



Scottish Union of Supported Employment

**‘More than the Sum of the Parts’ Project
Final Evaluation**

SMART CONSULTANCY SCOTLAND
DECEMBER 2018



CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. Introduction and process	3
2. Background and context	5
3. More than the Sum of the Parts - objectives and projected activities	14
4. Progress Review	16
5. Key learning and project legacy	40

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS

Smart Consultancy was commissioned by SUSE in the summer of 2014 to undertake a longitudinal evaluation of the 'More than the Sum of the Parts' (MTSP) project.

SUSE was awarded a four-year grant by the Big Lottery Fund to support this project. Its overall aim is to promote the employment of disabled people by supporting a range of related activities which engage and support employers, provide additional support for disabled people looking to progress into or in the workplace, and enhance the capacity of SUSE member organisations. Specifically, it aimed to ensure:

1. Employers will have increased skills, knowledge and feel more confident about employing disabled people and supporting disabled employees.
2. More disabled people will have greater opportunities for work of their choice, and have moved into employment or retained employment.
3. Supported employment agencies will have an increased ability to progress economically inactive disabled people into sustainable careers.

The BLF grant began in August 2014, and supported project activity until the end of July 2018.

Process

The evaluation work was designed as a both a formative (assisting in ongoing project development) and summative (reflecting and reviewing what has happened) support role.

An interim report on progress was produced in November 2016, and this report consolidates these earlier findings, and reviews subsequent progress. MTSP has now finished as a

stand-alone project, but section 5 details key learning and how the legacy of this is being utilised to support further developments.

The overall review process included:

- development of an initial project evaluation plan;
- an initial workshop with the project steering group to identify initial expectations and inform the full Performance Framework;
- development and agreement of the final Performance Framework;
- ongoing regular liaison with project staff to consider progress and advise on future project development;
- ongoing review of all project outcomes, including newsletters, publications, progress reports, and performance updates;
- workshops with supported employment agency staff;
- review of all final project documents and outcomes – this has included consideration and use of a number of elements of internal review work undertaken on parts of the project.

SECTION 2

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Three related elements of context are relevant to the project, and its aspirations: the overall role of SUSE; how this evolved to applying for funding for the MTSP project; and the wider operating context relevant to the supported employment agenda. As detailed below, the latter has continued to evolve significantly through the period of project operation.

Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE)

The Scottish Union of Supported Employment is an umbrella organisation for public, private and voluntary bodies interested in supported employment, social inclusion, and the movement from traditional resource-centre based day services to support programmes in the community.

The progress and profile of SUSE continues to increase. In recent years activities have included input to Scottish supported employment policy, the development of a blueprint for Supported Employment in Scotland, and the development of tools for improving the quality and consistency of supported employment. In addition, SUSE Board members worked with the Scottish Government and COSLA (Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities) to develop and deliver the recommendations laid out in the Scottish Government's Equal Opportunities report (Removing Barriers and Creating Opportunities). This culminated in the publication of "A Working Life for All Disabled People. The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland" published in 2010.

SUSE's mission is rooted in tackling workplace inequality. Within this, ensuring equal access to employment for disabled people is part of creating a more equal society and successful economy. Supported employment is particularly effective at moving disabled people into paid work and supporting them in their jobs. Consequently, SUSE aims to:

- help businesses employ and support disabled people through training, partnership working, and specialist advice;
- give more disabled people greater opportunities for work of their choice, and for more disabled people to have moved into or retained employment;
- increase the ability of supported employment services to progress disabled people into sustainable careers.

More than the Sum of the Parts (MTSP) project

The MTSP project originated from a combination of this wider SUSE purpose, and specific research work undertaken to (a) identify the key barriers to further progress on supported employment, and (b) better understand the access to work and in work experiences and the aspirations of people seeking a supported employment opportunity. Some key messages emerged from this research:

- that more work was needed with employers to change attitudes and promote supported employment opportunities;
- that people looking for opportunities value peer support, but felt access to this was limited and inconsistent;
- that individual supported employment agencies and SUSE members saw value in a national SUSE led project to support their activities and further enhance their capacity to source supported employment opportunities.

Responding to these factors led to the design of a successful application for 4 years of support from the Big Lottery Fund in 2014. The resulting project – ‘More Than the Sum of the Parts’ - is described in more detail in section 3.

The wider operating context

MTSPs was designed and continued to operate within a wider and dynamic operating context which shaped and provided further opportunities and rationale to develop supported employment. By the interim evaluation in late 2016, the main elements were identified as:



Employment rates of disabled people – the stark and simple starting point of the project is ongoing recognition that employment rates for disabled people remain low and well below average for the population as a whole. This stands in contrast to the recorded aspirations of many disabled people to work in some form. Research continually reflects a sense that series of barriers to work explain this outcome, and also that many employers indicate they need more support to provide further opportunities. Supported employment is recognised as the route in assisting many to meet these aspirations.

'A Working Life for All Disabled People - the Supported Employment Framework for Scotland' - published in 2010 this strategy recognises the key value of supported employment to people looking for opportunities and employers. It is premised on people maximising their contribution in a workplace setting, and calls for key attitudinal shifts across employers and wider stakeholders. The strategy also notes that supported employment is a more cost-effective approach to many previous non-work focused approaches, but that at present the demand for opportunities significantly outstrips demand.

Employability strategies and aspirations which seek to ensure that all people are supported into and sustained in appropriate labour market outcomes – underpinned by a commitment to realise a diverse workforce. These strategies specifically reference the role of supported employment and include ‘Working for Growth’, ‘Opportunities for All’, and the more recent ‘Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce’.

‘Keys to Life’ - the refreshed national strategy on learning disabilities which restates the ‘See Me’ commitment to the importance of maximising work-related opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

The Equality Act 2010 is a central legislative requirement which makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against disabled people, and requires that they make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to enable jobs access.

‘Asset based’ approaches are now given increasing emphasis across a range of policy agendas – focusing on what people *can as opposed to can’t do*. Good supported employment work is rooted in this principle.

Since late 2016, a number of very important new developments or increasingly prominent policy priorities added to the strategic context within which MTSP operated, and now continue to be of significance to SUSE in considering the project’s relevancy. Keeping pace and responding effectively has been a key part of the MTSP’s story.



