

DWP Worklessness Co-design – Final Report

June 2011

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DWP Worklessness Co-design – Final Report

May 2011

Foreword

Department for Work and Pensions

1. The Worklessness Co-design Pilot was launched in June 2010. The aim was to bring together DWP and Jobcentre Plus with a small number of local authorities in England (Birmingham, Bradford, Lewisham, South Tyneside and Swindon) to explore how we can best work together to tackle worklessness and develop a shared understanding of the evidence on what works.
2. In January 2011 we published an Interim Report which set out the progress being made. This report sets out the conclusions of our work and outlines opportunities to work with Jobcentre Plus and the range of services available to support the co-design of local solutions to worklessness.
3. As this work has progressed we have learned many lessons about working in partnership and I now wish to extend an invitation to those Local Authorities who are not already engaged in working with Jobcentre Plus to do so by contacting their local Jobcentre Plus District Manager.
4. The pilot has required input not only from Jobcentre Plus colleagues but from the Chief Executives and their staff in the Local Authorities in the pilot areas. I wish to offer my thanks to all those who have contributed to the report and in identifying ways in which, together, our organisations can provide a better service to our customers through new, more efficient and effective ways of working.

Adam Sharples

Director General – Employment Group

Jobcentre Plus

5. Jobcentre Plus is absolutely clear that effective partnership working is instrumental in helping people get back into work as soon as possible.
6. I remain committed to removing controls and establishing a culture of flexibility, innovation and partnership working rather than imposing 'top down' prescription.
7. I am delighted that the co-design initiatives in Birmingham, Bradford, Lewisham, South Tyneside and Swindon are beginning to demonstrate that a flexible local approach can genuinely be more responsive to the needs of the individual and community.
8. Jobcentre Plus' support of the recently introduced Community Budget initiative is a practical demonstration of how our District Managers are embracing new

and innovative ways of working. We want to build on this approach and welcome proposals from Local Authorities and other strategic partners on how they can engage with us and the range of services we provide.

Darra Singh

Chief Executive – Jobcentre Plus

Introduction

Why are we doing this?

9. DWP is reforming the approach to welfare to work. The introduction of the Work Programme and development of Universal Credit will fundamentally change the way we do business. These and other policy developments offer an unprecedented opportunity to work in partnership with a range of organisations to deliver cost effective services to help people into work.
10. The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to working in partnership with local organisations where this is seen to deliver the best outcomes for individuals. Our approach to worklessness and localism goes beyond devolution of funding and functions to local areas. We believe that real localism lies in shaping policies around individuals.
11. Local partners are critical to the delivery of employment outcomes and in securing improvement to employment services. However, this will not be achieved by simply devolving the funding and commissioning of programmes – such as the Work Programme – to the local level. That risks being inefficient.
12. Changes, including greater autonomy and flexibility within Jobcentre Plus will allow us to meet better the needs of communities, and the people most needing our support to find and stay in work. Further information on Jobcentre Plus autonomy and flexibility can be found in Annex B.

[Annex B – Jobcentre Plus support for partnerships](#)

13. Over the years we have undertaken many initiatives centred on developing partnerships to find solutions to local issues of worklessness, and we have a good understanding of what works. From the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) to the City Strategy and similar initiatives, we have been successful in establishing new partnerships and new and more flexible ways of working. However, there is limited evidence of their effectiveness in increasing employment opportunities for disadvantaged people or the cost-effectiveness of the solutions applied. Building on from these initiatives, our co-design pilots aim to showcase examples of effective partnership working designed to promote better value for money in the delivery of public services.

Why co-design?

