
Enhanced Employability Pipeline Strategic Intervention – European Social Fund

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Environment, Development & Infrastructure (EDI) Committee with an overview of the proposed Enhanced Employability Pipeline strategic intervention application to the European Social Fund (ESF), 2014 to 2020. Argyll and Bute Council has an indicative allocation of £3.66 million of ESF monies from the Scottish Government to develop and deliver a managed Enhanced Employability Pipeline. In order to access this money, the Council will be required to identify £3.66 million of match funding (from internal and external sources) giving a total budget of £7.32 million for the pipeline delivery.
- 1.2 The pipeline is quite distinct from the Department for Work and Pension's business model for initiatives such as the Work Programme. As the pipeline is a new approach for Argyll and Bute and to minimise the financial risk to Argyll and Bute Council, the Scottish Government has agreed that we can deliver over the first three stages of the pipeline only for an initial two-year period i.e. to the end of March 2018 when there will be a mid-term review of the European Social Fund pipeline activity. Thus we are anticipating a total budget (including match funding of just under £1.5 million) of just under £3.0 million.
- 1.3 This match funding (including a 40% flat rate¹) of £1,499,699 is broken down as follows and detailed in **Table A** in the paper:
- **£142,884** of staffing costs required from Economic Development & Strategic Transportation (EDST) Service. At present £61,602 of the General Reserves money secured to support the contractual obligations of the Employability Team over the financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18 can be considered as matched funding for the pipeline. However, £81,282 of match funding is still required. £35,000 of this can come from discretionary EDST funding that would otherwise have been spent on other activities. The remaining £46,282 (the total required for two years i.e. £23,141 per annum) may be able to be paid from the General Reserves funding approved by the Council, given that Employability Team redundancy costs are expected to be lower than anticipated. However, this is not certain at this time;
 - **£78,222** will be match funded by Adult Learning and Literacy enabling that service to lever in an additional £78,222 to support ESF pipeline activity and delivery; and
 - **£1,278,593** of match will come from partners who can bring their match as part of a competitive procurement process to delivery specific pipeline activity.

¹ Flat rate: costs incurred by Argyll and Bute Council for in-house delivery and project management only and comprises actual salary costs plus 40% to cover additional costs such as travel.

In short, if £46,282 of additional match funding can be secured by Argyll and Bute Council this would result in a total investment of just under £3 million for Argyll and Bute by the end of March 2018.

- 1.4 Subject to the outcome of the mid-term review and the availability of match funding, there will be an option for Argyll and Bute Council to continue to host the delivery of the pipeline until the end of the financial year 2019/20.
- 1.5 Given the current and future changes in the national employability policy landscape, such as a significant 42% reduction in the Employability Fund places (pre-employment training where the delivery is managed by Skills Development Scotland) across Argyll and Bute for 2016/17, coupled with uncertainty over the Welfare to Work framework to be delivered in Scotland from 1st April 2018 (after the initial one year transition period from 1st April 2017 as announced by the Scottish Government on 22nd March 2016) activity that can be funded through Europe can significantly enhance the offer to vulnerable residents.
- 1.6 This strategic intervention will deliver support to participants deemed to be furthest removed from the labour market, with multiple barriers to employment. It is intended to offer a wide array of support mechanisms (internal and external to Argyll and Bute Council) throughout a participant's journey to sustainable employment by providing a range of measures supporting individuals through the delivery stages one to three of the pipeline over an initial two-year period..
- 1.7 It is proposed that the Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline will be managed by Argyll and Bute Council. However, if members decide not to host this pipeline activity the indicative allocation for the area of £3.66 million (we propose to utilise £1.5 million of this funding up to end of March 2018) will go back into a central pot and be redistributed to local authorities that intend to participate.
- 1.8 This report will provide a detailed review of pipeline activity until the end of 2017/18 with regard to:
 - beneficiary eligibility and anticipated number of participants;
 - pipeline stages (e.g. stages one to three at present);
 - drawdown of ESF grant funding from the Scottish Government;
 - staffing requirements;
 - match funding; and
 - proposed targets.
- 1.9 The recommendations for EDI Committee members are as follows:
 - To note the content of this report.
 - To review the detailed approach for the Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline and provide comments as appropriate.
 - To provide a decision on the two options presented in section 6 of this paper. If the second option is preferred, in order to lever in an initial total investment of circa £3 million to the area, a non-legally binding stage one application (Strategic Intervention) will be submitted to the Scottish Government. A second stage application (Operation Application) will need to provide the detail on pipeline delivery and associated match funding. A report will be submitted Policy and Resources Committee in May 2016 seeking approval of the match funding required from Argyll and Bute Council and the submission of the Operation Application (which will have legal implications) by end of June 2016 deadline.

