

**FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND ANNUAL REPORTING STATEMENT
2011/13**

Organisation Name	The Action Group
Project	Real Jobs Falkirk
Agreement Dates	1 April 11 to 31 March 13
Name of Lead Officer	Linda Scott

A OVERALL ORGANISATION AIMS

Summary of Key Aims & Objectives

The aims of The Action Group are to ensure that families caring for a person, and individual who have support needs / learning disabilities:

- Encounter no barriers to their chosen lifestyle
- Are able to follow a path of choice; and
- Can enrich their opportunities

The Real Jobs Falkirk project is aimed at young people with a learning disability / other support needs leaving Carrongrange Special Education School and other, mainstream, schools in the Falkirk Council area.

List of Agreed Outcomes

Young people involved in the project will have a positive leaving destination (further education, training or work experience placements)

The project will have a positive impact on the self esteem of the young people participating.

Participants will have increased involvement with the labour market

Family income will increase

2012/13 outputs

No. of young people completing vocational profiles – target 10, achieved 16

No. taking part in work experience or voluntary work – target 20, achieved 31

No. undertaking supported work experience – target 35, achieved 76

No. supported into employment – target 8, achieved 6

No. sustaining employment for 3 months – target 4, achieved 5

No. sustaining employment for 6 months – target 3, achieved 5

No. supported into education or training sustained for 3 months – target 15, achieved 29

No. achieving work-related qualifications – target 10, achieved 11

No. households with raised income – target 10, achieved 9

Why Service/Project is Funded Externally Rather than by the Council

This project focuses on young people with a range of disabilities who are often hard to access and who find it difficult to use mainstream services. Young people with learning disabilities and other support needs attending Carrongrange school often feel excluded by the actions of others and self select not to participate. Project workers are skilled at working with these groups and have established effective partnerships across the council area. The project also benefits from attracting additional funds through fundraising activities and through Lottery funding.

B ACTUAL PERFORMANCE vs. OBJECTIVES / AGREED OUTCOMES

Summary of Key Achievements

The project has altered the negative destinations of young people attending Carrongrange school from 46% prior to the project to a figure of zero at the end of the school year 2012.

The project has also enabled a Work Experience placement to young people from various schools in the Falkirk area at the Muiravonside café.

There are 15 young people leaving Carrongrange school in June 2013 who will be supported by this project into a positive, sustained destination. The project will also continue to support 35 young people who have already left Carrongrange school to sustain their positive destination and move towards employment as their desired outcome.

In the last year, two service users have graduated onto mainstream college courses, which should help secure future jobs and three service users in employment have now reached the 12 month plus sustainability milestone. The project currently provides support to young people for two years after leaving school. It has recently been successful in attracting Big Lottery funding, which will now allow it to provide additional support beyond this period to those young people who are at college and in other positive destinations but not yet in employment in order to help move them further towards that goal. The project has led to a significant increase in household income through welfare benefit referrals.

Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation

College funding issues can impact on available courses and course duration times are subject to alteration.

Finding permanent job placements are hard but project continue to work with partners in the council and local business environment to try to secure this for their clients. This includes working with ASSET (a supported employment project for people with a learning disability developed by Falkirk Council in partnership with ENABLE Scotland), local colleges and Falkirk Council services (ETU and CLD).

The project is restrained in meeting demand because of resources but tries to combat this through external funding. It was successful in attracting lottery funding, referred to above, and is also applying for additional funding from other charitable sources.

How has Organisation Contributed to Council/ Service Priorities

The project has contributed to the Council's Poverty Strategy outcomes in:

- Employment: by increasing the number of young people participating in post 16 learning; and by increasing the proportion of school leavers entering a positive destination.
- Financial Security: By maximising the income of households that rely on benefits.

25% of the projects service users reside in SIMD areas.

List any Areas where there has been Shortfall in Performance

No. supported into employment – target 8, achieved 6

No. households with raised income – target 10, achieved 9

We understand the difficulties in achieving these outcomes in the current economic climate. The project continues to develop strong working relationships with Forth Valley and Cumbernauld colleges and hopes that the experience and training received by the young people that they have successfully placed in work experience will prove to employers that they are able to sustain full time jobs. The project has also geared up its marketing efforts and is keen to work with Falkirk Council to provide support for social enterprises as an option for providing jobs for disadvantaged groups.

How often are Review Meetings held with Lead Officer

Six monthly.

C FINANCIAL / RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Total Support Provided (Financial & In- Kind Contributions)

£90,000 per annum.

Last Period of Submitted Audited Accounts

1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 – no qualifications/issues. Audited accounts for 2012/13 are not yet available. The project submits quarterly monitoring reports and no financial issues have been identified for the current financial year.

Future Risks (Financial, Operational or Structural) Faced by Organisation

Lack of funding from the Council or fundraising activities would risk the ongoing delivery of the project.

Overall Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High)

Low

D CONCLUSIONS

Summary/ Opinion of Organisations Overall Progress During Year

The project is effective in carrying out the type of work that bridges the transition from school to employment for young people with learning disabilities and other support needs, including those leaving care, from an ethnic minority background / with a background of offending behaviour.

To date the project has successfully met targets with the exception of two that were narrowly missed, detailed above, and has the support of parents, teachers and employers.

E COMPLETED BY

Name

Linda Scott

Designation

Policy Officer

Date

15.8.13