The ‘Disability Employment Gap’

Although the issue is not new, the Scottish Government has more recently articulated policy aspirations to address ‘the Disability Employment Gap’. This recognises that:

- only 43% of disabled people of working age are in work compared to 80% of their non-disabled peers;
- less than 10% of people who have learning disabilities are in work;
- only 20% of people who experience mental ill health, and 25% of people with a visual impairment, have the opportunity of employment.

In response to these challenges, the Employability Policy team at the Scottish Government are currently developing the action plan which is intended to halve the employment gap by 2030. Through the MTSP project, and more generally, SUSE and many of its members remain active participants in this process.

Fair Start Scotland

In April 2018, the new Scottish Government Fair Start Scotland (FSS) programme began operation as the nation’s devolved employment service.

Fair Start Scotland offers a significant opportunity for SUSE members and their beneficiaries as it specifically requires successful bidders to deliver supported employment services. This is the first national contract to make such a real commitment to supported employment and it represents a major scaling up of services.

In preparation for the new programme, MTSP’s developed a range of support mechanisms to realise these new opportunities. This aimed to make a tangible impact for disabled jobseekers and employers to maximise additional outcomes and outputs. These are described further in section 4, and included:

- testing how Peer Support Networks could support FSS aspirations;

- development of the 'Inclusive Workplace Award' to evidence and support good practice for employers;
- development and piloting of the SUSE Quality Standard in Supported Employment;
- supporting materials and guidance including the Good Practice Guide, and on-line resources via the new SUSE website;
- roll out of the Professional Development Award in Supported Employment to enable staff from current SUSE members to gain the PDA - significantly increasing the capacity in the sector to train current and future staff, and acting as an exemplar for new providers.

'A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People'

The Scottish Government's plan has five long-term ambitions and 93 actions intended to change the lives of disabled people in Scotland and ensure their human rights are realised. The Delivery Plan sets out the Scottish Government's approach to policy for disabled people. It is based on the social model of disability as opposed to the medical model. It is also rooted in the UNCRPD and in the aim of the independent living movement, which is that disabled people can live the life they choose, participating equally alongside other citizens in their families, communities, workplaces and wider society, and with the support they need.

The plan includes a specific commitment to '...continue to promote the Supported Employment Framework and model for disabled people to learn on the job with support from colleagues and a job coach. We will require providers of future employment services to offer a diverse menu of options including supported employment'.

'No-one Left Behind'

Published in March 2018, No-one Left Behind is the Scottish Government's action plan for achieving the integration and alignment of employment support services in Scotland. The report notes that '...many groups continue to face real challenges in the labour market. These groups include disabled people; people recovering from substance misuse; people

experiencing homelessness; and people with convictions'. The plan has 14 actions. Of particular relevance to the work of MTSP and post project work for SUSE are:

Action 1 - during 2018, the Scottish Government will engage with people and organisations in a discussion on the future of the employability system in Scotland to explore how we create a more joined up system that is focussed on progressing people into the jobs and careers they choose.

Action 2 - by December 2018, working collaboratively with Local Government partners, we will develop a joint Action Plan that will identify and address emerging employability themes. The Action Plan will include a focus on improving integration and alignment of employability provision within local communities to improve employment outcomes for local residents.

Action 4 - from summer 2018 to summer 2020, the Scottish Government will work together with partners including Health and Social Care Partnerships, DWP, wider third sector bodies, and employers to pilot a Single Health and Work Gateway in the Fife and Dundee areas to help more disabled people, and people with health conditions access early support to help them sustain or return quickly to work.

Action 5 - from Summer 2018, the Scottish Government will work with partners within the Single Gateway pilot areas of Fife and Dundee to agree a plan to trial additional mental health support.

Inclusive Growth

The terminology of 'inclusive growth' has become increasingly prominent in recent years at both Scottish and local policy levels. The Scottish Government's definition is contained within the Scottish Economic Strategy as: 'Growth that combines increased prosperity with greater equity: that creates opportunities for all and distributes the dividend of increased prosperity fairly'.

It is not an 'add on' Government objective: inclusive growth has equal status in the Scottish Economic Strategy alongside the three other key themes of innovation, internationalisation, and investment.

Inclusive growth demands connecting and integrating our actions to develop the economy much more with a range of traditional ‘social’ policies – including childcare, school attainment, tackling poverty, welfare reform, and community participation - and in maximising positive environmental action. It also links closely to other key and recent policy developments – notably the ‘Fairer Scotland duty, which came into force in April 2018¹. Consequently, inclusive growth relates to and advances other key strategies linked to anti-poverty, social inclusion, employability, wellbeing etc. It critically demands that when growth and wealth creation is pursued two questions are consistently asked:

- ‘who benefits and in what way?’
- ‘whether we can do more to spread the benefits to those most in need?’

Conclusions on context

All the aspects of context referenced present a dynamic and complex operating environment. Collectively, they signal the initial relevance of MTSP’s, and the way in which the project’s aspirations have further increased in relevance since mid 2014. Amongst the detail, some key messages are suggested from this review on what this context means in retrospectively reviewing the MTSP project, and the learning gained to advance future SUSE aspirations.

- the challenge is both ‘specialist’ and ‘mainstream’ – whilst the specific needs of disabled people require to be addressed and supported, increasingly policy and programmes seek to ensure this is catered for within mainstream programmes. This is not automatic, and MTSP has sought to identify, provide and lobby for the building blocks required to achieve this;
- ‘inclusion’ and the concept of ‘inclusive growth’ is increasingly at the heart of all policy aspirations. Within this, ensuring people with disabilities experience the gains of growth in economic growth in terms of employment opportunities and an improved quality of life is a consistent theme, but again this is not an automatic outcome;

¹The Fairer Scotland Duty, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010 places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland to actively consider (‘pay **due regard**’ to) how they can **reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions**. Interim guidance on this duty came into force in April 2018 with a three-year implementation phase.

- evidence that supported employment works – for people looking for opportunities and employers;
- very many disabled people want to work, but the number of opportunities remain inadequate to meet the demand;
- a range of support agencies must work ever more effectively with employers to meet this demand, and provide appropriate supports and encouragement to employers to provide more high-quality opportunities;
- projects such as MTSP must keep pace with the dynamic of a rapidly changing context, identifying new challenges and opportunities;
- collectively we still can and must do more.

