



PACE Partnership Review September 2019

Commissioned by the Scottish Government and Skills Development Scotland on behalf of the PACE Partnership

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SUMMARY

Background and objectives

Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) is the Scottish Government's strategic national partnership framework for responding to redundancy situations. PACE aims to minimise the time individuals affected by redundancy are out of work and is delivered primarily through 18 local PACE Partnerships, each operating with a high level of local flexibility and independence. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) coordinates and chairs each local partnership; and membership varies across different areas depending on the local organisational and delivery context.

This work has been commissioned on behalf of the Ministerial PACE Partnership to provide an updated picture of how local PACE Partnerships are operating and what current issues they may face. The aims and objectives of the study were to:

- establish the membership of the 18 local PACE Partnerships;
- establish the operation of the PACE Partnerships;
- highlight local communications and reflective practice mechanisms;
- establish the processes adopted to respond to redundancy situations across the Partnerships;
- gauge the views of individual local PACE Partnership members on their involvement in the local PACE Partnership including input to strategy and provision of services;
- identify new opportunities for PACE to develop and to refine the current model;
- make recommendations for improving the reach of PACE, particularly in respect of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and smaller numbers of individuals affected by redundancy;
- make recommendations for any improvements to the PACE support provided; and
- seek views about a PACE Pledge agreement for local PACE Partners to sign up to.

Methods

This research is based on primary research carried out in early 2019, including focus groups and interviews with local PACE Partners and Chairs; an online survey of Partnership representatives and interviews with national partners and wider stakeholders.

Key findings

Partnership composition

Local PACE Partnerships are led and chaired by SDS, who work closely with local authorities and staff from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)/Jobcentres in delivering PACE support to individuals affected by redundancy. While these three partner organisations play the biggest role in PACE, they work with Colleges, Business Gateways, Enterprise Agencies and Citizens Advice Bureaux to plan and deliver support. Each partnership area also brings in other organisations to deliver services, which include libraries, training providers, trade unions, third sector organisations specialising in areas such as pensions advice, and mental health. Across Scotland, there are 154 organisational representatives involved in local PACE Partnerships.

Roles and responsibilities not always widely understood

While the majority of local PACE Partnership Chairs have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of partners; this is not always true of partner organisations. This is particularly likely to be the case where there have been staff and organisational changes. Chairs rely on 'mature relationships' to resource and deliver support, but these relationships take time to build up, meaning those new to the role can sometimes find it more difficult to engage partners for redundancy responses.

Informal partnership structures

We identified only one local partnership which had a written partnership protocol. Outside of SDS, the commitment of partner organisations relies on existing relationships and their having adequate resources to deliver PACE services effectively.

Varied approaches to governance

The majority of local PACE Partnerships have no scheduled meetings, coming together only when they are delivering PACE services. The remainder meet between two and four times a year to discuss and agree on the PACE offer, to update on any key organisational changes and to share learning. Around three in ten PACE Chairs would like to have more formal partnership meetings. However almost four in ten are happy with not having scheduled meetings and only meeting when necessary.

Risk from budget and service changes

Our research suggests that lack of formal arrangements can lead to problems particularly when there is a combination of:

- staff changes;
- service changes; and
- changing needs.

Where there is no formal commitment to local involvement, it is potentially an easy area for service cuts. PACE provides coordination of existing services only, so local authorities and other key partners do not have a budget allocation against delivering it. The danger of this is that its resources can be removed unintentionally as part of budget savings.

Training needs among less experienced staff

Outside of SDS, the majority of those who are delivering PACE support have not received any specific training related to their PACE role. Those with less experience with PACE are the least likely to have received training. There is no formal induction process for representatives joining local PACE Partnerships, with new staff learning through shadowing, handover support and through doing the job.

Training needs are mainly linked to information sharing

While there would appear to be a high demand for training among respondents to the survey, when we look at what respondents need, most requests focus around understanding the offer, knowing what all partners deliver, and finding out about recent changes. These issues

might more effectively be addressed through improved information exchange rather than through formal training.

Communication between SDS and PACE Partners is effective

PACE Chairs are responsible for communicating with other local partners and they do this largely through email, phone calls and through existing relationships and forums outside of PACE. Communication channels within local PACE Partnerships are generally considered to be effective, and the effectiveness of how SDS communicates with other partners has improved over recent years. Almost nine out of ten partners surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that communication was effective (87%); an improvement on previous internal monitoring in 2015 (70%).

Communication and support from the SDS National PACE team was generally considered to be effective and responsive. Some partners identified potential areas for further national support including providing a directory of specialist advisers across the country and providing template documents that local partners could edit and use.

More reflective learning opportunities

Local Partnerships have a range of different approaches to reflective learning, which tends to be informal and incorporated into other meetings. Where regular partnership meetings take place, this is usually an item on the agenda. All areas we spoke to would like to allocate more time to reflective learning, and only just over half of partners surveyed thought that the current arrangements for sharing good practice were sufficient. Partnerships identified more sharing of learning between areas, more written case studies, and more use of web-based approaches to sharing learning.

All local partnership representatives who had engaged with the national Continuing Professional Development (CPD) PACE events had considered them to be useful and worth attending. Partners generally wanted them to be more frequent, possibly delivered regionally and more accessible to wider partners.

More follow-up and impact information

While PACE customer information is gathered at the national level, several local partners highlighted a lack of locally available information on impact beyond anecdotal feedback. No organisation tracks the progress of individuals and the PACE Client Experience Survey is the main way of identifying the impact of PACE services. Partners would ideally like some level of more formal PACE Client Experience survey feedback locally on impact and how their customers were progressing.

PACE responses are effective

There is a well-established and largely standardised approach to how local partnerships respond to redundancy scenarios. This works well, with local partnerships augmenting the formal approaches with wider contacts and networks to pick up and share local intelligence. Our survey found that the vast majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that management approaches for PACE were effective (81%); an improvement on previous internal monitoring in 2015 (73%).

Identifying effective resources becoming harder

When there is a large redundancy situation, PACE Chairs alert partners who will be required to provide staff to attend information sessions and provide support to those affected. While local partnerships appear to be resourcing PACE services and responding effectively to employers and employees, there appear to be some emerging issues around resourcing. Budget tightening across partner organisations has already led to service delivery and/or staff changes in at least three local partnerships. These have included reductions in funding to areas such as employability services and financial inclusion advice within some local authorities.

Enterprise Agency representatives were more likely to identify issues in providing staff to attend PACE meetings and respond to redundancies. Partner representatives with less experience of PACE delivery were also less likely to be confident of resourcing PACE responses appropriately. This may be linked to the importance of the 'mature relationships' outlined earlier, in coordinating services.

Reach

While most partnerships considered that they engaged effectively with employers in their areas, there were always some instances where employers chose not to, or were reluctant to, engage. These were generally smaller employers who did not know what PACE was, or who had misconceptions about what their role was. There were also employers who did not want to bring PACE into the workplace because they did not want their employees' time taken up. Local partnerships had generally worked around these problems to support employees outside of the workplace and make sure they knew what support they were entitled to.

Marketing

Partners were keen to ensure that PACE was visible and that those requiring the services could easily find out about it. However, there was a certain reluctance to proactively market PACE services to employers; because some partners considered it might give out the wrong messages or appear too negative.

Gaps in services

There were two consistent areas where local partners highlighted there could be improvements to the services provided through PACE. These were:

- mental and emotional wellbeing; and
- funding for training.

Several respondents highlighted a growing demand for mental health and wellbeing support; particularly as part of large-scale responses. Most partnerships provide referral information only for these types of services; either to the NHS or to third sector specialists. One partnership incorporated specialist mental health services into its core response to larger scale redundancies.

The lack of, and variability of, funding for training was widely reported throughout this research. Issues included the lack of availability of Employability Fund places, local variations in Local Authority and Rapid Response funding and the capping of Individual Training Account places in late 2018.

PACE Pledge

Participants agreed that there should be a national standardised PACE offer, so that all customers know what service they are entitled to, regardless of where they live. This would help to address some of the 'postcode lottery' perceptions. However there also needs to be flexibility at local level to reflect varying need and differences in the local delivery landscape. Each local partnership benefits from 'on the ground' intelligence, a good knowledge of their local labour market and strong networks and relationships.

Recommendations

Partnership protocol

Each local partnership should have a partnership protocol setting out the roles and responsibilities of partners and outlining the approaches involved in the PACE response. This will help partners who are not as closely involved to improve their understanding of what other partners are delivering and provide an easily accessible mutual reference point. The National SDS PACE team should provide a basic template for this, if required.

Each partner organisation should provide a high-level commitment to delivering the PACE response based on the protocol.

Information sharing and updates

Each partnership Chair should identify effective ways of sharing information between partners, including updates on services and roles and feedback on PACE delivery. Partners should come together formally at least once a year to share experiences, reflect on delivery and update each other on any organisational changes. The Chair should consult on the timing and format of meetings, however they should have a focus on learning and information exchange. Where regular physical meetings are impractical, partners should consider video-conferencing or skype meetings.

Induction for new partnership representatives

Each partnership should identify how it will support and train new partnership representatives. This should form part of the written protocol outlined above. Guidance for SDS Chairs on carrying out induction for new representatives should be provided.

Widening access to CPD

The SDS National PACE team should support partnerships to develop wider opportunities for learning and CPD around PACE. This should include planning skype calls with external input and developing online learning resources that can be accessed by local partners.

Training needs

While many of the training needs identified by PACE Partners could be addressed through the measures outlined above, Chairs should identify any specific additional training needs among partners and feed these back to the SDS National Team.

Strengthening mental wellbeing support

The SDS National PACE Team and Scottish Government should support local PACE Partnerships to incorporate mental wellbeing into their PACE offer. This could include improved guidance and signposting as part of the information sessions and dialogue with potential service providers.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) is the Scottish Government's strategic national partnership framework for responding to redundancy situations. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) leads on the delivery of PACE on behalf of the Scottish Government, in conjunction with a number of key partners including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The Ministerial PACE Partnership, chaired by the Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills, brings 22 organisations together with the Scottish Government to oversee a continuous improvement programme to enhance the operation of PACE. This work forms part of that continuous improvement programme.

PACE aims to minimise the time individuals affected by redundancy are out of work. It is delivered primarily through 18 local PACE Partnerships, each operating with a high level of local flexibility and independence. SDS coordinates and chairs each local partnership; although membership varies across different areas depending on the local organisational and delivery context. PACE delivers a wide range of support to employers whose employees are going through the process of redundancy including employment rights, financial and pensions advice, benefits advice, careers information, advice and guidance, CV and job-search support, employability and vocational training support, and support to manage stress.