14. The concept of co-design emerged from the work of Total Place, which looked at how a 'whole area' approach to public services could lead to better services at less cost. Whilst a number of areas focussed on worklessness, it was felt that there was more work to be done to understand in more depth how we could work together in partnership to achieve shared outcomes. Further information regarding why DWP and Jobcentre Plus are involved in co-design can be found in [Annex A – DWP and Jobcentre Plus – Why co-design?](#).
15. During the current climate of public sector savings, the Coalition Government is undertaking a reform of DWP services. These changes to our services and the drive to empower local autonomy and support the Big Society mean we need to engage proactively with Local Authorities, providers and community stakeholders. This will ensure that those who need our help to get into sustainable employment get the support they need. Crucially we must achieve this while securing better value for money for the tax payer.
16. DWP, through Jobcentre Plus, has an extensive network of front line services with a wide range of knowledge, skills and networks covering employers, providers and the voluntary and community sector. This means that DWP are a key strategic partner in every local area on the issue of worklessness.
17. Through co-design we can work together to:
 - Develop, test, tailor and deliver services which meet local need
 - Demonstrate improved outcomes and value for money
 - Ensure that the right expert stakeholders are involved and duplication is avoided
 - Strengthen partnership working to respond better to future challenges making best use of the limited resources
 - Ensure that Local Authorities and other partners make effective use of the new Jobcentre Plus flexibility and the opportunities this provides
 - Provide evidence to support the development of future policies, including Community Budgets, and
 - Highlight the opportunities and advantages of what can be achieved by working together to co-design services.
18. For Local Authorities, this pilot has provided an opportunity to demonstrate how they can continue to play an important role in tackling worklessness.
19. The co-design pilot was launched in June 2010 to develop an understanding and evidence of 'what works' and how joint solutions could be developed to tackle worklessness fit for the future environment. Over the last year, the pilots have evolved at their own individual pace with some still undertaking development work and others moving into an operational phase. An interim report was published in January 2011. It highlighted the progress that had been made to that point and how DWP and Jobcentre Plus could support those partnerships. The report can be accessed through:
[DWP Worklessness Co-design Interim Report - Jan 2011](#) (DWP website)

What has co-design achieved?

What has been successful and what have we learned?

20. By working with the five co-design areas, we have been able to test how the changes within DWP and its approach to localism, combined with the co-operation and support of Local Authorities, can lead to the successful co-design of services. Throughout we have been keen to embed an evidence based approach, using cost benefit analysis to establish value for money.
21. Each co-design area has successfully worked in partnership to develop solutions to meet local priorities. Within the limited timescales available, each has achieved buy-in from partners, agreed priorities, decided what was needed and designed solutions. A few have already successfully moved into delivery.
22. As would be anticipated, each area has taken a different approach, with different priorities: These include:
- Tackling intergenerational workless families
 - Employer focussed services linked to opportunities for young people
 - Working with families residing in the most deprived areas, and
 - Closer working with individuals and involving them in identifying the best route out of worklessness.
23. A brief overview of each area's co-design activity follows, with more detailed information available in the 'What did each pilot do?' section of the report. The full reports are available from annexe E.

[Annex E](#) – Birmingham co-design area report

Birmingham

24. In Birmingham the co-design pilot is integrated with, and helped to shape, their Community Based Budget. They have come together as an effective partnership between the City Council, Jobcentre Plus and local private and third sector organisations. They have developed an intensive one-to-one, person centred support service. The aim is to ensure support is tailored and appropriate and prevent the cycling in and out of work and employment support programmes.

Bradford

25. Bradford have taken an ambitious approach to connect their 'Think Family' approach to worklessness; looking at worklessness from the family perspective, and the work of their Children and Young People's Services to address child poverty. Their partnership has been widened to include agencies not previously involved in tackling worklessness, including the police, housing and health, to deliver pathways to employment and skills that ultimately meet with the needs of employers. Bradford are working with the Audit Commission to develop a framework for cost benefit analysis to demonstrate the benefits of their co-design work.

Lewisham

26. Worklessness has long been a priority for the Lewisham Strategic Partnership. Their co-design work comprises three strands:

- A Personal budget project, offering personalised support to long term unemployed through a local housing association
- EmployAbility, a project carrying out ethnographic research into the motivation, capability and networks of residents
- Community Budgets, with a strong employment focus, including a family budget project aimed at tackling intergenerational worklessness.