Enhanced Employability Pipeline Strategic Intervention – European Social Fund

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee with an overview of the proposed Enhanced Employability Pipeline strategic intervention application to the European Social Fund (ESF), 2014 to 2020.
- 2.2 Argyll and Bute Council has an indicative allocation of £3.66 million of ESF monies from the Scottish Government, when matched at 50%, represents a total budget of £7.32 million for pipeline delivery. However, at this time, the Council has identified £1.5 million of match funding giving a total budget of £3.0 million.
- 2.3 The pipeline is distinct from the Department for Work and Pension's business model for initiatives such as the Work Programme. Some of the money secured to support the contractual obligations of the Employability Team over the financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18 can be considered as matched funding for the pipeline thereby leveraging additional external funding.
- 2.4 Given the current and future changes in the national employability policy landscape, such as a significant 42% reduction in the Employability Fund places (pre-employment training where the delivery is managed by Skills Development Scotland) across Argyll and Bute for 2016/17, coupled with uncertainty over the Welfare to Work framework to be delivered in Scotland from 1st April 2018 (after the initial one year transition period from 1st April 2017 as announced by the Scottish Government on 22nd March 2016) activity that can be funded through Europe can significantly enhance the offer to vulnerable residents.
- 2.5 This report will provide a detailed review of pipeline activity until the end of 2017/18 with regard to:
- beneficiary eligibility and anticipated number of participants;
 - pipeline stages (e.g. stages one to three at present);
 - drawdown of ESF grant funding from the Scottish Government;
 - staffing requirements;
 - match funding; and
 - proposed targets.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendations for EDI Committee members are as follows:
- To note the content of this report.
 - To review the detailed approach for the Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline and provide comments as appropriate.
 - To provide a decision on the two options presented in section 6 of this paper. If the second option is preferred, in order to lever in an initial total investment of circa £3 million to the area, a non-legally binding stage one application (Strategic Intervention) will be submitted to the Scottish Government. A second stage application (Operation Application) will need to provide the detail on pipeline delivery and associated match funding. A report will be submitted Policy and Resources Committee in May 2016 seeking approval of the match funding required from Argyll and Bute Council and the submission of the Operation Application (which will have legal implications) by end of June 2016 deadline.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Scottish Government is responsible for the overall delivery of the 2014-2020 ESF programme within Scotland. As part of this, each Local Authority has been allocated an indicative sum of ESF funding to develop and deliver an Enhanced Employability Pipeline.
- 4.2 The pipeline must target vulnerable individuals across Argyll and Bute with multiple barriers including long term unemployed, lone parents, people with disabilities, young people, older people and ethnic minority groups.
- 4.3 This pipeline can also address those in receipt of in-work benefits by supporting those with low skills and on low wages to upskill, to enable them to improve their career prospects.
- 4.4 Argyll and Bute Council has an indicative allocation of £3.66 million of ESF monies from the Scottish Government, when matched at 50%, represents a total budget of £7.32 million for pipeline delivery. However, at this time, the Council has identified £1.5 million of match funding giving a total budget of £3.0 million for delivery of the first three stages of the pipeline only for an initial two-year period.
- 4.5 As the pipeline is a new approach for Argyll and Bute and to minimise the financial risk to Argyll and Bute Council, the Scottish Government has agreed that we can deliver pipeline stages one to three for an initial two years i.e. to the end of March 2018 when there will be a mid-term review of the ESF pipeline activity. This equates to a total budget of just under £3.0 million. Subject to the outcome of the mid-term review and the availability of further match funding, there will be an option for Argyll and Bute Council to continue to host the delivery of the pipeline until the end of the financial year 2019/20.
- 4.6 In order to access this money for two years in the first instance, the Council will be required to identify circa £1.5 million of match funding (from internal and external sources, see **Table A**) giving a total budget of just under £3.0 million for pipeline delivery. It is proposed that some of the money secured to support the contractual obligations of the Employability Team over the financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18 will be used as matched funding for the pipeline.