Research objectives

As indicated opposite, this work has been commissioned on behalf of the Ministerial PACE Partnership to provide an updated picture of how local PACE Partnerships are operating and what current issues they may face. The aims and objectives of the study were to:

- establish the membership of the 18 local PACE Partnerships;
- establish the operation of the PACE Partnerships;
- highlight local communications and reflective practice mechanisms;
- establish the processes adopted to respond to redundancy situations across the various Partnerships;
- gauge the views of individual local PACE Partnership members on their involvement in the local PACE Partnership including input to strategy and provision of services;
- identify new opportunities for PACE to develop and to refine the current model;
- make recommendations for improving the reach of PACE, particularly in respect of SMEs and smaller numbers of individuals affected by redundancy;
- make recommendations for any improvements that could be made to the PACE support provided; and
- seek views about a PACE Pledge agreement for local PACE Partners to sign up to.

Approach

This research is based on primary research carried out in early 2019, including:

- seven Focus groups with Local PACE Partnerships (further details in Appendix B);
- seven Telephone interviews with other local PACE Chairs;
- an online survey of local PACE Partners which received 132 responses; and
- eight interviews with wider stakeholders: including DWP, Local Authority representatives, Trade Unions, Enterprise Agencies and the Scottish Government.

We have also reviewed previous internal research carried out among local PACE Partnerships in 2015 to provide comparative data where relevant. A copy of the survey questions is attached in Appendix C.

Report Structure

Following this introduction, the remainder of the report is structured into the following sections:

- Partnership composition and roles
- Communication and learning
- Processes, approaches and reach
- Gaps in services
- Conclusions and recommendations

PARTNERSHIP COMPOSITION AND ROLES

This section looks at the composition and structure of the 18 Local Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) Partnerships and what each member contributes to the partnership. It also outlines the mechanics of local partnership meetings and decision-making.

Membership of Local Partnerships

Partnership Chairs

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is the organisation tasked with organising and managing PACE delivery both nationally and locally. At the local level, SDS provides the Chair and administrative support for the local PACE Partnership, with the Chair taking the pivotal role in both the functioning of the partnership and service delivery. From our interviews and the SDS guidance, the Chair role includes:

- maintaining local partnerships by organising, chairing and recording PACE meetings;
- establishing roles and responsibilities for all partner organisations;
- being the key contact for all information about potential job losses;
- initiating and leading contact with companies requiring redundancy support;
- collating information and updating the central PACE recording system;
- establishing procedures for responding to Scottish Government information requests; and
- coordinating Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity and sharing good practice.

In addition, SDS PACE Chairs must also coordinate and manage the SDS element of the service delivery as a key part of the partnership.

Member organisations

SDS have collated information on membership from across the 18 partnerships. The different types of organisation involved in PACE delivery are summarised in Figure 1. It shows that Skills Development Scotland (SDS), local authorities, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Colleges and Business Gateways are involved across all partnerships. Other significant contributors to local PACE Partnerships across Scotland are Citizens Advice Bureaux and Enterprise Agencies: Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

Figure 1 Membership of local PACE Partnerships by type of organisation (2019)

	2019	
	Total number of organisations	% of total*
Local Authority	32	20%
College	24	16%
Business Gateway	18	12%
DWP/Jobcentre Plus	18	12%
SDS	18	12%
Citizens Advice	11	7%
Scottish Enterprise	8	5%
Chambers of Commerce	5	3%
Community and Voluntary Sector	5	3%
HIE	4	3%
Training Providers	4	3%
Pensionwise	2	1%
Library service	2	1%
NHS	2	1%
HMRC	1	1%
Other	6	4%
Total	160	100%

Source: Skills Development Scotland

*Percentage figure represents the percentage of the total number of organisations

From our focus groups and interviews, it is clear that there are very different definitions and classifications of ‘membership’ among local PACE partnerships. For the most part, local partnerships have no formal partnership infrastructure, and are fairly loosely constituted. Broadly, we have observed three types of member:

Core partners: who are involved in all local PACE redundancy responses. These are essentially SDS, DWP and the relevant local authorities.

Wider partners: organisations who are involved in planning and decision-making meetings and brought into redundancy responses when required. These include Colleges, Enterprise Agencies, Business Gateways, Trade Unions and Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Delivery partners: organisations who may be brought in from time to time to provide PACE related services. They are in contact with the PACE Chair but generally do not attend meetings. (Third sector specialist services, Pensions Advice, NHS Mental Health and Wellbeing services)

The full list of local PACE Partnership members is set out in Appendix A.

Roles and responsibilities

We have summarised the broad roles and responsibilities of the main partner organisations in Figure 2 below. There are variations between local partnership areas, based around the individual representative involved, and the particular services that partners deliver in that area. From our focus groups, differences appear to be most significant within the Local Authority sector.

Figure 2 Broad organisational roles

Organisation	Main roles
Scottish Government	National strategy and communication, chairing of the Ministerial PACE Partnership.
SDS	Chairing PACE Partnerships, communication, careers advice and guidance, job-search, employability and vocational training, employer support.
DWP/Jobcentre Plus	Benefits checking and advice, employer liaison, employability training.
Local authorities	Employability, economic development, financial inclusion, advice and support, equalities and social care support.
Scottish Enterprise/Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Business support; particularly for Account Managed and priority sector businesses.
Business Gateway	Business start-up advice.
Colleges	Employability and vocational training.
Citizens Advice	Employee rights, money and welfare advice.

All partners have a responsibility to share information and intelligence about key labour market issues or redundancies with the PACE Chair.

Formal partnership agreements and protocols

The majority of local PACE Partnerships do not have any formal partnership documentation such as agreements or protocols; operating instead as 'virtual partnerships'. However, Forth Valley PACE Partnership has a written PACE protocol setting out roles, processes and providing useful contact information. It covers:

- Membership: including key contact names
- Roles and responsibilities
- Procedures
- Funding
- Meetings

Partners in Forth Valley viewed the partnership protocol document as a useful reference point, particularly for induction of new staff and at handovers.

Membership changes and review

Most of the local PACE Partnerships had undergone some changes in organisational membership over the years; and many were in the process of continuing change to varying degrees. Member organisations who are no longer involved in some local partnerships include Trade Unions and HMRC. Trade Unions are involved at the national level and get involved locally on a case by case basis. HMRC are also still involved at the national level. While Citizens Advice are involved in most areas, they have stopped involvement in some partnerships.

There is generally no formal approach to reviewing the partnership, its composition, roles and responsibilities. One partnership is currently planning a review process, prompted in part by service changes within the local authority.

Partnership meetings

Frequency of meetings

From our survey, it is clear that most local PACE Partnerships do not have formally structured meetings scheduled, with 70% of Chairs holding meetings only where they are required. The other 30%

held formal meetings occurring quarterly. Several of those holding quarterly meetings have moved, or are in the process of moving, to less frequent meetings. In one area where we held a focus group, Local Partnership meetings used to happen quarterly but now take place every six months after agreement from partners. Additional meetings can take place if required, although members meet in different PACE and non-PACE circumstances outside of the formal meetings (e.g. Local Employability Partnership).

Another PACE Chair commented that:

'Due to a reduction in PACE delivery involving partners we decided to move to a schedule where we would not meet quarterly as had been the case for a number of years. We moved to a six-monthly frequency, however several partners did not attend and because of this I decided in consultation with partners that we would meet only when there was a recognisable need. Our partnership was very well-established and up until recently we had longevity in membership and partners understood our protocols and Scottish Government expectations around PACE.'

And another made similar comments:

'There are no regular meetings for all PACE Partners, but I meet/communicate with the key partners when there are redundancy situations pending if appropriate. Communication also takes place via email and telephone calls. Most of the partners are members of the local Employer Engagement group and we meet regularly - we have considered having PACE updates as an agenda item at some of the meetings.'

Smaller, more rural partnerships are less likely to have any formal partnership meetings. There are several inter-related reasons for this including:

- members have mature relationships and are regularly in contact with each other through non-PACE activity;
- PACE redundancy instances are sporadic and unpredictable; and
- logistical and travel limitations mean that members prefer to hold more practically focused PACE meetings where they are actively working together.

As one commented:

‘There is a distribution list of PACE Partners and they are contacted when there is a PACE need. It is in effect a virtual group. We would rather spend time on a demand basis from clients rather than in meetings. Partners meet and discuss the partnership at PACE events. Occasionally a manager will be phoned for an update.’

However, in some partnerships, staff and organisational changes have led to this approach becoming less effective, with the key contact losing touch and PACE work being passed from person to person. The breakdown of mature relationships due to staff and organisational changes will affect the ability to work in this way. From the survey responses, it is clear that an ad hoc approach to meetings does not work for all partners.

‘We only seem to get together when there is a crisis.’

‘Partnership comes together to meet emerging needs. Preference would be to meet on a regularly scheduled basis to share examples of good practice and to identify areas for improvement.’

‘Hold PACE meetings regularly to share intelligence and plan for potential closure and redundancies. All partners actively involved and clarity of roles regarding who is coordinating what and how feedback is provided.’

‘I think it would be beneficial to have local partners meet up to discuss what we each deliver and encourage stronger working links - where possible.’

A third of PACE Chairs would like there to be more formal meetings of the Local PACE Partnership. All but one of these currently have no formal meetings. Overall 38% of Chairs do not hold scheduled meetings and do not identify a need to, a further 31% hold no meetings but would like to, and 31% currently have scheduled PACE Partnership meetings. So, there is some appetite for more regular formal meetings, although a substantial minority who are happy with the current approach. Those identifying the need for further meetings feel that their purpose should focus on:

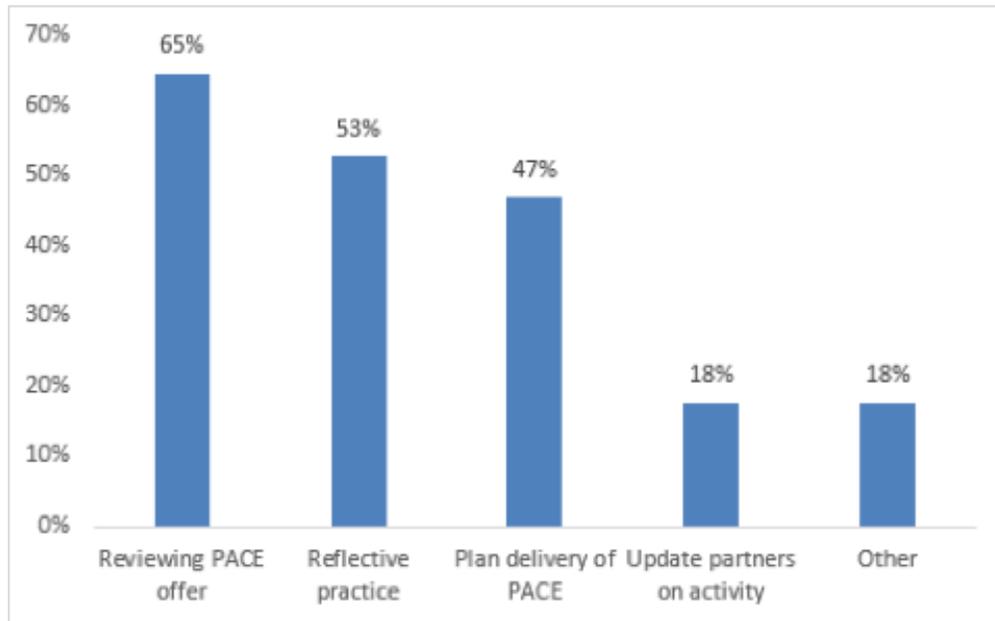
- understanding each partner’s role and remit, including any changes to what partners deliver;
- sharing learning, reflecting on previous redundancy situations; and
- updates on activity.

