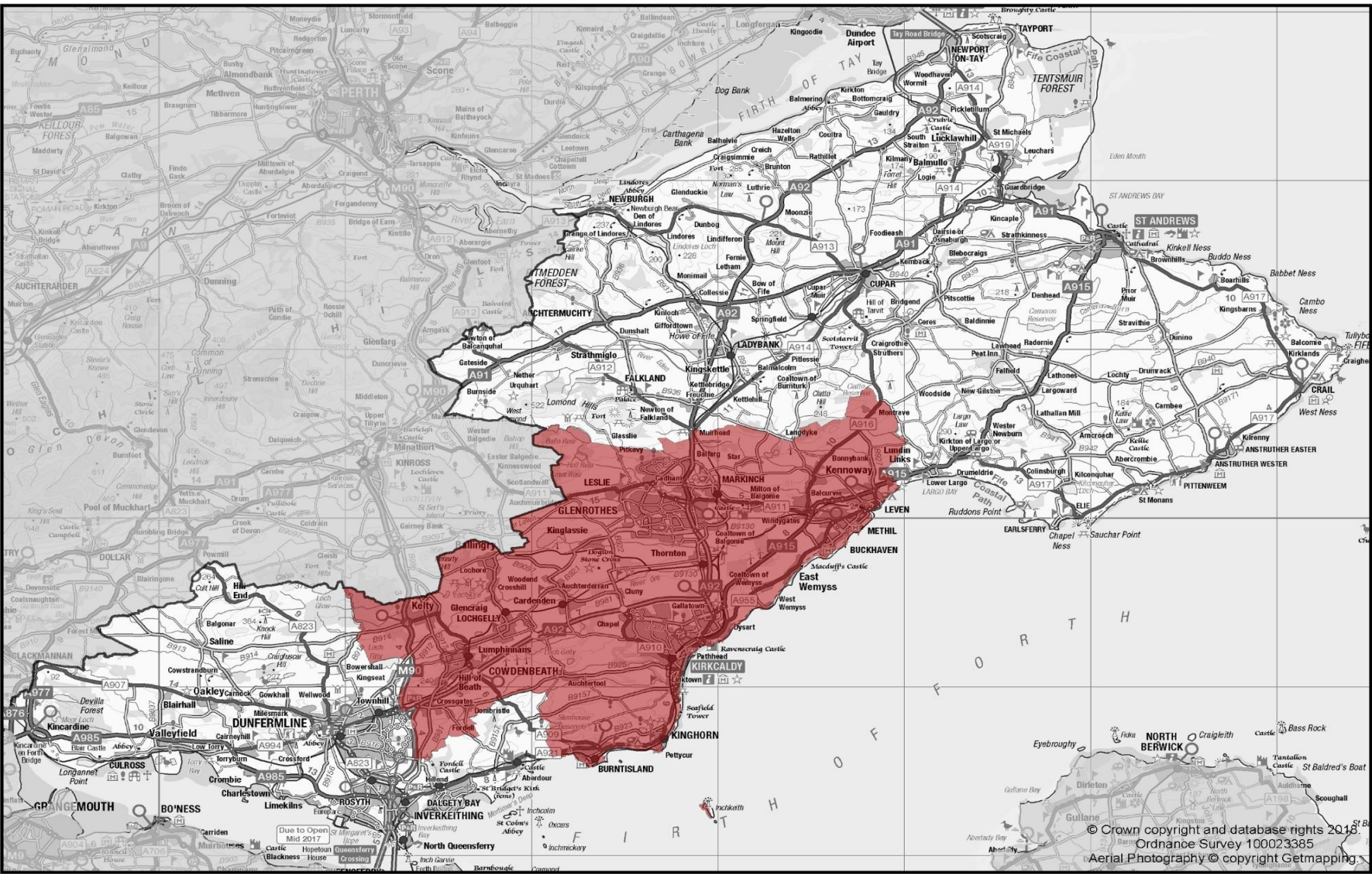
What out of hours provision will be made available and in what format.	
Rationale for the approach being taken	
Project Costs Anticipated financial costs for staff and related costs must be fully detailed Additional match or in-kind contributions can also be included. Details of any other public funds being received by applicants whether or not relevant to the project proposal	10%
Added Value How the proposal supports the Plan 4 Fife and other relevant local/National strategies (Section 2.5). How the proposal supports the Community Wealth Building agenda (Section 2.6). Established relationships with existing Community organisations and demonstrable links to the communities they are targeting. Any additional elements which are important for the panel to consider in terms of resource, relationships and values.	5%