South Tyneside

27. 'Family Works', the co-design project in South Tyneside, aims to address generational unemployment by providing access to high quality, flexible and intensive employability support to out of work residents within their own locality. The project is jointly funded with Jobcentre Plus providing a team of eight advisors with full access to programmes and service, and South Tyneside Council funding the costs of setting up 'Opportunity Centres' in four locations across the Borough. These will provide residents with a comprehensive employment, enterprise and skills service in one location.

28. South Tyneside Council will also lead on the development of a wider partnership with providers who are also delivering publicly funded employment, enterprise and skills programmes, and to develop a partnership communication strategy.

29. The project commenced in April 2011 and it is hoped that over 1,200 residents will access the service over the course of 12 months.

Swindon

30. Swindon have established and developed Plan 500, the aim of which is to be the single point of entry for employers who wish to engage with young people aged 16-24. Over the 12 month span of the project, Plan 500 will generate 500 new work related opportunities comprising:

- 50 more businesses linked to Diploma schools
- 50 young employees achieving a work based qualification
- 150 new work experience opportunities
- 100 young people being mentored by members of the business community
- 150 new apprenticeship opportunities

A cost benefit analysis model is currently in development to measure the impact of Plan 500, including financial savings, cost to employers and the public sector.

All locations

31. All the pilot areas highlighted their success in bringing partners to the table, including those who had not previously considered they had a role to play in worklessness. Key to this is a combination of gaining senior level support, building on an existing partnership base and developing new ones with the right stakeholders.

32. What is also clear is that even though the partnerships were building on existing relationships, it can take a significant amount of time to establish new partnership agreements, agree priorities, design solutions and move to delivery. This needs to be factored into delivery plans whilst ensuring that the momentum is maintained in driving the work. The role of effective leadership in overcoming obstacles and building momentum is therefore vital to the success of co-design activity.
33. A key driver of success is embedding the use of evaluation and evidence of what works into the design, and planned into the delivery. Lewisham employed ethnographic research which provided fresh insights into the existing system as well as testing out new approaches. In addition, some areas are conducting a cost benefit analysis of their activity, including Bradford who are working closely with the Audit Commission on this. The reports provided by each pilot area also highlight aspects where we do not yet have substantiated evidence of what works.

Case Studies – Measure / Demonstrate success

Bradford are keen to understand better the impact of their co-design and Community Budget activity, and are working with the Audit Commission to produce a framework for a cost benefit analysis. This will be a predictive tool to demonstrate the benefit of co-design and tackling worklessness to organisations whose primary functions are in other areas. This will measure the wider social impact and show the value of adopting new approaches. The model will allow Bradford to fully assess the policy and strategic implications of their work and influence the development of future policies.

DWP has agreed to publish further information later in the year when the model has been fully developed

Lewisham, with their strategic partners, have used Customer Insight and ethnographic research to gain a better understanding of the needs and barriers faced by people who want to move into work. The project carried out research into the motivation, capability and networks of residents. This delivered fresh insights into the current system as well as testing new approaches, which have combined personalised, one-to-one support with web-based solutions, to build people's momentum, connections and ability to create their own opportunities.

The research highlighted there is a clear need for personalised, flexible support for those furthest from the labour market and that there has been mixed success in identifying and addressing customers' underlying barriers to employment.

34. The co-design pilot has provided an opportunity for Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities to strengthen their relationships to co-design a joint solution to a problem and to showcase the results. In a period of reduced and uncertain funding this has meant scrutinising available capacity, and testing out the

ideas which could deliver the most. This was achieved through linking and aligning resources. It has not necessarily required the direct pooling of money. For example, in South Tyneside, a project previously funded through the Working Neighbourhoods Fund is now provided jointly by the partnership: 50 per cent funded by Jobcentre Plus and 50 per cent by the local authority. Evidence from the previous project demonstrated that continuing to fund the project would deliver greater outcomes (for the service deliverers and the community) than could be achieved through the standard service.

Case studies – Co-design solutions that meet local need

South Tyneside have used the experience gained through a previous partnership programme to develop a new programme which aligns resources and services rather than budgets. Together, South Tyneside Council and Jobcentre Plus have designed and are delivering community based 'Opportunity Centres' in four locations across the Borough, to provide residents with a comprehensive employment, enterprise and skills service in one location. Jobcentre Plus are meeting staffing and programme costs, and South Tyneside council is investing in the development of the programme, the infrastructure of the Opportunity Centres and marketing.

