

**Falkirk's Third Sector Employability Forum**  
**Wednesday 18 June 2025**  
**10am – 11am**  
**MS Teams Meeting**

**Present:**

Lynsey Hansford (Chairperson)	CVS Falkirk & District
Laura Jamieson (Minute Taker)	CVS Falkirk & District
Angus Maclean	Westfield Park Community Centre
Duncan Hearsum	Dial-a-Journey
Hazel Taylor	Cyrenians
Jenifer Keenan	Enable Works
Lynda Mcleod	Into Work
Navneet Sandhu	Link
Maria Throp	1 <sup>st</sup> Step Development Ventures

**Guest Speakers:**

Hazel Meechan	NHS Forth Valley
Noelle Mackay	NHS Forth Valley

**Apologies:**

Derek Allison	Falkirk Foundation
---------------	--------------------

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Lynsey introduced herself, welcomed forum members present and advised the meeting was recorded via MS Teams.

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

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3. NHS Forth Valley Development of their Employability Activities and Partnerships**

Lynsey welcomed Hazel and Noelle to speak about NHS Forth Valley's employability activities, and how the third sector can contribute to these.

Noelle provided a snapshot of the current work, designed as an action-based approach, with 2 active strands:

- Working with the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) and Falkirk Council's [Employment and Training Unit \(ETU\)](#) to support parents through a free employability programme. The programme runs over a number of weeks, and aims to help unemployed or underemployed parents build their skills and experience (with a focus on supporting health, wellbeing and personal development) to enter the workforce. (Travel and childcare costs can often be supported.)
- Working with local schools and Forth Valley College to highlight career options within NHS Forth Valley to students, which offers supportive work placements for young people aged 16 years old and over.



- Noelle noted they are keen to expand this work experience opportunity beyond young people, and outside of medicine.
- As part of this strand, this week NHS Forth Valley will be attending an event for all Falkirk District secondary school pupils (over 300 pupils); they are hoping to expand this next year to Primary 7.

Members discussed the similarities to Project Search and other buddying approaches, along with how those interested could apply. Noelle advised that, as these placements are not currently paid, participants should have some kind of financial stability, so applications should come through the mentioned partners for the time being.

#### **4. The Role of Employability in the Falkirk Community Wealth and Health Building Partnership**

Hazel spoke about the Falkirk Community Wealth and Health Building (CWHB) Partnership for those unfamiliar – Derek Allison is co-chair of the partnership, and Hazel described the third sector as “fundamental” to its work and plans.

The partnership held a session last November to look its priorities, and identify what and where it could do best as a group; it then selected its main 2 priorities as employability and procurement.

- **Employability:** Hazel noted that “quick wins” are important, to give people in the District sight of what the partnership is trying to achieve, including across the longer term.
- **Procurement:** the aim is to create a Community Benefit Portal, which has so far proved difficult due to the location of many providers; however, NHS Lothian and NHS Tayside have both had success in creating their portals, and the partnership is looking at how this can be mirrored and improved to suit Falkirk District.
  - Lynsey, who sits on the partnership with Derek and Hazel, highlighted that the partnership is keen for the portal be complimentary to what already exists and the systems in place across Falkirk District, and that it offers the best value to the third sector and local communities, while unlocking investments.

Lynsey also advised members should visit the [Centre for Local Economic Strategies \(CLEs\)](#) website (linked for your convenience) for more in-depth information on Community Wealth Building.

#### **5. Updates from CVS Falkirk & District: New LEP Plan Creation and Development: Opportunities to Contribute**

Lynsey shared the current drafted impact paper for the LEP; a final draft is not ready to be shared yet with the LEP, so members still have time to contribute if they feel their organisation has a strong example of the unique role and impact of the third sector in employability locally. Lynsey is keen for the forum to be more proactive in this way in order to highlight the sector’s impact, but in ways which meet the members’ needs.

Members discussed the draft and their thoughts; Laura suggested that multimedia evidence where possible would help bring a stronger picture, which members agreed with. Maria then



suggested opportunities for shadowing amongst members would be useful, especially for those newer to employability.

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 5 November 2025,  
2pm – 4pm  
Arnotdale House, Dollar Park, Camelon Road, Falkirk, FK1 5SQ**