5.0 DETAILS

Eligibility

- 5.1 Eligibility requirements have been formulated by the Scottish Government based on the European Directorate's interpretation of the relevant European regulations. Participants have to be able to demonstrate that they have multiple employability barriers as detailed in ESF beneficiary guidance: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0048/00487276.pdf>.
- 5.2 The anticipated number of participants on the ESF pipeline (where a participant may access more than one intervention within the first three stages of the pipeline thus optimising the impact of that support) until the end of 2017/18 is just under 540 based on detailed analysis of JobCentre Plus claimants, economic inactivity levels, recipients of other benefits, evidence on customer volumes from other local authorities who have previously delivered pipeline activity and the Scottish Government's anticipated cost per participant ranging between £2,000 and £6,000; depending on the intensity of support required under each particular stage of the pipeline and individual needs. This is detailed in **Table B** below.

Pipeline Stages

- 5.3 The pipeline stages have been defined by the Scottish Government:

- Stage 1: Referral Engagement Activity;
- Stage 2: Barrier Removal;
- Stage 3: Vocational Activity;
- Stage 4: Employers Support, Engagement and Job Matching; and
- Stage 5: In-work Support/Aftercare and Skills Development.

As detailed above, this strategic intervention will focus on stages one to three. This is outlined in more detail by anticipated participants in **Table B** below.

- 5.4 Participants will be referred through a variety of organisations. Early discussions have raised the possibility of referrals coming from the following partner organisations: Jobcentre Plus (JCP). Skills Development Scotland (SDS), the National Health Service (NHS) and local third sector organisations.
- 5.5 After joining the pipeline, participants will be assessed and can either progress through the pipeline stages two or three.

Drawdown of ESF Grant from the Scottish Government

- 5.6 ESF funding will be drawn down using a combination of methods:

- Flat rate: this can be claimed for costs incurred by Argyll and Bute Council for in-house delivery and project management only and comprises actual salary costs plus 40% to cover additional costs such as travel. It should be noted that the flat rate payment requires to be paid by the Council irrespective of participants and volumes; and
- Actual costs: these relate to procured costs and grant schemes.

- 5.7 This paper concerns the Council's first stage application (Strategic Intervention). The second stage application (Operation Application) will provide further detail of how delivery will be structured. It should be noted that the first stage application is not legally binding. It is at the 'Operation Application' where we will enter into a formal delivery agreement with the Scottish Government.
- 5.8 From recent discussions with the Scottish Government pipeline contact it is understood that payments will be based on phased activity within pipeline stages. This progressive payment model based on milestones achieved across the pipeline is **not** comparable with the current Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) business models associated with initiatives such as the Work Programme.
- 5.9 Payment points, milestones and outcomes will be uploaded onto the Scottish Government European Union Management Information System (EUMIS). This will trigger payments.
- 5.10 Every approved pipeline is required to collect participant data on a bespoke Management Information System (MIS). The Economic Development Service is currently working with the Council's IT department to develop an appropriate system which could be utilised by other Economic Development projects (e.g. the Hanlon Case Management and Projects System currently used by the majority of other Local Authorities to monitor pipeline activity). Costs that may be incurred by service in order to adopt this system will also need to be clarified, but it is anticipated that this will be covered by the flat rate payment as detailed in paragraph 5.6 above.

Pipeline Staffing Requirements

- 5.11 In order to deliver the pipeline compliantly and to ensure that the monies received are kept within Argyll and Bute and no fines incurred for non-compliance, there is a requirement to create discrete posts. It is recommended that a Pipeline Operations Officer (LGE11, as per internal job evaluation process), two Case Workers and one administrative staff member (yet to be submitted for job evaluation) are required as a minimum. It is important to note that this pipeline activity is distinct from the mandatory DWP welfare to work programmes currently delivered by the Council's Employability Team and the necessary requirement to reduce the current staffing complement. The team required to manage and assist in the compliance operational delivery of pipeline activity must solely work on this pipeline as 50% of the staffing costs will come from ESF.
- 5.12 A description of each of the proposed posts follows:
- **Pipeline Operations Officer:** to manage the Enhanced Employability Pipeline by ensuring efficient and effective delivery in line with the approved Enhanced Employability Pipeline strategic intervention and operations application, taking into account performance triggers, budget and appropriate partnership working. This post will have line management responsibility for the two Case Workers and Administrator. The postholder will establish effective operations management systems, monitoring systems and the bespoke management information system (with input for the Council's IT service).

