



**Falkirk's Third Sector Employability Forum**  
**Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023**  
**10am – 11am**  
**Zoom Meeting**

**Present:**

Lynsey Hansford (LH) (Chairperson)  
Laura Jamieson (LJ) (Minute Taker)  
Jade Harley (JH)

CVS Falkirk and District  
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Angela Hendry (AH)  
Duncan Hearsum (DH)  
Gavin Smith (GS)

One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS)  
Dial-a-Journey  
Salvation Army Falkirk's New Future Employability  
and Training Centre  
Cyrenians  
Dial-a-Journey  
Barnardos

Jessica Gillespie (JG)  
Martin Kenny (MK)  
Norman Philip (NP)

**Apologies:**

Lynda Ross-Hale

Cyrenians

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

LH introduced herself, welcomed forum members present and advised the meeting was recorded via Zoom. Introductions were made via the Zoom chat function.

**2. Review of Previous Minutes and Action Tracker**

The previous minutes will be reviewed and approved at the July meeting.

**3. Working Families Index Report**

LH recently attended a webinar launching the new [Working Families 2023 Index Report](#), which spotlights lower income families (defined by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) as a total household income of under £50,000). As there is a lot of detail in the report, today's meeting focused on highlighting the main points, and the report's recommendations in these areas:

- **Childcare:** LH noted that the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) recognises childcare and travel as 2 of the biggest impacts on households, and members discussed how the report highlights the disadvantages faced by single working parents, and that the support available around childcare often doesn't reach them.
- **Flexible Working:** the report shows that three quarters of working parents surveyed do work flexibly, and that of those surveyed, two thirds would like to work flexibly. Low income working parents are twice as likely to have their request for flexible working denied.

Members discussed that typical work for single mothers often included shiftwork like retail and hospitality, where it can be difficult to request any flexibility or time off, and that even parents who only are contracted to only work term-time faced difficulties through the lack of annual leave as a



result. It was also noted that caring responsibilities present many variables and need for leave, along with stress and other impacts on mental health.

Towards the end of the discussion, LH noted that parents and families are tying into the local employability picture more and more, which is why today's meeting focuses on them.

#### **4. Parental Employment Support Funding (PESF)**

There will be an update on this at the next LEP meeting on whether or not the [PESF](#) goes to tender this round.

#### **5. Falkirk Third Sector Employability Summit**

Local third sector employers and those currently offering (or who would like to offer) placements, internships or other employability opportunities in their community are invited to book their FREE place at the **Falkirk Third Sector Employability Summit**, 9:30am – 12:30pm on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at Forth Valley Sensory Centre, Redbrae Road, Camelon, FK1 4DD.

Those who, formally or informally, support and enable people in their community to increase and develop their skills, knowledge and opportunities for work are also welcome, as are those who would like to explore and demonstrate how their group or organisation can contribute, or already contributes, to good employability outcomes for people in Falkirk District.

The morning's discussions will be followed by a light lunch and an opportunity for networking with colleagues; while the event is free to attend, booking is essential.

This event is for third sector groups and organisations, including charities, social enterprises, community and voluntary groups, who contribute to (or are interested in contributing to) Falkirk District's employability aims and outcomes.

Please note, you do **not** need to be an established employer or employability provider to come along to this event.

For further information, including how to book your FREE place, please visit the [CVS Falkirk](#) website.

#### **6. Member Experiences and Highlighting Good Practice**

Members discussed good practice they had experienced or seen implemented, in particular what's worked well with parents in their organisation, and highlighting how supportive third sector employers are. Key points are noted below:

- flexibility, and seeing people not just as service users or staff, but as individual people, and treating employees as importantly as they do clients, and vice versa
- holistic sessions, leading to resilience, self-care, and employee retention
- flexibility when holding training for qualifications – holding at night, or during school hours, in order to support parents
- patience, and giving multiple chances in order to be respectful of their other responsibilities, and how quickly things can change



- a policy of working from anywhere (where “working from home” may not mean their home), and increasing carers leave allowance, while recognising not all caring responsibilities relate to children, and that carers do not use annual leave when these responsibilities come up during their working hours
- Wellbeing Action Plans for all staff, and flexible working (which includes longer hours, but a shorter week)
- informal settings (such as gardens and café areas) to help engage and support people working through mental health issues, with space to ease them into the formal environment of the employment journey

LH noted that all forums supported by CVS Falkirk begin at 10am, in order to allow the recruitment of a Third Sector Engagement Officer to be accessible to parents with school drop-off.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July,  
10am – 11am, via Zoom**

DRAFT