While not universal, there is a sense among some partnerships that services and funding are going through a significant period of change at the moment. This seems to be particularly affecting the Local Authority sector and the funding available for training. In at least three local partnership areas, the representation, roles or services of local authorities had recently changed in relation to PACE. These changes have included reductions in funding for money advice, equalities and elements of employability support. In two of these areas, service changes have resulted in the loss of representatives at PACE Partnership meetings. The imminent introduction of the new South of Scotland Development Agency will lead to more changes in the two partnerships covering the rural south. Changes to funding around employability and the uncertainty over European Structural Funds post-Brexit is also affecting the stability of employability partnerships.

Purpose of the meetings

When asked about the purpose of the meetings, the most common response provided by Chairs was reviewing the PACE offer, which around two thirds of PACE Chairs identified (65%). As Figure 3 shows, just over half used meetings to reflect on good practice and learning (53%), and just under half focused on PACE delivery (47%).

Figure 3 Purpose of partnership meetings



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=17)

The other category included:

- ensuring partners are familiar and supportive of our PACE response protocol;
- providing partner updates that are relevant to the PACE offer; and
- share PACE reports/feedback on PACE activity/partner updates/ relevant speakers

Change of PACE Chair

It seems that the informal approach works well when existing personnel are well-established, and relationships are strong. However, the lack of formal meetings is frustrating for those who are relatively new to the role and perhaps do not have the knowledge and relationships that more experienced Chairs rely on. One interviewee had inherited the approach from the previous Chair but was struggling to get contact and involvement from some partners. She highlighted that the lack of structured meetings did not help with this situation and had led to a lot of effort to engage and involve partners.

Training needs

Induction

In several of the Focus Groups we conducted, new personnel had become involved in the local PACE Partnership over the past few months. Induction approaches were mostly informal combining a handover within their own organisation, some shadowing of the PACE role and a session with the PACE Chair. The consensus appeared to be that this approach was adequate.

The PACE protocol agreement that is in use in one area sets out the recommended SDS induction process for new PACE Chairs, which should include:

- one-to-one meetings with all local PACE partners;
- training on the online SDS spreadsheet;
- meeting all local PACE advisers; and
- meeting with members of the National PACE team.

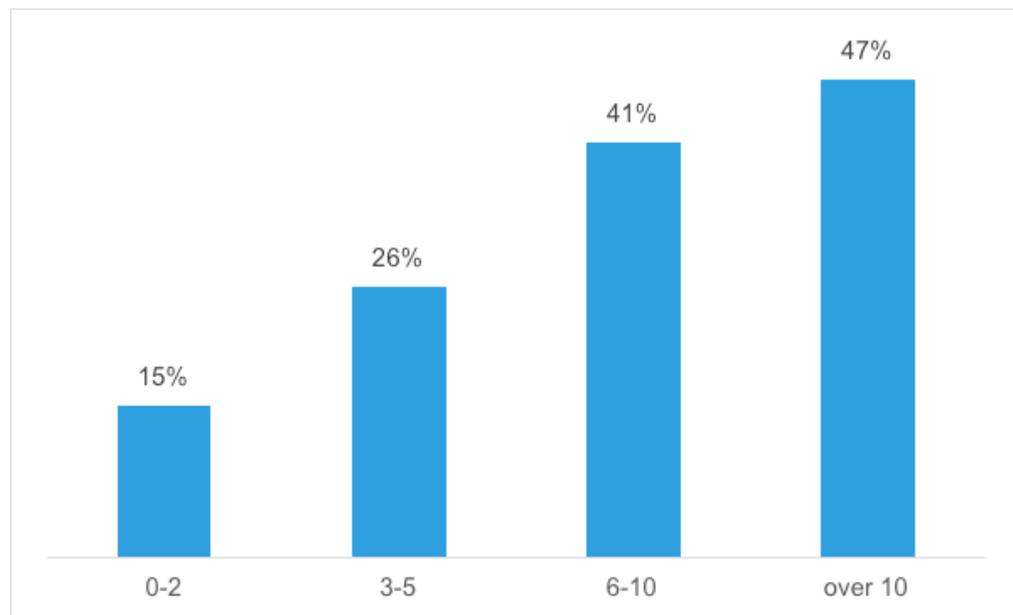
Of the 27 survey respondents who said they had been involved in PACE for less than two years, only 15% said they had received specific training relating to PACE support.

Training for PACE

In our survey of PACE Partners, we asked respondents whether they had received any training for their role in delivering PACE support. Overall, 31% of respondents stated they had received training. Whether or not members had received training appears to be linked

to their length of involvement, with those who have been delivering PACE services for more than five years much more likely to have received training. As Figure 4 shows, nearly half of those who had been delivering PACE support for more than ten years had received training (47%), compared with only 15% of those involved only over the past two years.

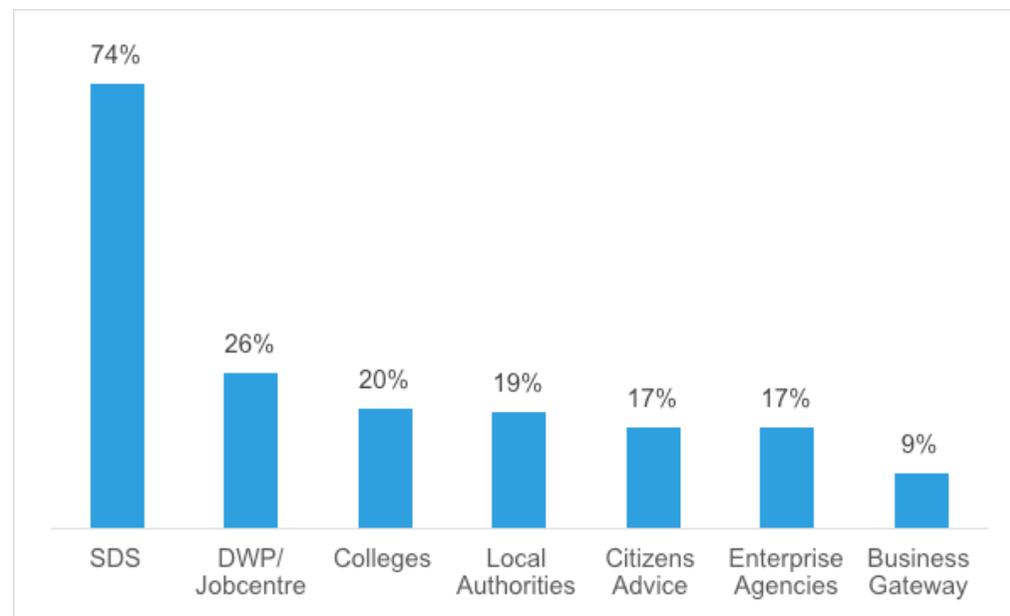
Figure 4 Whether they had received training by number of years involved in PACE support



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=114)

Three quarters of SDS staff who are involved in PACE delivery have received training (74%). However, the situation is very different among other organisations. Around a quarter of DWP/Jobcentre staff have received training (26%), around one in five College representatives (20%) and a similar proportion of Local Authority respondents (19%)

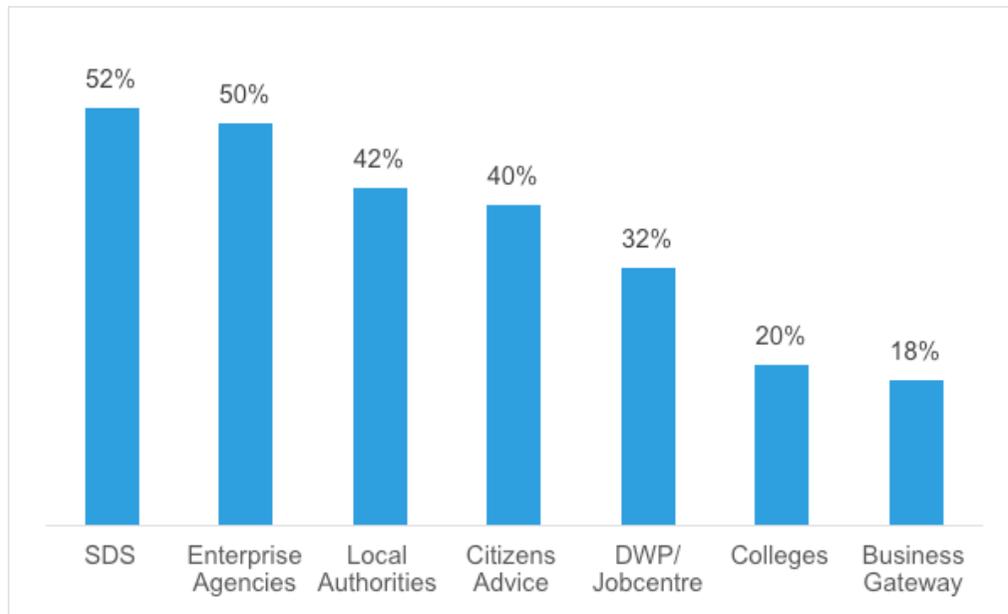
Figure 5 Whether received training around PACE delivery by organisation type



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=113)

And, among respondents to the partner survey, more than a third would like to have more training around PACE (37%). Perhaps not surprisingly, there is greater demand for training among those who have more recently become involved, with this figure increasing to 46% among those with less than two years' experience who are least likely to have received PACE training.

By organisation type, the highest demand for more PACE related training is among SDS (52%) and Enterprise Agency (50%) staff as Figure 6 shows. However, there is also a significant demand for training among Local Authority (42%) and Citizens Advice Bureau (40%) staff. Around a third of DWP/Jobcentre staff would like more training (32%); and the lowest demand is among College staff (20%) and Business Gateways (18%).

Figure 6 Proportion who would like more PACE training by organisation type

Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=112)

Of those who said they would benefit from additional training, the most commonly identified need was around the PACE offer, who is involved, and what each partner delivers. There is a strong positive correlation between these 'training' needs and the content and purpose of formal partnership meetings. Of the six PACE Chairs identifying further training needs, five also identified a desire for more scheduled meetings.