SECTION 3

‘MORE THAN THE SUM OF THE PARTS’ PROJECT: OBJECTIVES AND ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES

This section summarises the original design and expectations of the MTSP project as detailed in the successful BLF application. In practice, development has been an iterative process; whilst the project has remained true to its core objectives, in practice significant fine tuning and evolution in delivery and approaches has been necessary. The second phase of the project reviewed in this report, continued this process of iteration.

Aim

The overall aim of MTSP was detailed as ‘...to support employers to employ, support and develop employees with disabilities’

Activities

Rather than precisely detail activities, the original application to the BLF detailed a project work flow and a series of anticipated outcomes. The work flow was summarised in 4 stages as follows:

1. *Engagement*: engage with employers, employer bodies and disabled employees to set up activities, such as case studies; learning events and peer mentoring.
2. *Provide support and advice*: deliver interventions with employers (case studies, learning events etc) to build employer awareness remove fear and give support to overcome barriers to employing disabled people. Support disabled employee champions to be involved in this. Set-up peer networks of disabled employees to provide mentoring and support.
3. *Create opportunities for disabled people to be employed*: continue in-depth work with individual employers to assist in the design of new jobs and career opportunities for disabled people. Link the supported employment agencies to these opportunities and

employers. Through the peer network, facilitate support to return to/start work for disabled job seekers.

4. *Transfer knowledge and sustain improvements*: develop a guide for employers and a one stop shop website. Work to make the peer network sustainable after the project.

The activities that have led from this in practice are detailed further in section 4.

Governance and staffing arrangements

In phase 2 of operation, the project was managed by the SUSE Chief Executive who reported regularly on progress to the SUSE Board and the BLF.

Project staffing varied during the period of operation. In year 4, it concluded with 1 full time and 5 part time posts: SUSE Chief Executive; Communications Officer; 2 Peer Support Coordinators; a Digital Media Officer; and a Development and Engagement Officer.

Staff are employed directly by SUSE.

Costs

Over the four-year period total project costs were £690,817 revenue and £4,152 capital. These were broken down annually as:

Year 1 - £161,639

Year 2 - £159,970

Year 3 - £165,271

Year 4 - £208,089

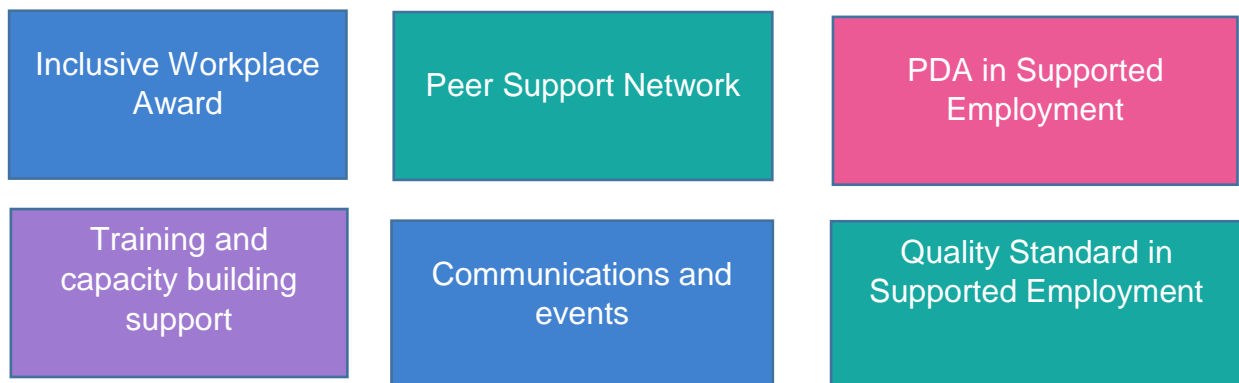
SECTION 4

PROGRESS REVIEW

Section 2 has summarised the research that led SUSE to develop MTSP, and the wider context which informed design and approach. These largely remain relevant, with the Scottish Government's increasing emphasis on inclusion confirming the significance of what the project is trying to achieve.

In the second phase of the project, activities to achieve project aims and outcomes evolved and developed significantly – in response to the rapidly changing context considered in section 2. Within a consistent overall ethos, this was a combination of extending work devised and begun in the first phase, the refinement/adaptation of earlier activities based on experience, and the identification of new opportunities.

Phase 2 work was consequently advanced through the following linked activity areas:



Inclusive Workplace Award

Based on previous employer engagement work in the initial 2 years of MTSP, the project has now developed the Inclusive Workplace Award (IWA). This led from the initial concept of the 'SUSE Diversity Badge'. But based partly on a recommendation of the interim evaluation, in the third year it was redrafted to improve its focus and connection with the

Supported Employment model. Up to that point it had been considered too generic, and this made it difficult to make a clear distinction with the DWP award 'Disability Confident'.

The IWA is now a unique resource for supported employment agencies to convince employers of the value of using supported employment services to recruit disabled people into their workforce. It focuses on achieving the change needed to open up employment opportunities for those who are harder to help and furthest removed from the job market.

The Inclusive Workplace Award was designed (and improved over time) to set employers and disabled jobseekers up for success. By working through the award employers can create an environment in which the person who has a disability can be properly supported and is able to progress in their occupation. Over time, the aspiration is that this improves culture and practice within workplaces and reduces the need for specialist support.

The IWA has produced a comprehensive process and support pack that is now on the SUSE website. It is premised on the concept of 'benefits all round', articulated that:

- it facilitates introductions and productive relationships between employers and supported employment organisations;
- employers will have increased skills and knowledge, and feel more confident in employing and supporting people with disabilities;
- supported employment services will have an increased ability to progress economically inactive people with disabilities into sustainable careers;
- it helps to create supportive workplaces where everyone can contribute their talents and skills;
- it recognises and celebrates employers who engage with supported employment services.

The IWA is intended to be delivered in partnership with a local supported employment service. It is premised on a 'light touch' assessment based around 4 specific criteria: a positive and supportive environment; reasonable adjustments; flexible procedures and

policies; and the provision of supported employment opportunities. It is underpinned by relevant training for managers and supervisors. On achieving the award, successful employers receive a plaque and an IWA Badge. Maintenance and renewal of the award is based on a bi-annual 'health check'.