- **Case Worker:** to provide evidence of eligibility, construct an agreed action plan and refer participants to appropriate pipeline stages and activity. The Case Worker will maintain systems for the storage and dissemination of participant achievement and progression across the pipeline. In addition, they will steer, support and monitor participants through the stages of the pipeline, including employer engagement.
- **Administrator:** to assist the Pipeline Operations Officer and Case Workers by ensuring efficient and effective administration and financial control procedures are provided to support the pipeline's operation and compliance requirements.

In addition to the above, to ensure compliance with European funding requirements a member of the European Team will assist with claims and project monitoring.

- 5.13 For ease of reference a staff organisational summary chart is outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Match Funding

- 5.14 The total allocation of ESF for the Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline is £3.66 million covering the period 2014-2020. However, it has agreed with the Scottish Government that we can deliver over the first three stages of the pipeline only for an initial two-year period i.e. to the end of March 2018 when there will be a mid-term review of the pipeline activity. Match funding (including the required 40% flat rate) up until the end of 2017/18 is outlined in **Table A** below

- 5.15 Match funding (including a 40% flat rate²) of £1,499,699 is broken down as follows and detailed in **Table A** in the paper:

- **£142,884** of staffing costs required from Economic Development & Strategic Transportation (EDST) Service. At present £61,602 of the General Reserves money secured to support the contractual obligations of the Employability Team over the financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18 can be considered as matched funding for the pipeline. However, £81,282 of match funding is still required. £35,000 of this can come from discretionary EDST funding that would otherwise have been spent on other activities. The remaining **£46,282** (the total required for two years i.e. £23,141 per annum) may be able to be paid from the General Reserves funding approved by the Council, given that Employability Team redundancy costs are expected to be lower than anticipated. However, this is not certain at this time;
- **£78,222** will be match funded by Adult Learning and Literacy enabling that service to lever in an additional £78,222 to support ESF pipeline activity and delivery; and
- **£1,278,593** of match will come from partners who can bring their match as part of a competitive procurement process to delivery specific pipeline activity.

- 5.16 In short, if £46,282 of additional match funding can be secured by Argyll and Bute Council this would result in a total investment of just under £3 million for Argyll and Bute by the end of March 2018.

² Flat rate: costs incurred by Argyll and Bute Council for in-house delivery and project management only and comprises actual salary costs plus 40% to cover additional costs such as travel.

- 5.17 For procured activity, clean match funding (not already matched by ESF) has to be identified, such as the national Employability Fund managed by Skills Development Scotland. Therefore delivery agents can use their own match, also detailed in **Table A** (overleaf). Initial expressions of interest have been received by external providers who would wish to be part of the competitive procurement activity for pipeline delivery.
- 5.18 The Scottish Government has advised that for such procurement activity advice should be sought from the Council's own procurement service (there is very limited guidance on this from the Scottish Government). The Council's Procurement Team has already been consulted on this issue and Internal Audit will also be kept informed to ensure the delivery of the necessary compliance requirements and adherence to best practice.

Table A: Indicative Project Delivery Costs and Match Funding Requirements 2016-2018*							
Maximising Delivery of Internal and External Pipeline Activity							
Item £	2016** (2016/17 Q3)	2017 (2016/17 Q4 and 2017/18 Q1-3)	2018 (2017/18 Q4)	Total 2016- 2018	ESF	Council	External
Pipeline Operations Officer 1 x LGE11*** (job evaluation concluded)	20,533	61,607	15,556	97,696	48,848	48,848	
Administrator 1 x LGE7*** (subject to job evaluation)	12,191	36,589	9,239	58,019	29,010	29,010	
Caseworker 2 x LGE8*** (subject to job evaluation)	26,422	82,444	21,186	130,052	65,026	65,026	
Economic Development In-house – Direct Costs (Pipeline Management)	59,146	180,640	45,981	285,767	142,884	142,884	
In-house delivery – Adult Learning and Literacy***	25,866	103,780	26,797	156,443	78,222	78,222	
Total Cost of Procured Activity with Match Funding	212,072	1,905,848	439,265	2,557,185	1,278,593		1,278,593
Total Costs	297,084	2,190,268	512,043	2,999,395	1,499,698	221,105	1,278,593

Notes:

* Activity estimated to cease at the end of March 2018, with an option to continue delivery post 2018 mid-term review (separate paper to go to EDI Committee). It is a European Social Fund requirement that the strategic intervention application has to be presented in calendar years.