Other suggestions include benefits, money advice, funding streams and the redundancy process. There appears to be a strong demand for information on the rules and processes around redundancy and on some of the recent changes to the benefits system. Some examples cited from the survey include:

'benefits and redundancy packages received by PACE clients, and which may affect any support provided by our organisation. How these benefits and other financial packages affect DWP benefits.'

'Eligibility criteria for programme support - what provision can we access and how do we link with other contracted provision.'

'Understanding redundancy process - specifically employee's rights, employer obligations, what happens when no HR dept or when company closes suddenly.'

'More visible funding streams for retraining. Access to meaningful LMI on LOCAL, current skills gaps, skills in demand, vacancies, how employers tap into the newly available skilled workforce following redundancies at other companies.'

There were also some specific skills identified as training needs including:

- networking skills;
- diplomacy and negotiating skills;
- more information on how recruitment companies operate in 2019;
- latest thinking on CV preparation - achiever versus doer CVs; and
- effective use of social media: for example; Advanced LinkedIn modules to help with building effective networks.

COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING

This section looks at how effectively communication works within partnerships, between partnerships and with national agencies. It also looks at partnership experiences of reflective practice and exchanging learning.

Partnership communication

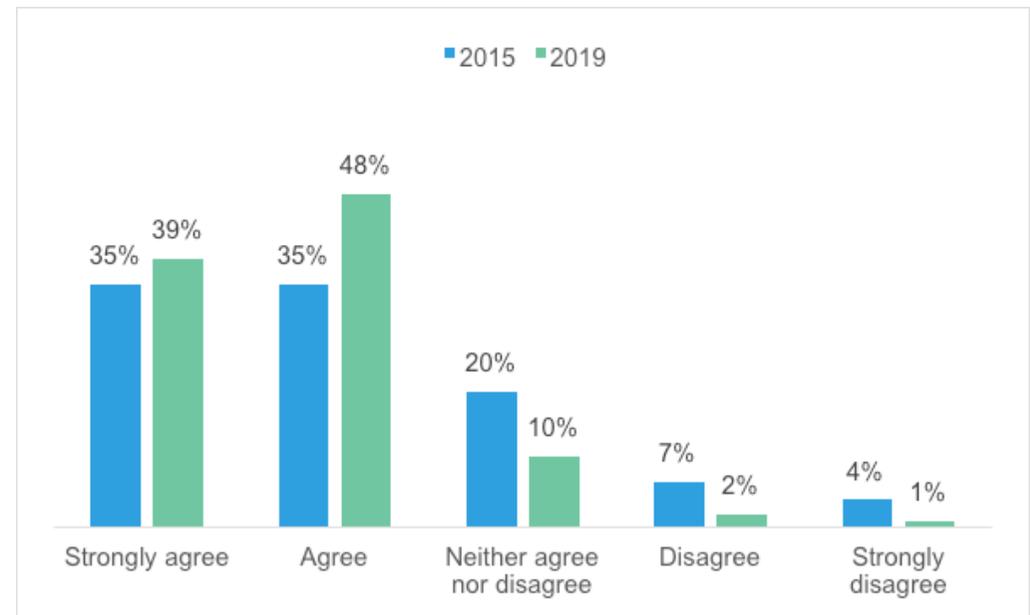
Communication channels and approaches

Effective communication is essential for Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) Partnerships in responding quickly to local redundancy scenarios. Most PACE Chairs rely on email and phone calls to keep themselves and partners informed. One Chair circulates a monthly report when there has been PACE activity in the local area. However, from our focus groups and interviews, it is clear that existing networks and meetings outside of PACE are important in sustaining partner communication and relationships.

‘I will discuss PACE activity/good practice with DWP at our regular bi-monthly meetings.’

From our survey of local PACE Partners, the vast majority of respondents agreed that communication between Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and other partners is effective (87%). This issue shows a significant improvement since this question was asked in 2015 as Figure 7 shows. There was little variation between different partner organisation types, with all largely positive around this aspect of the partnership work.

Figure 7 Whether you agree that communication between SDS and PACE Partners is effective



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=110) and SDS internal data (2015)

National-level communication

Communication with Scottish Government

Stakeholders in several partnerships spoke of challenges communicating with the Scottish Government around major redundancies. Issues cited were lack of consistency, lack of joined up approach and multiple requests for information (often the same information being requested). This tends to occur when there is a sectoral or regional initiative with an interest in the specific redundancy that is working in parallel with PACE. These requests add a time burden to partners who are already stretched in delivering services. These issues come about when Scottish Government staff do

not channel their communication through the Scottish Government's PACE policy area within government. One survey respondent also highlighted this point, requesting:

'Clarity on a single point of contact with, and reporting to, Scottish Government on redundancy incidents.'

Support from National PACE team

Partners we spoke to and survey respondents were very positive about the support provided by the national PACE team. They were seen to be responsive and supportive to local partnerships.

'PACE National team keep us abreast of developments, excellent Skype calls, yammer and annual conference. PACE National team communicate well with local partnerships and provide guidance as required.'

One interviewee highlighted a potential role for the national team in collating partnership resources commonly used across partnerships and providing templates that local partners could edit and adapt. There are certain things that partners will all do similarly, so sharing a template version of these would be less resource-intensive and would also be a way of transferring good practice. Examples given included templates for PACE posters, letters, timetables and schedules for one-to-one meetings on sites with multiple partners. Local partnerships could supply examples of ways that they have developed resources to deal with specific issues which could then be made available to other local partnerships.

Another respondent suggested that more support could be offered from the national team around making initial contact with some of the administrators.

Other suggestions included providing logistical support for events and marketing; and providing a directory of specialist advisers such as interpreters.

Reflective learning

From our focus groups, it is clear that some partnership areas are better at sharing learning than others - for example in some areas there were no formal mechanisms in place, and in others they spoke of having a "clean up meeting" after a redundancy situation to reflect on learning and best practice. Among methods of sharing learning at local level, partners identified:

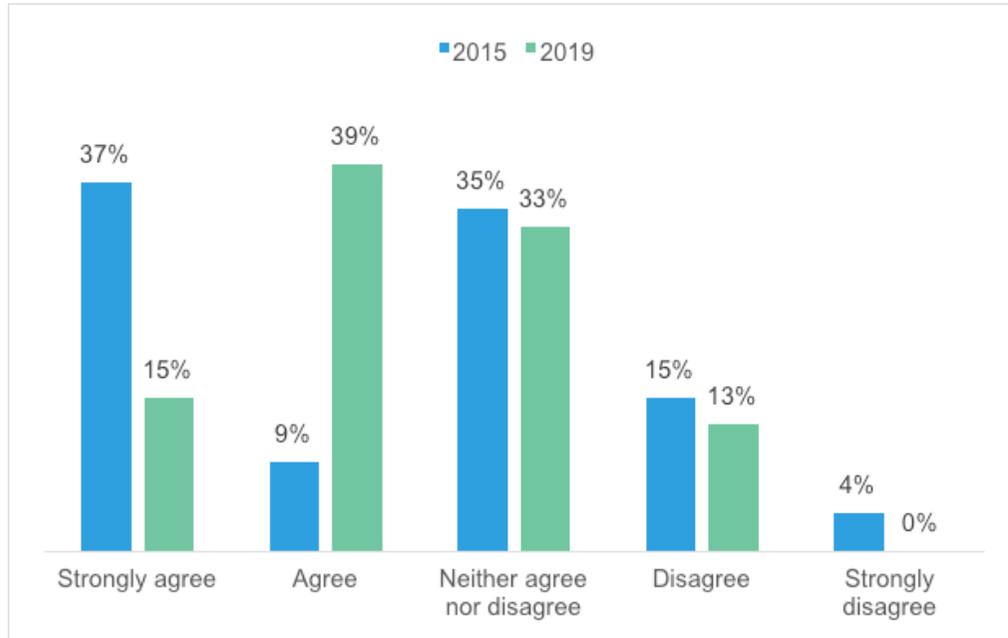
- Case studies
- Word of mouth
- Email
- "Good news stories".
- Yammer
- Partnership meetings

Reflective learning at the local partnership level tends to be incorporated into other meetings; either regular partnership meetings (where these take place) or meetings focusing on a specific PACE delivery.

'I share information on events, LMI, mutual partnership working and promote each organisation's courses, activity, information and resources.'

In our survey of local partners, we asked respondents whether they agreed that they had sufficient opportunities to share good practice with other PACE Partners (Figure 8). While more than half either agreed (39%) or strongly agreed (15%); a significant proportion were either neutral (33%) or did not agree (15%). While the responses to this question have shown an improvement since 2015, it is clearly an area where more could be done.

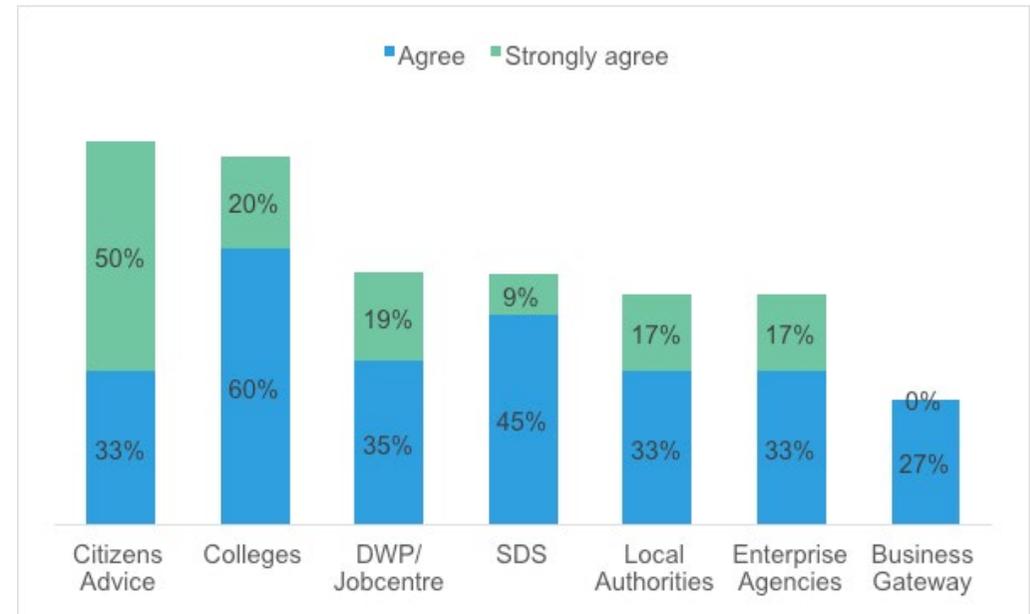
Figure 8 Whether you agree there are sufficient opportunities to share examples of good practice with other PACE Partners



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=110) and SDS internal data (2015)

If we look at the responses by organisation type as Figure 9 shows, representatives of Citizens Advice Bureaux (83%) and Colleges (80%) were more likely to agree that there were sufficient opportunities for sharing good practice. However, representatives of the core partner organisations; Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (54%), SDS (54%) and local authorities (50%) were less likely to agree with the statement.