The IWA is intended be a lasting legacy of the project, and SUSE now plans to continue to promote its uptake with members and their employer partners. The resources for the award have been posted on the members' section of the new SUSE website, and the training resource is available for SUSE members to use.

Inclusive Workplace Award

Outcomes

- 2 large employers and 1 smaller employer received the award by the end of MTSP project

Legacy

- a comprehensive IWA award based on a support package and tested process
- clear IWA criteria
- design and testing of a supporting training programme for managers and supervisors

Peer Support Network

The creation of a Peer Support Network (PSN) was identified at the outset of MTSP as a key aspect of the project. Subsequent discussions – in particular with staff from supported employment organisations – confirmed a strong ongoing interest in developments of this nature. Limited access to peer support was commonly perceived as a gap in current supports.

The interim review in late 2016, reflected limited progress by that stage in developing the PSN, and noted some early staffing problems which had impacted on developments. However, the building blocks of defining a PSN had been established, and new staff had injected considerable additional energy in moving forward.

As anticipated, very significant and positive PSN work has characterised the second phase of operation, and created a much stronger suite of practical learning for SUSE and other partners. This has included significant internal project review work which has informed the reflections of this report.

SUSE staff in Edinburgh and Glasgow ran peer support groups for disabled people and people with long-term conditions. The focus of the groups was on employability topics with the aim of raising confidence, gaining work skills and improving employment prospects. These groups took place fortnightly over the last 2 years.

'Peer Support has helped me know I can work and have a better life. I feel better about myself having a job gives me an identity and means I ask more, have less GP visits and I like myself again.'

Peer support service user

By July 2018, a PSN approach had been developed and tested across 9 groups in Edinburgh, Lothians, Ayrshire, and Glasgow. Four of these groups were long term and became an important support mechanism for people looking for work, and for people who were already in a job but wanting to come together with their colleagues to discuss issues that were affecting them in the workplace. Peer Support Hubs were established in a range of settings including community facilities (for jobseekers), an Edinburgh school (for young people planning for transition), IKEA in Edinburgh (for employees), a mental health service in Ayrshire (for service users) and an employability provider in Glasgow (for young people with additional support needs who needed some help to access a mainstream employment service).

The Peer Support Hubs have often been developed and delivered in partnership with other organisations including the Prince's Trust and ENABLE Scotland, and have built partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders such as In Control Scotland, Get2gether, Gig Buddies and the All Ability Bike Centre in Edinburgh. Guest presenters to the groups have included a range of partners in local authorities, the FE sector and private sector employers.

MTSP also established an online Hub on Facebook. This gave participants the chance to communicate across groups, share stories and develop friendships outwith the Hubs.

By the end of MTSP 4 distinct PSN models had been identified, including:

- employer based – tested in IKEA
- school transitions
- geographic based

The fourth model developed was an on-line Facebook group. This created the opportunity to build a unique resource to bring together disabled people from over Scotland with the aim of providing a platform for members to discuss common issues, seek advice, and celebrate achievement. MTSP's Digital Media Officer worked with the Peer Support workers to further develop on-line resources for disabled jobseekers by creating engaging social media content. This also sought to drive more traffic on SUSE platforms, particularly Facebook.

In addition, SUSE staff provided daily posts on a range of employment related topics including videos, interviews, signposting and motivational quotes. The Peer Support Coordinator also hosted regular 'online hubs' to provide an opportunity for members who were unable to access a physical hub due to where they lived.

In the latter period of PSN development, MTSP identified an opportunity to integrate these developments with the new Fair Start Scotland programme. This followed regular consultation of SUSE members during the design of the new Fair Start Scotland programme, and had the opportunity to share best practice in supporting disabled jobseekers. The final programme specification took on board many of these contributions including the need to build the aspirations of disabled people to gain paid work and the importance of sustained support once the disabled person has a job. Potentially, peer support has an important role to play in advancing both objectives.

The new programme offers 3 strands of support: core, advanced and intense. It is expected that most (though not all) jobseekers who have disabilities will be supported through the Intense strand. The initial ITT for Fair Start anticipates that over 12,000 people with

disabilities will access the programme, and that 3,500 of them will enter work between 2018 and 2021.

MTSP's staff sought to develop partnerships with Fair Start Scotland providers to demonstrate peer support as a cost-effective intervention in the disabled jobseeker's journey into work, and as a valuable input to the in-work support element of the programme. Peer support also has the potential to offer on-going support for people beyond the 12-month period when they are no longer in contact with a supported employment provider. This creates a major opportunity for SUSE to scale up peer support models and have them taken up by a host of providers, beyond the existing SUSE membership.

'Perfect, educational, enjoyable, resourceful, encouraging, laughter, sincere, beautiful, empathic, thoughtful, helpful.'

Peer support service user

In terms of legacy, in addition to testing and developing the 4 models, the peer support activity has generated a range of resources including session plans, advice and guidance and case studies that are posted on the SUSE website. These resources remain available and free for anyone to use and SUSE continue to provide support on an on-going basis for any organisations who wish to develop peer support for their beneficiaries.

Feedback from review work undertaken by project staff was very positive. It strongly suggests involvement with the PSNs had a direct beneficial impact on members in the form of wellbeing, personal growth, increased confidence, knowledge of other support networks, more opportunities for work placements, and volunteering positions.

'I have been able to connect with others who have shared experiences: we can then support each other at the hub without crossing boundaries or having to make extra appointments. I am gutted its coming to an end, it's a real loss.'

Peer support service user

The internal review of the PSN work also concluded with a helpful list of lessons learned from developments. These are also on the SUSE website, and provide another useful ongoing resource as part of the MTSP legacy.

Hub lessons learned

- No two Peer Support groups are the same and they all require different levels of facilitation.
- There is a real need for Peer Support to compliment the ongoing work being done to support disabled people into employment and helping them retain it.
- A lot of disabled people have no idea they have specific employment rights and it can be assumed that they have this knowledge. This makes Peer Support an essential tool for people to share information and learn from others who have similar lived experience.
- Involving people with a wide range of disabilities in peer support can require imagination. Unlike other groups some people with not feel able to join a lot of discussion due to lack of life experience, confidence, physical ability etc and other methods of encouraging participation are vital. Avoiding reading and writing where possible is really important.
- In order to involve the widest range of people it is important that groups are as accessible as possible. Making sure the building is physically accessible, as near to public transport as possible and with accessible parking if possible.
- Encouraging disabled people to lead as much as possible from the beginning gives a sense of ownership and helps develop new skills which can be taken forward into the workplace.

