

# Evaluation of European Structural Funds' Contribution to North Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership

## Phase 1

April 2008 – March 2010

## Phase 2

April 2010 – August 2011

(LUPS/ESF/2009/1/1/0027 - North Lanarkshire CPP)



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## **1 Summary**

- 1.1 This report covers the period of the North Lanarkshire CPP Employability Programme LUPS/ESF/2009/1/1/0027. Funded by a combination of ESF and ERDF the project has two distinct phases. Phase 1 ran from April 2008 – March 2010 and Phase 2 from April 2010 – August 2011.
- 1.2 The context and background of Phase 1 are covered by a report commissioned from Blake Stevenson by the Scottish Government which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.3 In 2011 the Scottish Government invited the 13 CPPs to extend their projects into a Phase 2 which extended the end date of the project, increased eligible costs and subsequently outputs and results. The outcomes and results for the overall project are described in the Appendix 2 for the overall project.
- 1.4 Finally the report outlines the changes in the North Lanarkshire labour market and additional context in the delivery of the project.

## **2 Challenges**

2.1 The original application for ESF & ERDF support in 2008 aimed to secure 4,765 participants with Phase 2 aiming to increase this to 10,328. The final number was verified as 7,033 participants.

2.2 The key challenges in delivering the North Lanarkshire CPP programme in this period were:

- (i) Management of such a large scale partnership
- (ii) Delivery of national, regional and local employability programmes alongside those funded by the EU
- (iii) The administrative aspects of compliance with National Rules
- (iv) The changing labour market influenced by the financial crisis

### **2.3 Management of the Partnership**

In the course of the project over 30 reviews were carried out on the delivery by partners to check progress and push toward meeting targets. A management structure was implemented within the project which involved a Steering Group and sub groups looking at compliance, finance and other operational requirements.

### **2.4 Delivery of national employability programmes alongside those funded by the EU**

During the period of the project there were significant changes to UK employability programmes as a result of the 2010 General Election result with accompanying Welfare Reform measures which impacted on services. In Scotland new programmes aimed at supporting young people into employment and increases in availability of modern apprenticeships influenced the labour market.

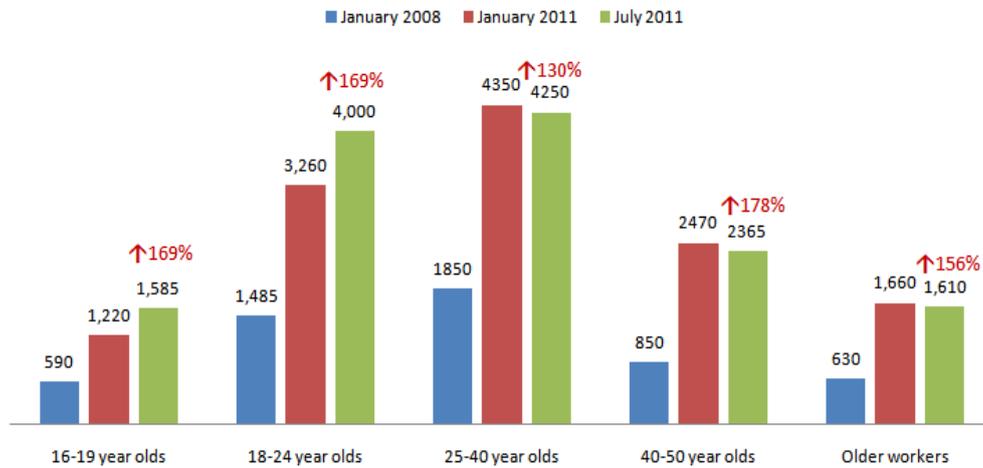
### **2.5 The administrative aspects of compliance with National Rules**

The Council's own verification and compliance team carried out 20% verification checks on every element of expenditure covered by the project on a quarterly basis, with project expenditure totalling over £14 million.

### **2.6 The changing labour market influenced by the financial crisis**

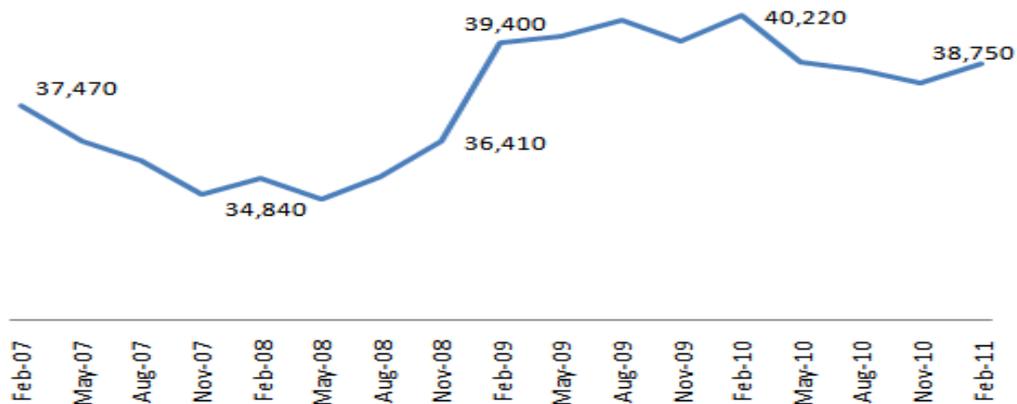
The labour market across Scotland and the UK was completely changed as a result of the financial crisis. Within North Lanarkshire Job Seeking figures during the period of the project were at their most dynamic since the recession of the early 1990s. The charts below offer an indication of the volatility of the local labour market with unemployment rising during the period of the project to a peak in 2012, despite the intervention of this large scale employability programme.

**Figure 1 Impact on specific age groups**



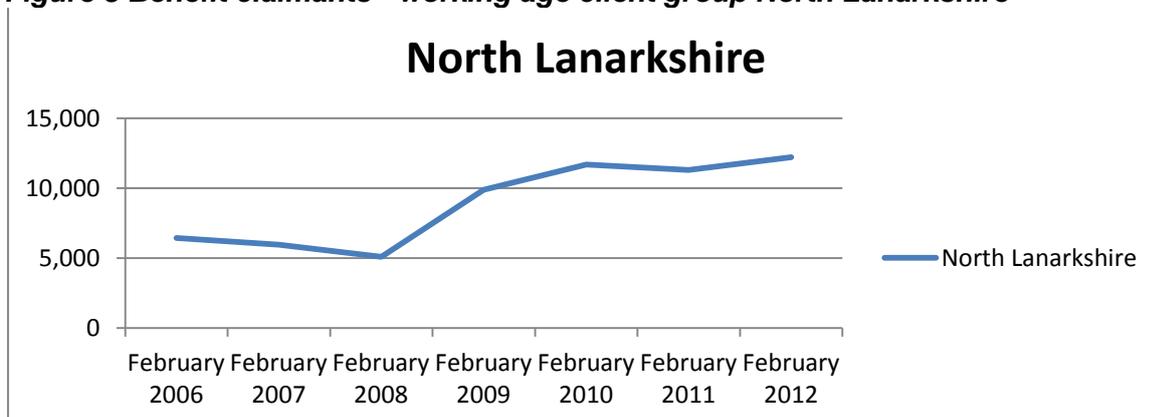
- All age groups were affected by the increasing JSA level. The red percentage levels reflect the increase in JSA for each of the age groups between January 2008 (blue column) and July 2011 (green column)

**Figure 2 Total out of work benefit claimants**



- The upsurge in JSA means that the total number of benefit claimants has increased since the low of 34,840 in early 2008

**Figure 3 Benefit claimants - working age client group North Lanarkshire**



END