Figure 9 Whether you agree there are sufficient opportunities to share examples of good practice with other PACE Partners by organisation type



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=112)

Some of the comments on what partners would like to see included engaging with other areas and partnerships:

‘I would like to visit other areas where they have regular PACE Partnership meetings to see what good practice I could bring to my own area.’

‘Cross-region links occasionally. We border other local authorities and have customers who travel across boundaries for work.’

Other respondents identified a need for specific meetings or sessions focusing on learning.

‘I think more regular meetings of the partners for reflective practice would be helpful. Also to reflect back on delivery as this doesn’t happen regularly and could be a learning opportunity.’

‘More informal workshops to share good practice.’

This was an issue we also picked up through our focus groups and interviews. Attendees thought it would be useful to develop some written case studies of local good practice, for sharing and communicating with other partners, and for publicity purposes. Online sessions such as webinars might also be an effective way of sharing good practice across rural areas such as Dumfries and Galloway.

Follow-up and impact

Another aspect that partners would like more information on, is follow-up and impact on the support provided. Although information is collected and aggregated by SDS, only limited information is being reviewed at local partnership level. Each organisation tends to have its own system in place for collecting information on impact, but this is generally not collated across the partnership.

‘A brief overview of what PACE aims to achieve would be helpful perhaps, and examples of where it has had a positive impact and results. It would be good to receive follow-up reports on individuals assisted and their destinations following redundancy, if known.’

Engagement with national learning/CPD

At the national level there are several methods of sharing learning including:

- National CPD events
- Skype calls for SDS staff every few months
- National conference
- PACE chair events

All the partnerships we spoke to through Focus Groups and interviews had engaged with the national PACE CPD conference. They found the networking and sharing of good practice to be particularly useful. The main feedback we gathered was that such sessions should be more frequent, more accessible or more local. There was some demand for regional learning events that might be a bit more accessible to a wider range of partners. As one PACE Chair responded:

‘At the moment not enough of this goes on apart from skype calls that are usually arranged every few months. Be good to have more national and regional face-to-face events/conferences.’

There was also a feeling that it was mainly an SDS event; albeit partners from local authorities, Colleges and DWP had all attended in the past. It was difficult for other organisations to allow the time and travel expenses for representatives to attend. Another respondent suggested that getting a more collaborative approach to developing the CPD events might be useful.

‘PACE CPD events from what I understand have been designed by SDS - it would be good to have involvement of others in the design of the days.’

PROCESSES, APPROACHES AND REACH

This section looks at how effective processes for delivering Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) services are, how well-resourced local partnerships are, and where improvements could be made to the reach of the service.

Effectiveness of processes and approaches

Approaches to responding to redundancies

There is a well-established and largely standardised approach across local PACE Partnerships which seems to work well.

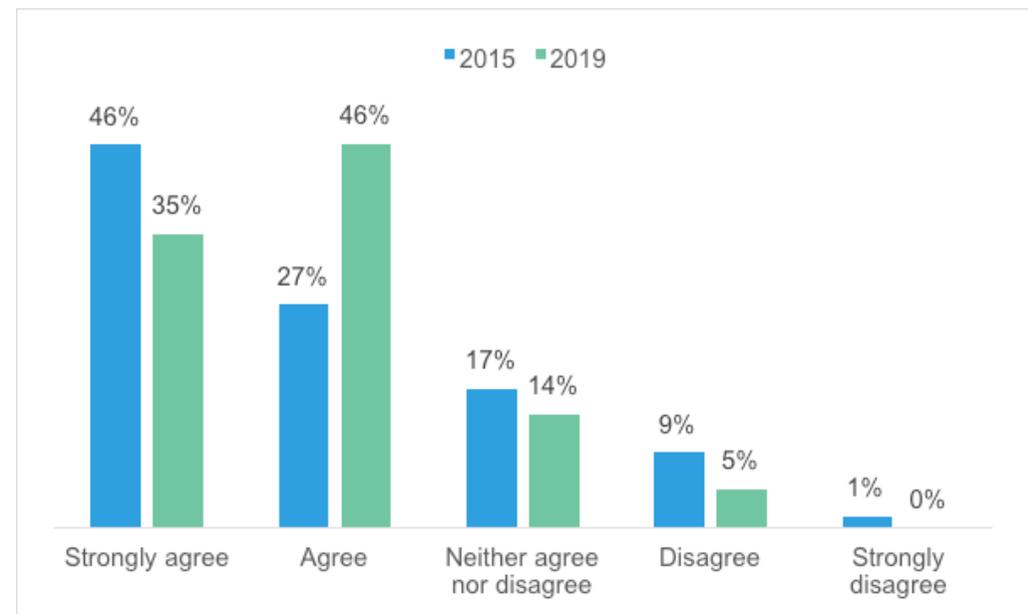
- National team notifies PACE Chair of a redundancy once the HR1 has been triggered (20 or more redundancies), or they will hear about redundancies through the media, word of mouth, or from other partners.
- PACE Chair generally checks with the Enterprise Agency contact whether the employer is an account-managed business (in these cases the Enterprise Agency representatives may make the initial employer contact).
- PACE Chair takes the lead in mobilising the partnership and deciding what partners need to be involved.
- PACE Chair contacts employer and offers support. Meeting with the employer will usually happen within 48 hours of original notification.
- Presentation offered to all employees (as a minimum), then individual support/signposting offered based on customer need.
- The specific nature of response will be tailored to need, based on size of employer, number of redundancies, profile of staff affected, sector, and imminence of the job losses.

Early identification of customer needs will define the approach and level of support offered. For example, one PACE chair spoke of employees at a particular company who had been identified with pre-existing health conditions. She then tailored the presentation to include information on health services.

Effectiveness of management approaches

We asked respondents to what extent they agreed that their local PACE Partnership was being managed effectively. As Figure 10 shows, the vast majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that management approaches were effective (81%); an improvement on the data available from 2015. The overall proportion disagreeing with this statement has halved since 2015 from 10% to 5%.

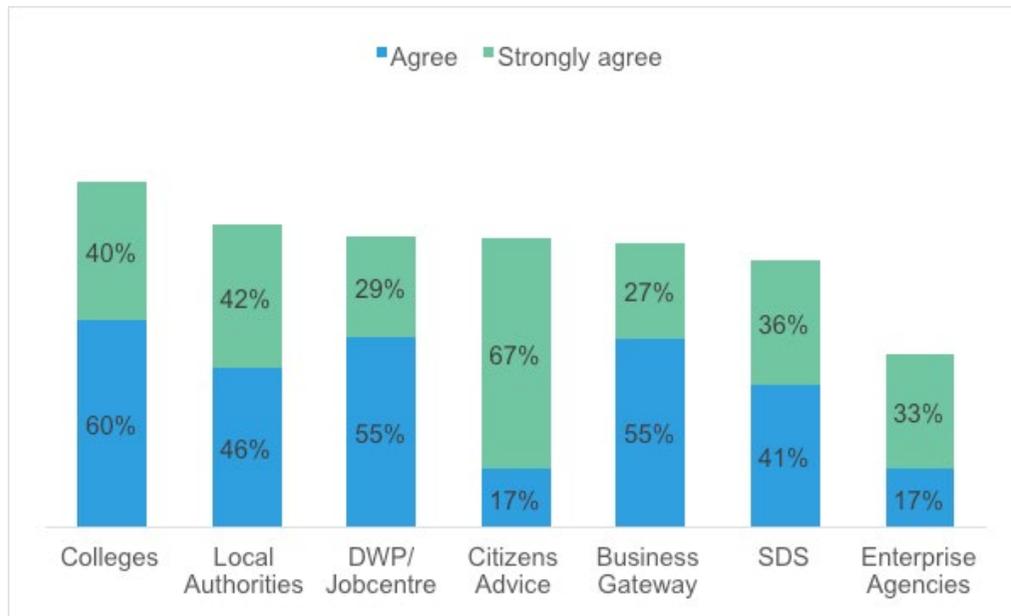
Figure 10 Whether you agree that existing local management arrangements for PACE are effective (2015 and 2019)



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=110) and SDS internal data (2015)

The views of local partners from different organisations regarding the effectiveness of management were broadly positive, with College, Local Authority and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) respondents providing the most positive responses as Figure 11 shows. And although not as high as the other core partner organisations, more than three quarters of Skills Development Scotland (SDS) respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that management was effective. However, only half of Enterprise Agency respondents agreed that the existing local management arrangements for PACE were effective.

Figure 11 Whether you agree that existing local management arrangements for PACE are effective by organisation type



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=110)

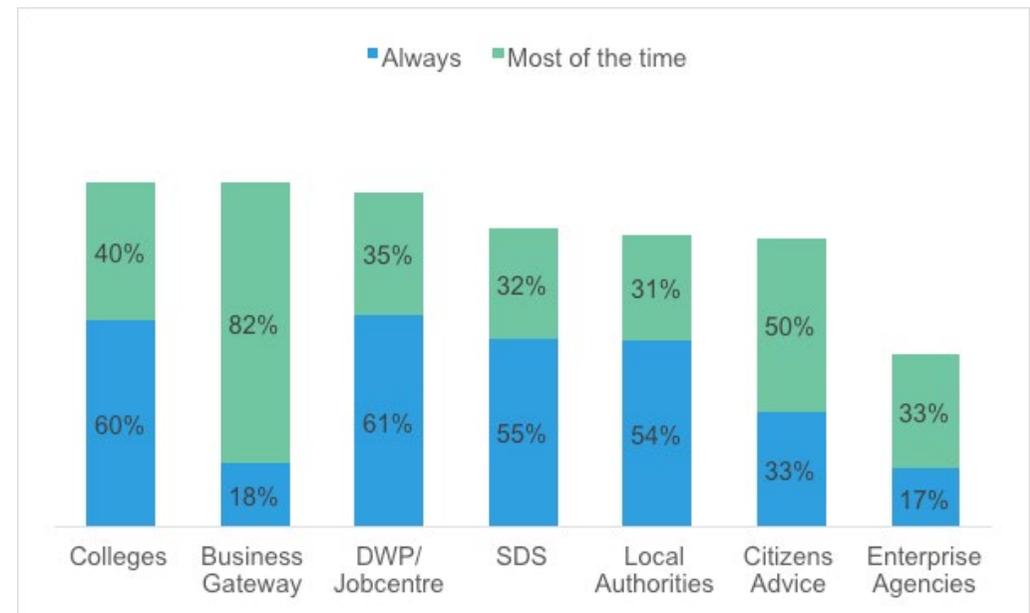
Partner and stakeholder responses on the management of the local partnerships were also largely positive:

‘It works extremely well - SDS do an excellent job of co-ordinating PACE and communications between all partners is very effective.’