- Giving each session or term a theme (perhaps suggested by members) can be really useful, this helps ensure that they are relevant and that the group is talking about issues which may not be addressed by other employability services, job centres etc
- Having a bank of resources to hand is really useful, they do not need to be expensive, just fun, interesting and imaginative (For example a giant dice, some quiz buzzers, post it notes and a 'talking stick'). It's not really about an activity it's about people engaging, discussing and learning from each other.
- Guest speakers are sometimes useful to include particularly for new groups, they can give information on a range of employability topics, provide question and sessions and be a stepping stone for people apprehensive to contact new organisations on their own. They can also be useful for someone new to running a group as it takes the pressure off the facilitator.
- Sessions for school leaver groups require something very different. Young people obviously don't have the life experience to talk about employability issues and so it needs to be much more about moving on from school and looking at work options for the future. For this group encouraging them to think about different careers for their future and inviting people from these careers to come and have a chat has proved really popular. For disabled people (particularly young people) having few or no role models who are disabled gives nothing to aspire too. Working with his age group is vitally important if we want to see disabled people climb the career ladder.
- Disabled people who do reach the workplace can feel isolated if there are no others around identifying with a similar life experience. Bringing a workplace peer support group together can help staff to feel more confident, supported and informed and help people to retain work.
- A Peer Support group does not need to meet over a long period of time, setting aside one hour once a fortnight or even once a month can help people feel engaged and supported.
- Make the peer support groups as user led and sustainable as possible not only increases the likelihood of the groups longevity but also helps people build confidence and learn new transferable skills. Therefore it is important to maintain a professional boundary and recognise that the person setting up and facilitating the hub is not a peer and therefore not part of the group.

Source: internal SUSE review of Peer Support Network 2018

Despite the positive experience recorded, it has not been possible to continue the PSNs established beyond the end of the MTSP project. Every effort was taken to ensure all ongoing participants were signposted to some replacement form of assistance, and this was largely successful. But nevertheless, the initial project aspirations to establish self-sustaining networks has not proved to be practical, and some participants noted some concern on the supports terminating.

This need for ongoing support to maintain them is, however, important learning. Good materials and recorded experience is available to any organisations wishing to continue this form of peer support, but at this stage it is not possible to assess whether this will happen.

Peer Support Network

Outcomes

- 69 people engaged through work, school and geographic based Hubs
- 55 engaged via Facebook Hub
- very positive service user feedback on increased wellbeing, personal growth, increased confidence, knowledge of other support networks, more opportunities for work placements and volunteering positions.

Legacy

- PSN models tested and ready for future implementation
- comprehensive 'lessons learned' analysis
- support materials on SUSE website
- identification and promotion of potential peer support role within Fair Start Scotland programme
- strong partnerships developed between SUSE and other peer support delivery agencies

Personal Development Award (PDA) in Supported Employment

In the context of new developments, most notably Fair Start Scotland, MTSP determined to proactively increase the number of staff in member organisations attaining the SCQF Level 7 PDA in Supported Employment. This award combines off the job and workplace learning, and aims to provide candidates with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required to work with candidates with additional needs.

Supporting this award was recognised as central to aspirations to improve and guarantee the quality of Supported Employment. Within FSS alone initial estimates suggested c150 supported employment workers will be needed to meet the programme's targets.

Consequently, SUSE contracted with ENABLE to deliver the PDA to a targeted 20 additional staff across the supported employment sector. This sought to position the award within comprehensive staff development programmes, and is anticipated over time to link to the anticipated SUSE Quality Standard in Supported Employment (considered further below).

Personal Development Award in Supported Employment

Outcomes

- 18 staff from a total of 12 supported employment agencies gained the PDA

Legacy

- development of SUSE/ENABLE capacity to further deliver the Award to members and other agencies
- support to the evidence base required for the forthcoming SUSE Quality Award
- support to delivery of supported employment aspirations of FSS

Training and capacity building support

This became an increasingly important aspect of MTSP in the final year of operation. It has included:

- design and delivery of the employer training programme required as part of the Inclusive Workplace Award. In the final 2 years of the project 2 large employers have completed the full award – IKEA in Edinburgh and the Information Services of the University of Edinburgh.
- design and delivery of an Introduction to Supported Employment courses to Civil Servants as part of the introduction of the Fair Start Scotland programme. This now has the capacity to be applied in other settings;

- development of the internal SUSE resources to deliver the PDA in Supported Employment
- 1-to-1 sessions with 22 providers in the year to July 2018 to build capacity
- in years 1 and 2 a series of seminars for supported employment practitioners on working with employers. These sought to capture what was working well and what could be shared within our network to generate more opportunities for beneficiaries and also to improve the 'brand' of supported employment. These on-going discussions led directly to 2 initiatives in the later stages of the project: the development of a Quality Standard for Supported Employment, and support for practitioners to achieve qualifications.

Training and capacity building support

Outcomes

- Delivery of IWA training to 2 large employers
- Training inputs to the development of the FSS programme

Legacy

- IWA training package developed and tested – and capable of wider application
- Support to a range of other development materials on the SUSE website

Communications and events

Communications and events became an increasingly important aspect of MTSP activities in the second period of operation. It included a series of linked activities – significant in their own right, but also in supporting other aspects of project development.

SUSE Website

This was a major piece of work in the final years of the project. It was a key learning experience for SUSE and informed future approaches to communicating with stakeholders, increasing an understanding of what information people wanted to receive, and how to minimise the ongoing resource requirements for managing and updating the site. The site

has been developed as user friendly but also as easy to maintain. SUSE members assist this and are encouraged at every stage to update information and interact with the site directly. This resource now offers an online community for the supported employment sector in Scotland, where partners come together to communicate, share information and operate an internal marketplace. The site allows SUSE members to publicise their events and the training they are offering, and in the longer term be used to invite expressions of interest for partnership working opportunities and research.