Birmingham partnership has designed a personalised approach which provides effective aligned and wrap-around services for the individual. They have developed a six stage process for each customer, covering the initial referral to post employment support. However, it is acknowledged that this process cannot meet every customer's need and they therefore built in scope to allow customer to move to specialist provision where appropriate - for example, when dealing with debt or mental health issues. The service focuses on people and families with the greatest need living in the city's most deprived areas, with the underlying premise that to help more people move into sustained work a more intensive person centre approach was needed instead of the previous standard or blanket approach.

35. In Swindon, where there is no additional funding for combating worklessness, the co-design pilot has enabled Jobcentre Plus to work with an employer-led stakeholder group to deliver what is required for employers to get the right people with the skills and qualities they are looking for. Through co-design, the partnerships in Swindon developed a product which met the needs of local employers and encouraged them to support unemployed 16 - 24 year olds.

Case study – Building inclusive partnerships

Swindon has established a true partnership of the public and private sectors. A board was established, led by a major local employer, which brought together key strategic partners, to design, develop and deliver solutions to Swindon's dramatic increase in youth unemployment. With the high level support from the local strategic economic partnership and the commitment from key public sector organisations, the expertise from within the board and ability to target resources led to the creation of Plan 500.

Plan 500 addresses the needs of young people by finding simple but effective engagement mechanisms for local business.

36. During the development of the co-design pilots, DWP analysts have worked with South Tyneside and Swindon to provide guidance so that they can produce indicative cost benefit information, and have supported the other co-design areas on a more ad-hoc basis. DWP will continue to provide support to these areas as they move into their delivery and reporting phases. It is too early to report outcomes of the pilots. This information will be made available on the DWP website as the projects move into delivery phase. A straightforward guide to cost benefit analysis can be found in the Worklessness Co-design Interim Report – January 2011.

[DWP Worklessness Co-design Interim Report - Jan 2011](#) (DWP website)

37. For the Department, the co-design pilot has enabled us to review this type of partnership activity. It has allowed areas to share their experience and pool knowledge across the co-design areas and with DWP/ Jobcentre Plus. It showcases examples of what partnerships can achieve by working together. These have included:

- The co-location of staff and services
- Partners working together to align services and products rather than pooling direct financial support,
- The design of flexible provision and alignment of in-kind support
- Partnerships helping to identify restrictions within data sharing and seeking workable solutions
- Improved Cost Benefit Analysis and the development of the Social Return on Investment framework¹.

¹ The Social Return on Investment Framework is a method of capturing not just the fiscal savings generated from the likes of co-design activity or an employment programme, but also the social impacts such as crime, health and other benefits that are associated with a job outcome. The pilot has allowed us to explore local variations in both and look at the, often bespoke, needs of partners.

KEY LESSONS – for DWP / Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities

- Gain commitment to undertake the work from Senior Leaders, Ministers etc from the outset
- Embed evidence and evaluation into the design of the service and be open to changing the approach if the findings do not support the continuation of the project
- Use Jobcentre Plus knowledge and experience as strategic partners and include them from the initial design stage
- Use learning from co-design when developing mainstream or other work, for example Community Budgets – not just for ad-hoc or stand alone projects
- Maintain a clear focus on outcomes and shared objectives
- Review and build on existing partnerships
- Use co-design as a method of bringing partners closer together to work jointly, (as equals) to develop a solution
- Moving from design to delivery can be difficult due to a range of issues, including limited resources, managing risk, gaining commitment to innovative approaches and requires focused leadership to overcome these effectively
- The co-designed service must demonstrate value for money – use cost benefit analysis in making the case and assessing success and take into account wider social impacts
- Whilst devolution offers greater local autonomy and flexibility, we need to understand what support from the centre will still be required
- The issue of 'Trade offs' - what do you stop doing when prioritising a particular approach? What would be the implications?
- Avoid duplication - Understand the funding landscape and what organisations bring to the table
- Allow time for evidence to come through – there are no quick answers
- Understand the individual priorities of each partner, what drives and constrains them, and what the room is for manoeuvre when agreeing shared objectives
- Identify possible ideas for revised ways of working and test these out with strategic partners
- Share what works (and what doesn't)

What got in the way?