Resourcing

Our Partner Survey asked respondents whether they always had adequate resources to meet the needs of PACE support. In this context, resources will mainly involve staff time to attend PACE meetings. Just under half (48%) stated that they always had adequate resources and a further 40% felt that resources were adequate most of the time. However, around one in eight respondents identified that adequate resources were available only some of the time (12%). As Figure 12 shows, among different types of partner, Colleges and DWP/Jobcentres were most likely to identify adequate resourcing. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Local Authority respondents provided a similar response profile; although local authorities had the highest proportion answering ‘some of the time’ among core partners at 15%. Enterprise Agencies appear to have the biggest issues in resourcing PACE services among the main groups surveyed. Only half identified having adequate resources all the time or most of the time.

Figure 12 Ability to provide the appropriate resources to respond effectively to major redundancies by organisation type



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=112)

The resource requirement will depend on a number of factors. Every case is different, and the response needs to be tailored to meet the specific need. Clearly, the scale of the potential job losses is the main factor, however the lead-in time for providing support will also impact on resources, as one Focus Group participant highlighted:

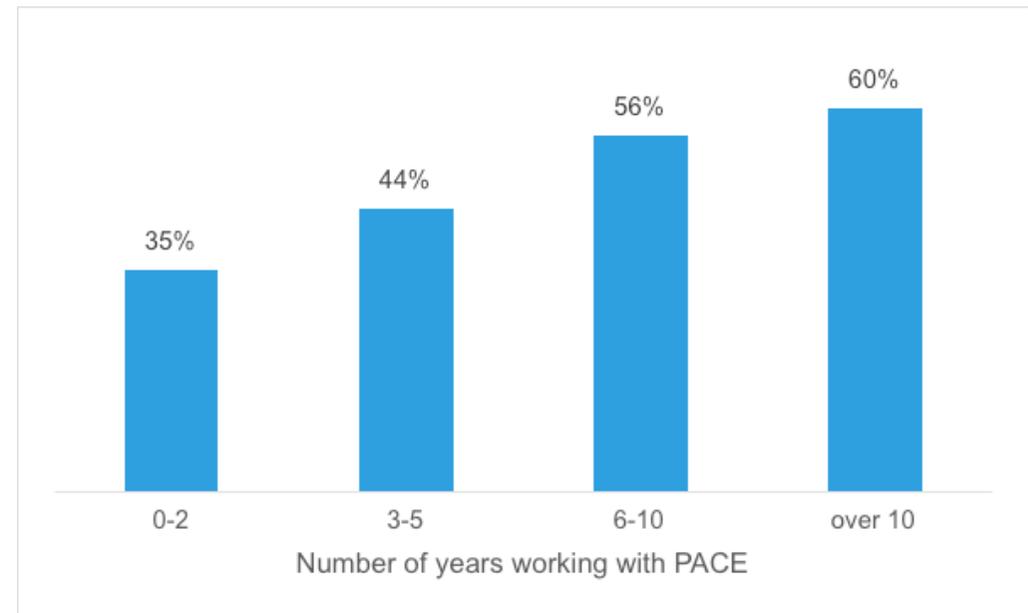
‘The longer lead-in time means that staff can consider career change options; which has implications for resources. With staff looking at career change as a possibility, there is more demand for one-to-one support with SDS and Business Gateway.’

And in another instance, the local SDS PACE team only had a short window for action but required a big response to a specific redundancy which required support from outside of the team. In some smaller, rural areas it can be more difficult to resource larger redundancies, for example in the Outer Hebrides:

‘While resources are normally adequate, larger redundancies require staff to be deployed from elsewhere on the islands. There can be nothing for months and then a cluster of two or three redundancy scenarios.’

It also appears that the level of experience with PACE work is a key factor in ensuring that responses are fully resourced. As Figure 13 shows, the longer partners had been engaged with PACE, the more likely they were to be able to always resource PACE responses. Some 60% of those who had more than 10 years’ experience highlighted they were always able to effectively resource responses. However, this dropped to just 35% among those with two or less years’ experience. This reinforces the issues outlined earlier around the significance of ‘mature relationships’. It also presents a challenge for succession planning, where PACE Chairs or organisational leads retire or move on.

Figure 13 Proportion of partners who are always able to provide the appropriate resources to respond effectively to major redundancies by length of time involved with PACE



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=112)

With budgets being stretched among many partners, we also picked up signs of partnership working unravelling slightly, with some pushback against requests for support. Survey respondents highlighted issues with some partners not pulling their weight.

‘More commitment from some partners to the concept of partnership working. Some partners are starting to push the boundaries of partnership working to some extent. PACE is the sum total of its parts and some organisations need to understand this better.’

‘Partners need to be more aware of what their business has signed up to deliver. There is sometimes a reluctance to respond appropriately by giving the required resource. Very difficult for the PACE Chairs to enforce this so it would be good if this could come from a higher level.’

This highlights the fact that PACE provides coordination of existing services only, rather than adding to service delivery. There is no specific local budget or resource commitment made for PACE at the local level, aside from staff attending meetings.

Improving reach

Employers

Our discussions with local PACE Chairs suggest that most employers are happy to engage with PACE and are keen to make sure their employees get access to the support they need. However, in all areas there seems to be a minority of employers who do not want to engage, or who are actively obstructive to PACE teams. The reasons given include:

- not wanting employees to take time away from work;
- not wanting to antagonise employees; and
- lack of understanding and wariness of what PACE teams will provide.

Some examples given included a smaller, family-run business which was reluctant to engage with the PACE ‘banner’ because they were wary that the PACE team engaging with staff would ‘cause trouble’. In this instance, the Chair did his best to inform the business owner about the PACE role and to ensure those facing redundancies received support.

Another issue, highlighted in one of our rural focus groups, was where construction workers are laid off as contracts come to an end. This generally happens ‘under the radar’ and, while they are technically being made redundant, this is a cyclical part of the construction industry, and employers will not generally engage with PACE teams. Workers will generally use their down time to upskill or to renew/

upgrade their Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) tickets. However, partners report that it is difficult to secure funding to support them. While the numbers may be quite small, sometimes three or four workers, this can have a significant impact on small, rural communities and economies.

Smaller contractors and SMEs are harder to reach as they are less likely to have day to day contact with partners. They won’t necessarily know who to go to. Issues around smaller employers were also highlighted through the survey:

‘Small companies with no HR dept often don’t know how to proceed in making redundancies, don’t know about SDS or PACE.’

‘employees from smaller companies can slip through the net as no HR1 requirement which formally kicks in PACE services. Better marketing so those individuals know to approach SDS for holistic overview of PACE services.’

It can be more difficult to reach employers where the company has closed down very quickly and gone into administration. However, the national team has developed very good relationships with the main administrators, which makes it easier to provide services to employees in these circumstances.

Other employers who may not engage with PACE are those who use private sector out-placement agencies. As one survey respondent highlighted:

‘Companies with head offices in England or abroad often hire in redundancy help as they are unfamiliar with SDS and PACE. It’s difficult then for us to get in.’

However, we came across several instances where PACE teams coordinated activity and worked closely alongside out-placement services (including Michelin and Talk Talk). They reported a good balance between the sectoral specialism of the private sector and the local knowledge of labour market and funding that the PACE team brings.

Employees

Several partners highlighted the difficulties in providing services to night shift workers affected by redundancies. Given that most partner organisations work around standard daytime working hours, delivering support to night shift workers usually requires an SDS adviser and/or a DWP representative to volunteer to attend a night-time session. This will happen from time to time; particularly where the redundancy is a larger manufacturer. One respondent identified the possibility of making better use of technology to either record the presentation or deliver it through a webinar or similar web-based format.

In some scenarios where there are large numbers of migrant workers, communication and language issues can emerge. This was identified in several areas, including the Outer Hebrides, Borders, Fife, Dumfries and Galloway and Inner Moray Firth. PACE teams have generally been able to address these issues through accessing either a partner organisation representative or employee representative who is bilingual. With one fish processing redundancy, there was a need to use an interpreter to translate. PACE information packs are available in various EU languages.

Marketing and publicity

Partners highlighted the importance of ensuring awareness and visibility of the PACE service. Good partnership links and relationships are key to this, with intelligence being shared and passed on through the local partners. In one partnership area, they had ensured there was prominent PACE presence in business materials such as local business and service directories, so that businesses could find the details without partners having to 'push' it to potential customers.

Several local partnership Chairs were aware of the radio advertisement about PACE services, although none of these could identify whether it had made much of an impact.

A few interviewees and stakeholders highlighted the issue of the PACE name and brand; suggesting that it was not always clear to customers what PACE stands for and what services it offers. Another issue identified by some of the interviewees was the difficulties that partners had in marketing the services of PACE, because it may portray too negative a perspective. This was highlighted by Enterprise Agency staff in particular, who wanted their interactions with businesses to focus on more positive aspects of business growth.

One focus group participant suggested that it would be useful to understand how employers or individuals find out about PACE as part of the data recording process.

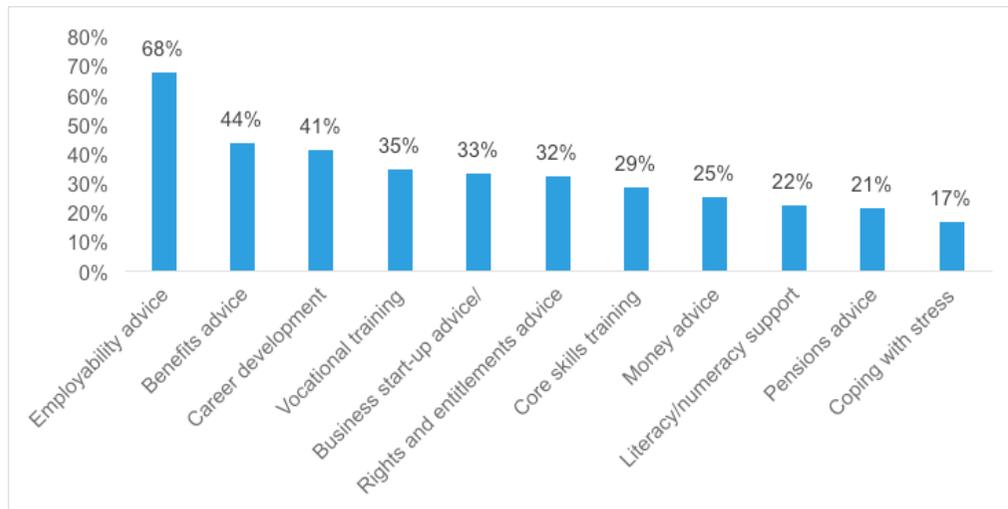
GAPS IN SERVICES

This section looks at the services that local partnerships provide and what types of service there may be gaps around.