** Assumed to commence in October 2016.

*** Includes 40% flat rate plus assumed 1% annual increase. Figures subject to rounding.

Table B: Participants and Activity for Enhanced Employability Pipeline Stages 1, 2 and 3							
Stage 1	Delivery	2016 (2016/17 Q3)		2017 (2016/17 Q4 and 2017/18 Q1-3)		2018 (2017/18 Q4)	
		Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops
Receive referral from JCP, SDS, NHS, Self-referral (Total no. of beneficiaries)	In-house	100		350		88	
Eligibility checks conducted to ensure participants have multiple barriers	In-house	100		350		88	
Eligibility checks to ensure participants are eligible for programme	In-house	100		350		88	
Diagnostic tool to ascertain best route way for participants	In-house	100		350		88	
Activity plan devised	In-house	100		350		88	
Refer to appropriate organisation	In-house	100		350		88	
Further appointment made for review to gain feedback and further referral	In-house	100		350		88	

Table B: Participants and Activity for Enhanced Employability Pipeline Stages 1, 2 and 3 (continued)							
		2016 (2016/17 Q3)		2017 (2016/17 Q4 and 2017/18 Q1-3)		2018 (2017/18 Q4)	
Stage 2	Delivery	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops
Financial Advice and support workshops (10 participants per course)	Procured	10	1	140	14	10	1
Steps to excellence workshop (10 participants per course)	Procured	10	1	140	14	10	1
ESOL (10 participants per course)	Procured		0	20	2		0
Confidence building workshop (8 participants per w/s)	Procured	8	1	120	15	8	1
Intensive mentoring activities, including outdoor	Procured	0		12		0	
Intensive job search, digital training ,work preparation (16-25 years)	Procured	10		40		10	
Intensive job search, digital training ,work preparation (25+ years)	Procured	70		240		70	
Branching Out - condition management (disabilities), outdoor activities, practical courses	Procured	10	1	120	12	10	1
		2016 (2016/17 Q3)		2017 (2016/17 Q4 and 2017/18 Q1-3)		2018 (2017/18 Q4)	
Stage 3	Delivery	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops	Training Participants	Courses/ Workshops
Train volunteers to deliver ESOL (from original intake)	Procured	2		2		1	
Work experience (no payment)	Procured	0		16		4	
Short work based testers (1 or 2 days - no payment)	Procured	3		60		15	
Intensive mentoring support, inc. outdoor activities	Procured	0		12		0	
Intensive job search, digital training ,work preparation (16-25 years - on-going from Stage 2)	Procured	5		40		10	
Provide work related eligible qualifications/certificates (e.g. First Aid, H&S, Construction Skills Certification Scheme)	Procured	15		100		25	
Intensive job search, digital training ,work preparation (25+ years - on-going from Stage 2)	Procured	35		240		70	
Provide work related eligible qualifications/certificates (e.g. SCQF Level 3 qualifications)	In-house delivery	10		50			
Sector Based academies e.g. care sector (10 participants per course)	Procured			20	2	10	1

Note: It is a European Social Fund requirement that the strategic intervention application has to be presented in calendar years.

- 5.19 A number of local authority **Stage 1** strategic intervention pipeline applications have been approved. No local authority has yet had approval for a **Stage 2** 'operation' application. The cost per participant ranges between £2,000 and £6,000 depending on a number of factors such as:
- * the cost of delivery in rural versus urban areas;
 - * economies of scale;
 - * the density of target groups; and
 - * proximity and availability of training providers.
- 5.20 It is estimated that the cost per participant for Argyll and Bute pipeline will be nearer £6,000. The Scottish Government has anticipated that the delivery of the pipeline across dispersed remote, rural and island communities, such as Argyll and Bute, will be at the higher end of the cost per participant scale and this is reflected in the ESF indicative award allocation.