The site was user tested by SUSE developers Cole AD who invited a group of people with disabilities to use the site and feedback their views during the development phase. This fine-tuned site as a useful resource for disabled jobseekers.

The site was launched in July 2018 and now incorporates dedicated sections for jobseekers, employers, and SUSE members. It has continued to be developed by SUSE since the end of the MTSP, and is intended as a key marketing tool for SUSE going forward.

Materials now included on the website include:

- information on the PDA in Supported Employment;
- how to guides on the different stages of supported employment;
- how to guides on peer support for work hubs;
- Inclusive Workplace Award information for employers;
- Inclusive Workplace Award Employer training pack for providers;
- Good Practice Guide for Employers – online and downloadable PDF.

Good Practice Guide for Employers

Developing this guide has been a further major developmental and capacity building activity in the second phase of the MTSP project. It took 18 months to develop this resource from start to final edit and publication, and included extensive consultations with employers and SUSE members to gain a strong understanding of the types of information people wanted and how to present it.

This guide has been developed as a learning resource that is intended to de-mystify the employment of people with disabilities and encourage employers to create workplaces that are more diverse. A major focus of the guide is challenging mistaken beliefs and laying out best practice in accessible language that is supportive and non-judgemental. SUSE premised developments from a view that too much of the existing information for employers in this field is legalistic and focussed on regulations and rules: this is potentially off-putting, and may create barriers rather than tear them down. In response to this, the Inclusive Employer Guide was developed in partnership with employers – who told SUSE what should be included and what mattered to them.

The Guide is now available online and as a downloadable document. It is a very comprehensive and well-presented document covering over 100 pages, though it is easily navigable by individual sections. Main topics covered include: making reasonable adjustments; induction and initial training; disability and discrimination; communication; policies and practice; recruitment; selection and interviews; how to be proactive and further information and guidance.

The guide has been designed to complement the Inclusive Workplace Award – and SUSE now encourages employers to consult the guide as they work through the award.

‘Duo day’

In the final year of MTSP SUSE launched the ‘DuoDay’ initiative. This has operated across Europe for several years but April 2018 was the first time it had been tried in Scotland. DuoDay is intended to: connect jobseekers who have a disability with employers to create opportunities for employment; increase the capacity and knowledge of employers; and raise awareness of supported employment as an effective route to increasing the representation of disabled people in the workforce. The day was based on the theme of ‘leadership’ to demonstrate that people with disabilities want to not only enter employment but should be able to occupy positions that are commensurate with their abilities and ambitions, including leadership positions.

12 beneficiaries were recruited who were supported by our members and matched with 9 leading figures in the voluntary and public sectors such as the leader of City of Edinburgh Council, the CEOs of ENABLE Scotland and ALLIANCE Scotland, and a Director of Skills

Development Scotland. The beneficiaries shadowed these leaders for a day and were able to share their experiences of jobseeking and the challenges they have faced. SUSE were also able to arrange matches with Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, and 2 Cabinet colleagues - Jamie Hepburn and Jeane Freeman. Based on this success, SUSE will repeat DuoDay in May 2019.

SUSE conference/development

The resources and opportunity to communicate the learning of MTSP enabled SUSE to host its first conference for three years in December 2017. 65 organisations attended including: supported employment providers; employers; funders; health and education services; and disabled people's organisations. A number of aspects of the MTSP projects were prominent in the agenda, including:

- presentation of the initial 2 Inclusive Workplace Awards to IKEA and the University of Edinburgh by Scottish Employment Minister Jamie Hepburn;
- showcasing the peer support model, and inviting ongoing interest from SUSE members;
- consulting further on the design and development of: the SUSE website, the Good Practice Guide; and the Quality Standard.

Communications and events

Outcomes

- SUSE website developed – 21 members; significant use based on initial months of operation (July/August 2018): 691 sessions; 325 users; 6,025 page views
- comprehensive 'Inclusive Employer Guide' developed and promoted
- 12 service user participants and 9 very high profile Scottish leaders engaged in DuoDay 2017
- 65 organisations participating in the 2017 SUSE conference

Legacy

- ongoing use and development of SUSE website
- ongoing use of 'Inclusive Employer Guide' – supporting further rollout of the Inclusive Workplace Award and SUSE Quality Standard
- future annual DuoDays
- framework for future SUSE conferences

SUSE Quality Standard in Supported Employment

Through MTSP SUSE has begun the process of developing a Quality Standard in Supported Employment. This is intended to develop a provider 'kitemark' that confirms providers follow the five stage Supported Employment Model. It is intended to provide jobseekers, employers and commissioners with greater confidence in the services offered. The introduction of the Fair Start Scotland is viewed by SUSE as an opportunity to establish Scotland as European leading in the field of disability employment.

In this context, the SUSE quality standard aims to:

- complement the Inclusive Work Award for Employers to ensure each jobseeker will be properly supported by both the employer and their supported employment provider, thereby maximising their chances of success;

- further develop the Scottish Supported Employment Framework, and establish it as the 'gold standard' for disability employment services;
- provide a pathway for non-supported employment providers to develop the competencies they need to support disabled jobseekers into work;
- form the future core criteria for SUSE membership, improving our offer in the employability sector and enabling us to be sustainable;
- inform future public sector commissioning of employability services for people with a disability;
- champion the value of professional, suitably accredited employment workers as a core component of the supported employment model – further encouraging the take up of the Professional Development Award in Supported Employment.

Through MTSP's development, work SUSE has begun the process of involving members, employers, and people who use services in developing the quality standard to ensure it meets the needs of our stakeholders. It is anticipated that the final model will assess organisations in areas such as: staff training and development; fidelity to the Scottish Supported Employment Model; use of appropriate tools, support for beneficiaries; working with employers; and in-work support and sustainability.

By the end of MTSP the standard was still in development. Consequently, the project can only lay claim to having triggered the development process, but not in producing the final outcome. Developments attributable to MTSP are nonetheless:

- a very successful event with our members to discuss what a new Quality Standard in Supported Employment should include and how we should go about developing it – attended by 15 partner organisations;
- establishment of a working group led by the SUSE CEO with membership from Values into Action Scotland, Remploy, ENABLE Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council, and Momentum Scotland.

The working group is now developing the first draft of the new Quality Standard, which is expected to be agreed and launched at the next SUSE conference in spring 2019.