Services being provided

From our survey of Local Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) Partners, it is clear, as Figure 14 shows, that most services focus on Employability advice, benefits advice, career development and training. This reflects the main roles of the core partners involved in PACE delivery.

Figure 14 Services provided by local PACE Partners



Source: Local PACE Partner survey 2019 (n=112)

Other types of support are developed collaboratively through PACE, for example: Future Jobs Fairs in the Forth Valley PACE Partnership. In this partnership, the Local Authority will generally take the lead in organising the jobs fair to promote employment opportunities

alongside wider PACE support in the context of major redundancies. In responding to the Carron Phoenix redundancy scenario, a series of ten Future Jobs Fairs were organised which were 'clearly beneficial' in getting people other employment or retraining opportunities.

Types of service that may be needed

Broadly, across the majority of partnerships that we engaged with, there were two areas where there were perceived to be gaps in services provided through PACE, these were:

- consistently funded training; and
- mental health and wellbeing support.

Other' less frequently identified issues were:

- linking up more effectively to current or emerging job opportunities; and
- earlier intervention (before redundancies announced).

Issues around accessing funding

One key element highlighted in our research was the limitations on resources for training. This was highlighted across all local partnership areas where we carried out focus groups. As one focus group participant commented:

'There is no 'clear route to funding'. In the past, each LEC used to have its own pot of funding for redundancy support. There is nothing that meets the needs fully (outside of the Oil and Gas Transition Training Fund). People looking to upskill or renew their CSCS 'tickets' need to use the JCP funding (Rapid Response). The Employability Fund is being moved to Local Authority administration and the number of Stage 4 places is declining. The Individual Training Account doesn't fit every situation.'

The lack of consistency across different geographies in funding was also highlighted by survey respondents:

‘A big issue for Careers Advisers is the lack of consistency with the Employability Fund and geography. Not all customers can be offered similar training opportunities due to them being from a different local authority area.’

Mental health services

Local partnerships highlighted a growing need for mental health and wellbeing support as part of the package of measures available to customers.

‘PACE needs to strengthen its service in certain PACE situations - responding to clients with mental health and anxiety issues.’

Most partnerships have information and signposting details to NHS or third sector providers of support. The only local partnership with direct provision for mental health services that we spoke to was Forth Valley, which has Falkirk and District Association for Mental Health (FDAMH) as one of its delivery partners. FDAMH are involved in the Future Job Fair events, and while they generally do not get many people approaching directly, they get a lot of calls afterwards. This partnership also signposts links to national services that deal with transition. Some people prefer to access help anonymously or remotely, while others will want face-to-face support.

Another of the local Chairs highlighted that mental wellbeing is an area where there is often a demand in the larger-scale redundancies. It is something they are getting asked about more frequently. At the moment they direct people to online resources and they have pulled together a two-page leaflet with resources about managing stress and mental health.

Links to job opportunities

While connecting those going through redundancy with current or emerging job opportunities is a key element in PACE delivery, there are inconsistencies in the extent to which local partners implement this. Several survey respondents highlighted this as an area where services could be strengthened.

‘Would like to have better links with agencies who liaise with companies looking to set up, take over, utilise redundant workforce.’

Early intervention

Several stakeholders and survey respondents highlighted the potential for PACE to get involved with businesses at an earlier stage than currently. One suggestion was that PACE could respond to earliest notification of court orders against companies for the late or disputed payment of bills, as this would provide signs of business stress and distress.

Another issue raised was the impact of a large-scale redundancy scenario on the local and wider supply chain. Pre-emptive support could be directed towards supply chain and downstream businesses who may be at risk of knock on impacts from job losses.

Groups who may need further support

Older workers

Several focus group participants and survey respondents highlighted the specific needs of older workers. Over 55s always appear to be the group that struggle the most in terms of transitioning into another job or retraining. However, this is not necessarily a factor related to PACE, but reflective of wider barriers in the labour market, and the lower likelihood of older workers having transferable skills or recent job-search experience.

‘Previous research confirmed it is harder for older individuals affected by redundancy to find work. I think PACE and government need to do a big promotion campaign to extol the virtues of mid-older workers to employers; especially in light of demographic changes, Brexit etc.’

While these workers are being reached by PACE teams, they tend to require more support to get back into the jobs market.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out the key conclusions from the research, based on the objectives set out in the brief. It also identifies several recommendations to build on the strong delivery of Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) services locally and to ensure local partnerships remain effective.

Partnership composition

PACE aims to minimise the time individuals affected by redundancy are out of work. Local PACE Partnerships are led and chaired by Skills Development Scotland (SDS), who work closely with local authorities and staff from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)/ Jobcentres in delivering PACE support to individuals affected by redundancy. While these three partner organisations play the biggest role in PACE, they work with Colleges, Business Gateways, Enterprise Agencies and Citizens Advice Bureaux to plan and deliver support. Each partnership area also brings in other organisations to deliver services, these include Libraries, training providers, trade unions third sector organisations specialising in areas such as pensions advice and mental health.

Roles and responsibilities

While the majority of local PACE Partnership Chairs have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of partners; this is not always true of partner organisations. This is particularly likely to be the case where there have been staff and organisational changes. Chairs rely on 'mature relationships' to resource and deliver support, but these relationships take time to build up, meaning those new to the role can sometimes find it more difficult to engage partners for redundancy responses.

Partnership structures

Only one local partnership which we spoke to had a written partnership protocol. Outside of SDS, the commitment of partners relies on existing relationships and their having adequate resources to deliver PACE services effectively.

The majority of local PACE Partnerships have no scheduled meetings, coming together only when they are delivering PACE services. The remainder meet between two and four times a year to discuss and agree on the PACE offer, to update on any key organisational changes and to share learning. Around three in ten PACE Chairs would like to have more formal partnership meetings. However almost four in ten are happy with not having scheduled meetings and only meeting when necessary.

Our interviews and focus groups suggest that lack of formal arrangements can lead to problems particularly when there is a combination of:

- staff changes;
- service changes (due to budget cuts for example); and
- changing needs.

Where there is no formal commitment to local involvement, it is potentially an easy area for service cuts. This is evident in several areas where roles are changing and services reducing; particularly local authority and business gateway roles. Often this means other partners having to backfill these roles or services.

One fundamental issue which the research highlighted is that no-one knows what PACE costs to deliver. PACE provides coordination of existing services only, so local authorities and other key partners do not have a budget allocation against delivering it. The danger of this, is that its resources can be removed unintentionally as part of budget savings.

Training needs

The majority of those who are delivering PACE support have not received any specific training related to their PACE role. Those with less experience with PACE are the least likely to have received training. There is no formal induction process for representatives joining local PACE Partnerships, with new staff learning through shadowing, handover support and through doing the job.

While there would appear to be a high demand for training among respondents to the survey, when we look at what respondents need, most requests focus around understanding the offer, knowing what all partners deliver and finding out about recent changes. These issues might more effectively be addressed through improved information exchange rather than through formal training.

Communication

PACE Chairs are responsible for communicating with other local partners and they do this largely through email, phone calls and through existing relationships and forums outside of PACE. Communication channels within local PACE Partnerships are generally considered to be effective, and the effectiveness of how SDS communicates with other partners has improved over recent years. Almost nine out of ten partners surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that communication was effective.

Our focus groups highlighted some issues in the communication with the Scottish Government in large-scale redundancy scenarios. While partners understood the need for the Scottish Government to be kept up-to-date on the response; there were instances where information requests were being needlessly duplicated because they were not being directed through the Scottish Government PACE policy area.

Communication and support from the SDS national PACE team was generally considered to be effective and responsive. Some partners identified potential areas for further national support including providing a directory of specialist advisers across the country and providing template documents that local partners could edit and use.

Reflective learning

Local Partnerships have a range of different approaches to reflective learning, which tends to be informal and incorporated into other meetings. Where regular partnership meetings take place, this is usually an item on the agenda. All areas we spoke to would like to allocate more time to reflective learning, and only just over half of partners surveyed thought that the current arrangements for sharing good practice were sufficient. Partnerships identified more sharing of learning between areas, more written case studies, and more use of web-based approaches to sharing learning. Indeed, most of what was identified in the survey responses as training needs would be addressed through more sharing of:

- changes to organisations and funding;
- partner roles and responsibilities;
- refreshers and updates on redundancy processes and benefits;
- impacts and success stories; and
- innovative practice.

All local partnership representatives who had engaged with the national CPD events had considered them to be useful and worth attending. Comments on how to improve on these sessions focused on:

- making them more accessible; possibly through having regional events;
- getting input from wider (non SDS) partners to designing them; and
- holding them more frequently to enable more people to engage.

Follow-up and impact

While PACE customer information is gathered at the national level, several local partners highlighted a lack of locally available information on impact beyond anecdotal feedback. No organisation tracks the progress of individuals and the PACE Client Experience Survey is the main way of identifying the impact of PACE services. Partners would ideally like some level of more formal PACE Client Experience Survey feedback locally on impact and how customers they had supported were progressing. However, without formal tracking of customers by any of the local partners this is difficult.

Effectiveness of approaches

There is a well-established and largely standardised approach to how local partnerships respond to redundancy scenarios. This works well, with local partnerships augmenting the formal approaches with wider contacts and networks to pick up and share local intelligence.

Resourcing

While local partnerships appear to be resourcing PACE services and responding effectively to employers and customers, there are some emerging issues around resourcing. Budget tightening across partner organisations has already led to service delivery and/or staff changes in at least three local partnerships. Enterprise Agency representatives were also more likely to identify resourcing issues, with only half able to provide appropriate resources all, or most of the time. Partner representatives with less experience of PACE delivery were also less likely to be confident of resourcing PACE responses appropriately. This may be linked to the importance of the 'mature relationships' outlined earlier, in coordinating services.

Reach

While most partnerships considered that they engaged effectively with employers in their areas, there were always some instances where employers chose not to, or were reluctant to, engage. These were generally smaller employers who did not know what PACE was, or who had misconceptions about what their role was. There were also employers who did not want to bring PACE into the workplace because they did not want their employees' time taken up. Local partnerships had generally worked around these problems to support employees outside of the workplace and make sure they knew what support they were entitled to.

In terms of employees, the groups that were more difficult to reach included:

- night shift workers; and
- employees whose first language is not English.

Local partners had generally found supporting night shift staff more difficult as it required volunteers from SDS and DWP to deliver the

presentations. One interviewee suggested that recorded presentations or webinars could be used to deliver support to night shift staff.

Many large-scale redundancies had involved large numbers of Eastern European employees with limited English language. Local partners had identified local employee or partner representatives who had the required language skills to translate or had brought in specialist advisers with the help of the SDS National PACE team.

Marketing

Partners were keen to ensure that PACE was visible and that those requiring the services could easily find out about it. However, there was a certain reluctance to proactively market PACE services to employers; because some partners considered it might give out the wrong messages or appear too negative. There was a general reluctance, for example, to use social media. Some stakeholders considered that the PACE 'brand' was too vague, and that it should have a more clearly understood name.