Proposed Targets

- 5.21 The programme aims to secure a total of just under 540 participants across stages one to three as outlined in **Table B** above. Subject to the mid-term review and the availability of match funding, activity and targets will be presented for stages 4 and 5 of the pipeline.

Summary

- 5.22 With reference to the scale and intensity of the proposed pipeline stages one to three, Argyll and Bute Council has the opportunity to bring in additional investment to Argyll and Bute as a whole to achieve positive impacts for vulnerable residents. These impacts will be long term for both the participants and the wider community, such as:
- improved wealth and quality of life for participants;
 - breaking cycles of worklessness and deprivation;
 - increased availability of skilled staff;
 - improved health of participants through engagement, health interventions and the positive impact of moving into training;
 - providing a flexible base for activity and future growth, thus strengthening the economy; and
 - improving the overall sustainability across areas, thus ensuring Argyll and Bute is an attractive place to live, work, study and invest, including the reduction of public finances for support through benefits.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The EDI Committee is presented with two options as outlined in **Table C** below.

Table C: Options for Consideration			
	Delivery	Risk	Mitigation of Risk
Option 1	Do nothing	<p>Lose indicative European investment of £1.5 million to Argyll and Bute for Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the Enhanced Employability Pipeline delivery out of a total indicative allocation of £3.66 million.</p> <p>A gap will be left in Argyll and Bute for provision and support to groups of disadvantaged people with multiple barriers.</p>	None.
Option 2 submission of the stage one application (Strategic Intervention) which is effectively an expression of interest and is not legally binding.	Deliver Stages 1 to 3 of the Enhanced Employability Pipeline for a period of two financial years.	<p>No external provider(s) bid for contracts to delivery discrete stages of the pipeline.</p> <p>Winning contractor(s) fails to deliver.</p> <p>Unable to secure appropriate Council match funding</p> <p>Flat rate payments of 40% will be incurred by Argyll and Bute Council irrespective of participants and volumes.</p>	<p>Expressions of interest have already been received from very experienced providers with good track records of delivery, e.g. pipeline activity approach utilised for Employability Fund delivery.</p> <p>Adult Learning and Literacy has identified match funding for delivery staff to provide in-house delivery of additional SCQF Level 3 qualifications. EDST requires an additional <u>£46,282</u> that is subject to Committee approval.</p> <p>If appropriate participant volumes are not achieved for course delivery, there is the option not to run the training.</p>

6.2 This paper outlines the proposed approach to the implementation and delivery of the Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline. It will deliver support to participants deemed to be furthest removed from the labour market and have multiple barriers to employment. It is intended to offer a wide array of support mechanisms throughout a participant's journey to sustainable employment by providing a range of measures supporting individuals through the delivery of stages one to three of the pipeline over an initial two-year period.

6.3 The target beneficiary number of just under 540 is predicated on the ability to fully match fund the pipeline (50% intervention rate) until the end of March 2018, prior to the Scottish Government's mid-term review early in 2018.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy The strategic intervention fits and contributes to Outcome 3: *Education, skills and training maximises opportunities for all of the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome, with a particular focus on the short term outcome 3.2: to ensure education and skills training opportunities are aligned to economic development opportunities both within Argyll and Bute and nationally.* To maximise European funding investment is a key objective within the Argyll and Bute Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP), 2013-2018 and the four area-based EDAPs
- 7.2 Financial Argyll and Bute Council as Lead Partner for this ESF Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline strategic intervention will be responsible for administering the funds compliantly within European rules and regulations. To lever in the proposed £1.5 million of ESF over the next two financial years, £1.5 million is required in match funding from internal and external sources. A shortfall of £46,282 of match funding has been identified. Non-compliance of European funding rules may result in fines.
- 7.3 Legal All legal implications with regard to proposed Argyll and Bute Council actions will be taken into consideration.
- 7.4 HR A total of four additional full-time staff will be required to deliver the Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline strategic intervention.
- 7.5 Equalities The Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline activities will comply with all Equal Opportunities policies and obligations.
- 7.6 Risk Council officers will ensure that Argyll and Bute Council's risks with regard to this strategic intervention are proportionate and reasonable to its role as a Lead Partner organisation (as detailed in **Table C**), in close liaison with the Council's Legal Services and Internal Audit.
- 7.7 Customer Services None.

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Appendix 1: Argyll and Bute Enhanced Employability Pipeline Organisational Staffing Chart.