Quality Standard in Supported Employment

Outcomes

- Development process launched
- Multi-partner Steering Group established

Legacy

- Launch of new quality standard spring 2019 – but not directly attributable to MTSPs

Performance against BLF outcomes and indicators

The initial application for BLF support for the project was premised on achieving 3 key outcomes measured by 9 indicators. These are detailed in the table below. As indicated, the subsequent development of the project was iterative – based on ongoing learning and the opportunities and challenges presented by a changing context.

Nevertheless, the project continued to align its impact against the initially agreed outcomes. This has not always been straightforward, and relates in part to the initial project concept as a ‘work flow’, rather than as a detailed set of activities. The fit with the indicators is perhaps understandably more direct in some areas than others. They are assessed in the table below.

BLF OUCTOME 1: EMPLOYERS WILL HAVE INCREASED SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND FEEL MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT EMPLOYING DISABLED PEOPLE AND SUPPORTING DISABLED EMPLOYEES	
INDICATORS	ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 employers will receive new guidance on employment and disability: a practical and informative reference document • 2 large employers successfully convinced of the case for employing disabled people through seminars, learning events, and access to the one stop shop website • 	<p>The Inclusive Workplace Award and complementary training for managers has been developed and introduced. By the end of MTSP it has been achieved by 2 larger and 1 smaller employer.</p> <p>MTSP have engaged with 88 employers through the project or indirectly via SUSE members who have worked with employers on our behalf. 74 employers have attended a SUSE event in the past 2 years, and 10 participated in our DuoDay initiative. The Good Practice Guide has been completed and published, and downloaded over 100 times in the first couple of months. A specific employers’ section has also been created on the new SUSE website.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70 employers report increased skills on employing and supporting disabled people through seminars, learning events, and access to the one stop shop website • more employers feel confident enough in their good practice to participate in the Scottish Business Diversity awards 	<p>The nature of employer engagement did not enable direct measurement of increased skills, though this can to a degree be implied through attendance at events and the accessing of the Good Practice guide.</p> <p>The Scottish Business Diversity Awards have not been continued, with the intended benefits of these now progressed through other parts of the MTSP project.</p>
---	--

BLF OUTCOME 2: MORE DISABLED PEOPLE WILL HAVE GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK OF THEIR CHOICE, AND MOVE INTO EMPLOYMENT OR RETAIN EMPLOYMENT

INDICATORS	ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 disabled people will have joined the newly established peer support network for employment • 40 disabled job seekers or employees will have increased in confidence through contact with the peer support network • 48 disabled people in touch with the project, or who’s employment support worker was in touch with the project, move into work 	<p>The development of the Peer Support Hubs has contributed to MTSP achievements against this outcome. 78 beneficiaries in total are reported as having attended a hub on a regular basis. The average period of attendance was around 18-21 months. 60 people also participated in the online Facebook hub.</p> <p>Beneficiaries have reported increased skills, confidence and preparedness for work from attending the hubs. Over the last year of the project, staff gathered baseline data from a survey conducted with beneficiaries. This was repeated in June 2018 and showed that around 45 people were reporting improvements across the range of criteria measured. Six people have moved on from the hubs to a job, and 22 people who are in jobs have been supported to stay in work. Over the full life of the project an estimated 35 people have taken up volunteering opportunities or joined new community or social groups as a result of their participation in the hub.</p> <p>MTSP supported people to increase their confidence by consulting with them on the content of the hubs and enabling them to take the lead whenever possible. Beneficiaries have also played an active role in MTSP/SUSE events and the conference, experiences they valued and reported benefits from.</p> <p>The project has also developed a range of peer support models for different settings</p>

including workplaces, schools and employability projects. The hub at IKEA in particular has given SUSE a model that has attracted a lot of attention from policy makers who are looking at cost effective methods of improving in-work support for disabled people.

At the end of the project, staff asked beneficiaries in the Peer Support Hubs about their experiences. These were overwhelmingly positive, and reflected and reinforced the survey findings referenced above. Some of these quotes are also presented earlier in this section. The only negative comment, were some concerns that the Hubs were ending with the termination of the MTSP project, and not being sustained in any form. This is a positive comment in terms of the perceived value of the Hubs, but less encouraging in terms of a guaranteed post project legacy.

BLF OUTCOME 3: SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES WILL HAVE AN INCREASED ABILITY TO PROGRESS ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE DISABLED PEOPLE INTO SUSTAINABLE CAREERS

INDICATORS	ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 supported employment services will have accessed new employers or new teams within a large employer, through connecting with the project • 25 new jobs will have been created in line with the needs and aspirations of disabled clients of supported employment agencies • 40 disabled job seekers will feel they have been offered work that fits with their needs and wishes 	<p>SUSE members were involved at every stage of the project, and the project consistently sought to share learning. A number of aspects of the work also changed in response to feedback.</p> <p>Over the life of the project, strong relationships have been developed with the All in Edinburgh consortium of providers, which includes Shaw Trust, ENABLE Scotland, Into Work, and the Action Group. The development of this partnership and its delivery of services in the Edinburgh area from 2015 was concurrent with the operation of MTSP. The project supported and advised these providers and took part in some joint delivery and awareness raising. While it is not possible to directly attribute credit for the outcomes those providers achieved, the support can be anticipated to have contributed in some way to the major increase in jobs they have secured in the past 3 years to a high of 172 in 2017/18 – an increase of 80% in 3 years.</p> <p>Events for practitioners and the SUSE national conference were attended by 40 SUSE members and many other stakeholders. MTSP also provided regular updates via the SUSE website and bulletins, and all key learning materials have been published on the new website. This includes training materials on all aspects of supported employment best practice, Inclusive Workplace materials, and Peer Support information and guidance.</p>

18 practitioners were funded and supported to achieve the PDA in Supported Employment and SUSE members are now significantly involved in developing the supported employment quality standard. These practitioners have achieved over 60 jobs for beneficiaries during the time they have been supported by MTSOP to achieve the PDA.

The Inclusive Workplace Award and training is a new resource which providers can use with their employer partners and this is anticipated to be a positive selling point for engaging with employers and establishing long term and fruitful relationships.

Practitioners who are working towards the PDA have supported over 100 people into paid employment in the past year. The project may have made some contribution to these achievements as a result of the training and support commissioned.