Gaps in services

There were two consistent areas where local partners highlighted there could be improvements to the services provided through PACE, these were:

- mental and emotional wellbeing; and
- funding for training.

Several respondents highlighted a growing demand for mental health and wellbeing support; particularly as part of large-scale responses. Most partnerships provide referral information only for these types of services; either to the NHS or to third sector specialists. One partnership incorporated specialist mental health services into its core response to larger scale redundancies.

The lack of, and variability of, funding for training was widely reported throughout this research. Issues included the lack of availability of Employability Fund places, local variations in Local Authority and Rapid Response funding and the capping of Individual Training Account places in late 2018.

PACE Pledge

Participants agreed that there should be a national standardised PACE offer, so that all customers know what service they are entitled to, regardless of where they live. This would help to address some of the 'postcode lottery' perceptions. Central roles would include:

- national strategic communication with Scottish Government;
- marketing;
- common resources (tools, templates etc.);
- national response support;
- specialist support signposting;
- monitoring and evaluation support; and
- networking and sharing good practice between partnerships.

However there also needs to be flexibility at local level to reflect varying need and differences in the local delivery landscape, including:

- local Labour Market demand and prospects;
- different (and changing) organisational structures and services provided locally; and
- differences in the funding landscape across local areas.

Each local partnership benefits from 'on the ground' intelligence, a strong knowledge of their local labour market and strong networks and relationships.

Recommendations

Partnership protocol

Each local partnership should have a partnership protocol setting out the roles and responsibilities of partners and outlining the approaches involved in the PACE response. This will help partners who are not as closely involved to improve their understanding of what other partners are delivering and provide an easily accessible mutual reference point. Scottish Government/SDS PACE should provide a basic template for this, if required.

Each partner organisation should provide a high-level commitment to delivering the PACE response based on the protocol.

Information sharing and updates

Each partnership Chair should identify effective ways of sharing information between partners, including updates on services and roles and feedback on PACE delivery. Partners should come together formally at least once a year to share experiences, reflect on delivery and update each other on any organisational changes. The Chair should consult on the timing and format of meetings, however they should have a focus on learning and information exchange. Where regular physical meetings are impractical, partners should consider video-conferencing or skype meetings.

Induction for new partnership representatives

Each partnership should identify how it will support and train new partnership representatives. This should form part of the written protocol outlined above. Guidance for SDS Chairs on carrying out induction for new representatives should be provided.

Widening access to CPD

The SDS National PACE team should support partnerships to develop wider opportunities for learning and CPD around PACE. This should include planning skype calls with external input and developing online learning resources that can be accessed by local partners.

Training needs

While many of the training needs identified by PACE Partners could be addressed through the measures outlined above, Chairs should identify any specific additional training needs among partners and feed these back to the SDS National Team.

Strengthening mental wellbeing support

The SDS National PACE Team and Scottish Government should support local PACE Partnerships to incorporate mental wellbeing into their PACE offer. This could include improved guidance and signposting as part of the information sessions and dialogue with potential service providers.

APPENDIX A: COMPOSITION OF LOCAL PACE PARTNERSHIPS

Argyll	Skills Development Scotland
	Business Gateway
	DWP
	Citizens Advice Bureau
	UHI - Argyll College
	Argyll and Bute Council
Ayrshire	Skills Development Scotland
	Business Gateway
	Ayrshire College
	East Ayrshire Council
	South Ayrshire Council
	North Ayrshire Council
	Citizens Advice Bureau
	DWP
	Scottish Enterprise
Scottish Borders	Skills Development Scotland
	Citizens Advice Bureau Central
	Citizens Advice Bureau Roxburghshire
	Citizens Advice Bureau Berwickshire
	Citizens Advice Bureau Peebleshire
	DWP
	Business Gateway
	Scottish Borders Council Welfare Benefits
	Borders College
	Volunteer Centre Borders
	Pensionwise
	Scottish Enterprise
	Live Borders Library Services

Dumfries & Galloway	Skills Development Scotland
	Citizens Advice Service
	Dumfries and Galloway College
	D&G Council Economic Development/Employability
	DWP
	Scottish Enterprise
	Business Gateway
Dunbartonshire	NHS
	Skills Development Scotland
	East Dunbartonshire Council
	Argyll & Bute Council
	DWP
	Business Gateway
	New College Lanarkshire
	Scottish Enterprise
	West College Scotland
	West Dunbartonshire Council
Fife	Skills Development Scotland
	DWP
	Fife College
	Fife Council
	Business Gateway
	Business Gateway
Forth Valley	Skills Development Scotland
	Business Gateway
	DWP
	Falkirk Council
	Forth Valley College
	Clackmannanshire Council
	Stirling Council
	Scottish Enterprise
	Scottish Enterprise

Glasgow	Skills Development Scotland
	Business Gateway
	City of Glasgow College
	DWP
	Glasgow Chamber of Commerce
	Glasgow City Council
	Glasgow Clyde College
	Glasgow Kelvin College
	Scottish Enterprise
	Money Advice Services
	STUC
Pensionwise	
Grampian	Skills Development Scotland
	Aberdeen City Council
	Aberdeenshire Council
	Business Gateway
	Citizens Advice Bureau
	DWP
	North East Scotland College
	NHS
	Scottish Enterprise
Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce	

Highland	Skills Development Scotland
	DWP
	Highland Council Employability Service
	Chamber of Commerce
	Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership
	West Highland College
	Inverness College
	Highlands & Islands Enterprise
	Voluntary Action Lochaber
	North Highland College (UHI) Thurso
	Business Gateway
	Citizen's Advice
	Volunteering Highland - Wick
	HMRC - Wick
	Lairg Learning Centre
	Brora Learning Centre
Highland Council PPP Forum	
Arise - Homeworking	
Lanarkshire	Skills Development Scotland
	Business Gateway
	Citizens Advice Bureau
	DWP
	New College Lanarkshire
	North Lanarkshire Council
	South Lanarkshire College
	South Lanarkshire Council
Edinburgh and Lothians	Skills Development Scotland
	DWP
	Business Gateway
	City of Edinburgh Council
	East Lothian Council
	Midlothian Council
West Lothian Council	

Moray	Skills Development Scotland
	Highlands and Islands Enterprise Moray
	DWP
	Moray College
	Business Gateway
	Moray Council
Orkney	Skills Development Scotland
	Citizens Advice Bureau
	DWP
	Orkney College
	Business Gateway
	Voluntary Action Orkney
Renfrewshire	Skills Development Scotland
	Business Gateway
	East Renfrewshire Council
	Inverclyde Council
	DWP
	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
	Renfrewshire Council
	Inverclyde Community Development Trust
	Scottish Enterprise
	West College Scotland
Shetland	Skills Development Scotland
	DWP
	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
	Business Gateway
	Lifeskills
	NAFC Marine Centre, University of Highlands
	Citizens Advice Bureau
	Shetland Library
	Train Shetland/Lifeskills
	Adult Learning
	Shetland Council Economic Development
	Shetland College
	Shetland Islands Council

Tayside	Skills Development Scotland
	Perth and Kinross Council
	DWP
	Business Gateway
	Perth College
	Dundee City Council
	Tayside Council Welfare Rights
	Angus Council
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Dundee and Angus College
	Dundee and Angus Chamber of Commerce
	CAB Money Advice Team
	Skills Development Scotland
	Cothrom
	HIE Innse Gall
	DWP
	Lews Castle College
	Business Gateway/Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
	Western Isles Citizens Advice Bureau

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP ATTENDANCE

We held Focus Groups in seven Local Partnership areas:

- Ayrshire
- Lanarkshire
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Lochaber (Highland)
- Forth Valley
- Glasgow
- Outer Hebrides

Organisation	Number of attendees
Skills Development Scotland	11
DWP/Jobcentre Plus	10
Local authorities	6
College/University	3
Business Gateway	2
Highland and Islands Enterprise	2
Scottish Enterprise	1
Citizens Advice	3
Total	38

APPENDIX C: PACE PARTNER SURVEY QUESTIONS



About your organisation

This survey will be used to help Skills Development Scotland and its partners to review its services and how it supports local partnerships. All responses will be treated anonymously. If you would like further information about this survey, please contact Steven Ross on telephone 0141 204 3183 or email steven.ross@hallaitken.co.uk.

1. Please identify which organisation you work for.

Skills Development Scotland	Citizens Advice
DWP/Jobcentre	Training provider
Local Authority	Trade Union
College/FE sector	Private sector (please specify below)
Enterprise Agency	Other public sector (please specify below)
Business Gateway	Other voluntary sector (please specify below)
Chamber of Commerce	
Please specify	

Role

2. Are you the Chair of the local PACE Partnership?

- Yes->Q.3
- No ->Q.8

3. How often does your local PACE Partnership meet?

- More than once a month
- Around once a month
- Every two months
- Quarterly
- Only when required (please give details)

4. What is the purpose of the meetings? Select as many as are relevant.

- Plan delivery of PACE
- Reflective practice
- Reviewing PACE offer
- Other (please specify)

5. In what ways do you communicate or share information with partners about the PACE partnership outside of formal meetings?

7. How do you share learning and good practice with other PACE teams across Scotland?

6. Do you feel there should be more formal meetings of the local PACE partnership?

8. Are you the main contact for PACE work in your organisation?

Yes
No

Yes
No

If yes, what should they focus on?

9. Who else in your organisation is involved in supporting PACE activity?

Your experience with PACE

10. How long have you been involved with supporting PACE? Please enter the number of years.

11. Have you received any specific training on providing support through PACE?

Yes
No

12. Do you feel you would benefit from any additional training on PACE related support?

Yes
No

If yes, please specify

13. In what ways do you provide support to PACE customers? Click all that apply.

Rights and entitlements advice
Employability advice (job-search, CV writing, interview skills)
Benefits advice
Career development
Business start-up advice/support
Core skills training
Vocational training
Coping with stress
Money advice
Pensions advice
Literacy/numeracy support
Other (please specify)

14. Over the past six months, approximately how many times has your organisation supported individuals or employers through PACE?

	None	Once or twice	Three to six times	Seven to ten times	More than ten times
Individuals					
Employers					

15. Is your organisation able to provide the appropriate resources to respond effectively to major redundancies?

- Always
- Most of the time
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

PACE delivery

16. Are existing local management arrangements for PACE effective?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

17. Is communication between SDS and PACE partners effective?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

18. Are there sufficient opportunities to share examples of good practice with other PACE Partners?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

19. In what ways could local PACE partnerships be more effective in these aspects?

20. Are there any groups who you feel could benefit more from existing PACE services?

21. Are you aware of any additional services which PACE partners could offer to customers that are not currently being offered?

22. What (if any) support does your PACE partnership require from outside of the local partnership?



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