Annex A





Annex B – Map of Mid-Fife



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Ordnance Survey 100023385
Aerial Photography © copyright Getmapping

ANNEX C: Summary of OFP's Core Delivery:

Core OFP Delivery is built around person centred activity that operates using a 5-stage keyworker/support worker model, which aligns with the OFP's Employability Pathway (Annex A).

People's life circumstances mean that they may need support at multiple stages simultaneously and it will be the keyworkers' role to navigate the necessary supports as appropriate to the individual's journey. Keyworkers are expected to take a **strengths-based approach** to supporting individuals, with capacity for **reflective practice** to ensure sufficient support and momentum is in place on their journey, as outlined within the OFP Principles.

Core Services provide access to a *menu* of skills development as appropriate to individuals' needs. Elements of the menu of support are listed here. This is not an exhaustive list and not all elements are expected to be delivered by all providers.

Core provision must include	Core provision may also include the following	These elements will be available through NOLB infrastructure or existing provision
Digital Skills, tools and access to the internet	Volunteering	Understanding stigma and discrimination
Accurate and easy to understand financial advice and support	Work placements (of personal relevance)	Talking to your employer and knowing your employment rights
Employability skills: cv, applications, personal presentation, interview and career management skills	Peer mentoring	Basic literacy and numeracy support
Growing Community Connections	Funding for transition to work costs	Use of Employer Recruitment Incentives
Emotional Awareness (resilience)	Travel training and financial support	
Support for mild mental health problems, Mental Health First Aid	Engagement with & feedback from employers	
Trauma & Alcohol use Aware	In-work support	
Strengths-based approaches and reflective practice	Industry specific training	
Understanding and awareness of the impact of stigma and discrimination		

Positive outcomes for Core Provision primarily focus on the outcomes relevant to the individuals being supported. From an employability perspective they will include moving into: training, education, volunteering which supports transition to employment; paid employment and staying in/progressing in work. Job outcomes are a core element and expectation of any employment service. No One Left Behind job outcomes are expected to be sustainable and in 'good and healthy'³⁷ working environments.

³⁷ [Marmot Principles of Good Work](#) and [Scottish Government Fair Work First Principles](#)

Core Provision is split according to Fife's seven localities - with keyworker provision for young people (24 and under) and for adults (25+) in each area:

- **Core Provision for adults (25+)** focuses on key transition points such as supporting women returners, over 55s, and those affected by change in life circumstances. This would be reviewed to ensure provision reacts to the changing needs of the economy, as highlighted to the response to the Covid-19 Pandemic between 2020-2022.
- **Core Provision for young people (24 and under)** focuses on key transition points including early engagement, actively working with schools, those who have left school to a negative or unknown destination, and/or those who have fallen out of/not sustained their first positive transition. Provision can target support at young people in key age brackets such as 16-18 or 19-24 year olds, should that be relevant for the delivery activity.

Core provision is allocated by locality, providers must offer flexibility and willingness to work with individuals out with that area where necessary. For example, this may be due to the individual moving accommodation mid-engagement with a service or due to a stated preference to access a service out with their local area.

ANNEX D: UK Shared Prosperity Fund Outputs and Outcomes – by Intervention:

UKSPF Intervention	Outputs by 31/03/25	Outcomes by 31/03/25
S31: Employment support for economically inactive people	920 socially excluded people accessing support	276 in employment or self-employment
S33: Enrichment & volunteering activities	315 volunteering opportunities supported	105 in employment or self-employment
S36: Local areas to fund local skills needs	307 people supported to gain a qualification	92 in employment or self-employment
S37: Green skills courses	240 people supported to access basic skills	96 in employment or self-employment
S39: Education & skills targeting the vulnerable leaving school	425 people receiving support to sustain employment	125 in employment or self-employment
Total People & Skills Interventions	2,207 people supported	694 in work