

MORAY COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Moray Lifelong Learning Forum

Moray Lifelong Learning Strategy 2010

1 Background

A Moray Lifelong Learning Forum was formed in 2006. This initiative was taken under the auspices of the Moray Community Planning Partnership to provide an opportunity for those member organisations which provide learning opportunities to the Moray community to meet and explore possibilities for closer working.

The Forum met on a number of occasions in 2006 and 2007 but went into abeyance pending clarity in relation to its contribution to the delivery of the emerging Single Outcome Agreement for Moray. Resulting from the Moray Community Planning Partnership's 2009/10 Single Outcome Agreement, it was agreed that the Forum should be re-established as part of the local planning arrangements relating to the Smarter Theme Group.

At the present time, the core members of the Forum are senior managers from the Moray Council and Moray College, as it is these two organisations which carry the most significant local responsibilities for delivery of the lifelong learning `agenda`. However, membership will be kept under review to ensure that the membership reflects the strategic imperatives outlined below.

In the period since 2006, the Council and College have forged an increasingly purposeful and successful relationship in furtherance of a shared view that the two organisations can achieve much more together than can be achieved separately in meeting the learning needs of the Moray Community.

2 Strategic Context

This Strategy is very much based on the Scottish Government's "Skills for Scotland; A Lifelong Skills Strategy" (2007).

In her Ministerial Foreword to the Strategy, Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, stated that:

Scotland's greatest asset is our people. We want to build a self-confident, outward looking Scotland – an ambitious nation with opportunities for everyone to contribute and benefit and make a positive contribution to Scotland's prosperity. Investing in our people's skills, ensuring that skills contribute as much as possible to sustainable economic growth, is central to unlocking our potential.

A smarter Scotland is at the heart of everything we want to achieve for this country. We can only build a Scotland that is wealthier and fairer, one that is

healthier, safer, stronger and greener, if people are equipped with the skills, expertise and knowledge for success.

These aspirations are manifested in one of the Scottish Government's "National Outcomes":

We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.

Derived from this, the Moray Community Planning Partnership has developed the following "Local Outcome" which is to be found in the Moray Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10:

The community will develop and improve their learning and qualifications.

3 Vision for Moray

The Moray Lifelong Learning Forum has as its vision:

To provide the lifelong learning opportunities for our community that are required if Moray is to fulfil its economic, social and cultural potential.

In the new Scottish-wide planning context, the realisation of this vision has to be related to the achievement of the specific goals that are set out in the Scottish Government's own "Lifelong Skills Strategy":

- *(Lifelong Learning) Is about personal fulfilment and enterprise; employability and adaptability; active citizenship and social inclusion.*
- *Our vision is for a smarter Scotland with a globally competitive economy based on high value jobs with progressive and innovative business leadership:*
- *Where people can work in teams, are creative and enterprising and hungry to continually learn new skills. They expect to realise their aspirations and are equipped to achieve their potential in constantly changing world. People are motivated to contribute to Scotland's future and are confident that they can do so.*
- *Where people are entrepreneurial and innovative; small businesses are encouraged to grow and there is strong, coherent support for businesses of all sizes. Migrant workers and overseas students play a valuable role in an expanded workforce and economy.*
- *Where employers improve productivity by investing in their own staff and are able to access a skilled workforce that is increasingly literate and numerate with good ICT and problem solving skills.*

- *Where learning and training providers work as one system and thanks to wider use of technology and e-learning, barriers of geography and rurality have been reduced.*

4 **Scope of Strategy**

Although the Moray Lifelong Learning Strategy is principally concerned with post-compulsory education, it does concern itself with school-college partnerships and with aspects of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

In line with the skills emphasis to be found in the Scottish Government's overarching strategy referred to above, the following are the skills that Forum members have a particular interest in fostering in Moray:

- **personal and learning skills** that enable individuals to become effective lifelong learners;
- **literacy and numeracy**;
- the five **core skills** of communication, numeracy, problem solving, information technology and working with others;
- **employability skills** that prepare individuals for employment rather than for a specific occupation;
- **essential skills** that include all of the above; and
- **vocational skills** that are specific to a particular occupation or sector.