As mentioned, the All in Edinburgh partnership has achieved 159, 170, and 172 jobs in the past 3 years. This is an increase from a baseline of 80. MTSOP has worked closely with this partnership and again some attribution to this impressive increase in performance can perhaps be implied. It should also be noted that All in Edinburgh collectively represent only 4 of SUSE's 40 members.

However, despite some reasonable grounds for implied attribution of outcomes, the indicators in outcome 3 are very indirect. In retrospect, they should not have been

	<p>articulated in this way in the original BLF application as it is not clear how any of the activities anticipated could ever have delivered these direct job outcomes. Moreover, these types of outcomes have the potential to fundamentally change the historic relationship between SUSE and member organisations, and in a way that could create tensions. This point is key learning, and is returned to in the final section.</p>
--	--

SECTION 5

KEY LEARNING AND PROJECT LEGACY

More Than the Sum of the Parts was an innovative and iterative project which continued to evolve throughout its 4 years of operation. This final evaluation has sought to review overall progress, alongside capturing a range of key learning which will inform SUSE and key partners in developing further supported employment activities.

This ever-evolving nature of the project has made the review process less straightforward than for a static project. The period since the interim evaluation in late 2016 has signalled a range of new developments. In this context, it is important to recognise that the project continued to learn from its own experience - with ongoing reflection signalling refinement of some approaches, and identifying new opportunities to explore.

Overall, the second phase of project activity has used many building blocks from the initial period, but there is a sense of greater focus, and the need and opportunities to contribute towards, and respond to, developments in the wider context.

The application to the BLF to support the project was based on a 4 stage 'work-flow' rather than a more defined set of activities. This resulted in a longer lead in period than anticipated in precisely defining the project's work programme. More positively it provided the space to ensure that the project best met the support needs identified. A more prescriptive initial project definition may not have enabled this, and MTSP's subsequent 'real time' responsiveness to the changing context.

Key learning

Learning from the project has both positive and less positive dimensions. But it is all of value, and importantly both aspects of learning have been taken on board by SUSE in designing action beyond the end of MTSP.

Positive aspects of the project's experience include:

- the increasing strategic based approach of the project in recent years to join up and complement supports to disabled people looking for employment, supported employment agencies, and employers – with very obvious synergies across key products and resources;
- within this, the recognition of the need for consistency and connections between work on 'supply' side issues (with service users and supporting agencies), and 'demand' side work with the employers who can provide these opportunities;
- a very strong emphasis on supporting and ensuring quality in the supported employment offer – based on training/capacity building; recognised awards; and a formal quality standard;
- evidence of MTSP continually evolving and responding to a changing policy context – most notably by linking project activities to the new FSS programme;
- an increasing focus which recognised the importance of digital media;
- very positive feedback from PSN service users on the value of this approach, and the positive way it has advanced key aspects of their lives;
- in the second period of project operation in particular, an increasing emphasis on listening and consulting with all stakeholders – service users, employers, and supported employment agencies – to jointly design new supports and resources. Leading to more incidence of challenging orthodoxies and encouraging innovation;
- recognition of the importance of securing the longer-term legacy of the project by increasingly integrating project activities with wider SUSE work – highlighted by the importance of MTSP's experience to designing the future SUSE strategy.

Reflections from the project that are less positive include:

- a potential loss in SUSE's overall focus as a capacity building resource for members and wider supported employment stakeholders;
- linked to this, the inappropriateness of initial targets on direct job outcomes from the project – these did not fit with what the project was actually about, could only be attributed in a very loose and indirect way, and potentially 'cross the line' in terms of SUSE's role as a capacity building and lobbying resource into a direct service delivery function;
- an initial approach to developing the Diversity Badge overly focused on a legalistic mentality – which was not engaging/motivating to employers, and potentially counterproductive through inadvertently highlighting what could 'go wrong';
- an expectation that the PSN could be self-sustaining in the longer term which did not prove practical.

Performance against BLF outcomes

The tables at the end of section 4 specifically seek to assess MTSP's performance against the 3 outcomes and 9 supporting indicators contained in the successful application for BLF support. These suggest:

Outcome 1 on increased employer skills, knowledge, and competence - recorded data indicates that engagement targets have been met through a variety of mechanisms. But how these have been achieved means identifying increased competencies is more implied than formally measured.

Outcome 2 on greater opportunities for disabled people indicates targets have largely been met or exceeded in terms of engagement and positive service user experiences. Some progression into work data is recorded but this is below the initial target. Progressions to volunteering opportunities are, however, high.

Outcome 3 on supported employment agencies progressing people into work as a direct result of MTSP is most problematic in recording. Whilst it is apparent that significant and positive support to assist was happening through project activities, direct attribution cannot be strongly evidenced.

Legacy and moving forward

MTSP ended as a stand-alone project in July 2018. SUSE deliberately, and in view of this evaluation, correctly chose to advance its legacy through different mechanisms, rather than through a formal second project phase. This is a positive outcome, and through a range of legacy approaches and products much very valuable work is already progressing.

In this context, it is instructive to reflect back and cross reference these to the core MTSP aims listed at the start of this report:

MTSP aims	Legacy resources and products
1. Employers will have increased skills, knowledge and feel more confident about employing disabled people and supporting disabled employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Work Award – process, criteria and support package, and tested training support programme for managers and supervisors’ • Dedicated employer section of SUSE website – with range of support materials • Options to participate in future SUSE events – DuoDays and conferences
2. More disabled people will have greater opportunities for work of their choice, and have moved into employment or retained employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 PSN models tested, with key learning recorded • Options to participate in future SUSE events – DuoDays and conferences • Support materials to operate PSNs on website
3. Supported employment agencies will have an increased ability to progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 new support staff with PDA

<p>economically inactive disabled people into sustainable careers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUSE capacity developed to deliver further PDA accreditation • Identification of new opportunities to link MTSP approaches to the new Fair Start Scotland programme • Range of new support materials available via SUSE website • Forthcoming SUSE Quality Standard in Supported Employment
--	--

In practical terms, these aspirations and supporting activities are now being advanced through the new SUSE strategy to 2021. It is difficult to overstate how important the development work and legacy of MTSP has shaped this and provided many of the key building blocks for future success.

scs

4th December 2018