In this regard, it is acknowledged at Government level that:

There is a significant number of adults in Scotland who do not meet employers' essential skills criteria and this is a key employability focus for colleges and the Community Learning and Development sector, in particular.

5 **General Aims of Strategy**

The national strategy sets out various challenges in relation to lifelong learning provision in Scotland that are no less challenges to be faced in the Moray context. Specifically, we must aim for local provision that is:

- relevant
- responsive
- coherent
- high quality.

In addressing these, members of the Moray Lifelong Learning Forum are committed to:

- Placing local citizens at the centre of things and not our own institutions.
- Developing a coherent lifelong learning framework for Moray that seeks to bring about greater levels of access, inclusion and attainment.

- Bringing about a change in attitudes towards learning that will lead to more members of our community wishing to participate in learning activities.
- Pursuing opportunities for more complementarity in what is provided, thus avoiding unnecessary or unplanned competition. We see ourselves as being part of a *continuum of learning* and each member being part of *one system*.
- Identifying, sharing and encouraging good practice in learning amongst the agencies involved in lifelong learning.
- Seeking to attract new resources in furtherance of the Forum's activities.

6 Strategic Themes

The Forum will pursue this strategy on the basis of a number of important themes:

i Systematic and Effective Engagement with Employers

Given the prominence given by the Scottish Government to the economic benefits to be gained by investing in learning, it is essential that the learning opportunities provided in Moray are informed by a dialogue with local employers to ensure that their perceived needs are being met. This requires mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that our engagement with them is systematic and sustained.

ii Providing Flexible and Accessible Learning Opportunities

Moray's rurality presents challenges to many members of our community, as do other factors that can militate against participation in education. The Forum is determined to bring about local arrangements whereby everyone in Moray, regardless of their background or personal circumstances, has reasonable opportunities for their personal development via learning.

iii Providing Accessible and Clear Information, Advice and Guidance

Members of our community need a system of information, advice and guidance that is accessible, comprehensive and easily understood.

iv Ensuring Opportunities for Progression

We want the people of Moray to be lifelong learners with the confidence and choice to move easily into and through the learning opportunities available to them to achieve their goals, whether they are personal, social or economic. For this to happen we need a flexible and, integrated portfolio of opportunities

locally, offered at all levels of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

7 Linkage to Other Strategies

The Lifelong Skills Strategy is considered by the Scottish Government to cohere with other strategic developments and it is our intention to give this local expression wherever necessary. It is also the Forum's intention to avoid cutting across other initiatives that are already underway in Moray and that we strive for maximum coherence and minimal overlap at all times.

National Strategies

- Skills for Scotland: a Lifelong Skills Strategy
- Curriculum for Excellence

Local – Key Moray Community Planning Partnership Documents

- Community Learning and Development Strategy
- Moray Community Learning and Development Action Plans
- Moray Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan
- Moray Social Inclusion Strategy
- Moray ESOL Strategy
- Moray More Choices More Chances Strategy

Local – Key Lifelong Learning Forum Member Documents

- Moray College Strategic Plan 2009-12

8 Strategic Assessment of Starting Point/Baseline Evidence

In order to guarantee the requisite level of coherence with the broader community planning arrangements within Moray, it is essential that the Lifelong Learning Forum derives its targets on the basis of the Strategic Assessment that relates to the work of the Smarter Theme Group.

At this time, the 2007/08 Strategic Assessment is largely bereft of any evidence base that relates to post-school education and training. With this in mind, a short-term priority for members is to ensure that they bring forward evidence that can be captured in the revised Strategic Assessment that will emerge during 2010. In stating this, it is nevertheless recognised that the partners are already doing a great deal in furtherance of lifelong learning in Moray from an evidence base that has not yet found its way into the Strategic Assessment.

9 Performance Targets

Logically and necessarily, these need to be arrived at on the basis of an agreed understanding of the evidenced starting point in the specific areas where Forum members decide to put their individual and collective efforts and resources to bring about improvements. It is once again recognised that certain activities that will now fall under the Forum's control are already being pursued on the basis of agreed targets.