38. Some of the co-design areas reported that this was a difficult time to be implementing this type of innovative approach, with reduced resources and staffing levels. This may also have impacted on the number of partners 'buying into' the concept. There can be a tendency to retreat back to the delivery of core services. However, the tight fiscal climate has concentrated minds on how sharing and working together can provide greater value for money.

39. The pilot also raised the question of whether we should try to join up all services or if there is still a role for stand alone specialist services, where it is not effective to align existing services or develop a joint approach. The limits

40. Limited time and resource mean the evidence base still requires development, for example cost benefit analysis on the outcomes of the pilot will not be completed for some time. Also, the evidence from some of the co-design areas has not yet been verified, for example we would be interested in seeing the effectiveness of the segmentation tool developed by Lewisham.
41. Finally, reduced and uncertain funding has impacted on the ability of co-design areas to move forward into the delivery phase as quickly as they would have liked.

What did each place do?

42. Each of the co-design areas has provided an overview of the key elements of their co-design work, the full reports from each area are in annexes E to I.

Birmingham

43. Despite a wide range of employment support programmes and resources, worklessness rates in Birmingham, and in specific parts of the City, continue to remain above the national average. These high levels of worklessness affect the quality of lives for citizens, their families and their communities, and have an impact on the City's economic growth. As key strategic partners we are committed to addressing this issue. In developing Birmingham's co-design pilot, we recognised that current employability programmes may not be appropriate for some individuals with multiple barriers or long-term history of unemployment; particularly as traditional programmes can often be perceived as process driven rather than person-centred.
44. The key elements of Birmingham's co-design pilot are:
- a more personalised approach, with quality, skilled advisers who can address psychological barriers and who act as advocates to ensure improved access to services, whilst assertively challenge individual assumptions
 - effective aligned and responsive wrap around services in a personalised budget approach, so that individuals are responsible for, involved in and own their individual solutions to worklessness
 - effective engagement with employers to provide opportunities for employment, work experience and other “Get Britain Working” measures
45. Four different Cohorts have been identified:
- Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) recipients
 - Housing Association referrals
 - Community Agency referrals
 - NEET referrals

46. Whilst we will work with customers on active benefits, particularly JSA, we will also support those customers who are:

- without work and have one or more barriers to employment
- self referrals
- referrals from partners and community organisations
- the customer's family dependents
- in low paid employment

47. We will be working with a range of partners who have expertise in:

- breakdown in relationships
- drug misuse
- problem drinking
- debt problems
- severe mental health and other mental
- physical health issues.
- offenders
- asylum seekers and refugees
- carers
- 16 to 18 year olds

48. The co-design pilot will be delivered through a range of locations, including:

- community venues
- Local Colleges and schools previously involved in delivering
- in individual's own homes, building on best practice developed by Midland Heart, a major Residential Social Landlord in the Lozells area and a member of the Project Board

49. Our underlying premise of Birmingham's co-design pilot is that providing more of the same would not improve the numbers of people with multiple needs moving into sustained employment.

50. Our co-design pilot is not a blanket or standard approach for all unemployed people, but identifies those for whom a more intensive one-to-one person-centred support service would be more effective in securing sustainable employment.

51. Our approach is: "do the right thing not necessarily do things right", and mirrors the underlying philosophy currently being developed by Jobcentre Plus's flexible pilots.

52. Birmingham's co-design pilot is not a short term, one-off project. It builds upon, and has been a demonstration of effective partnership working between Birmingham City Council (BCC), Jobcentre Plus and local private and third sector organisations in designing a new approach to tackling issues of worklessness. We will also be working with Jobcentre Plus and Partners who specialise in employer engagement to agree joined-up co-design employer and self-employment strategies; and so maximise local and Birmingham - wide activities.

53. The co-design pilot is integrated with, and helped shape Birmingham's Community Based Budget (CBB) approach for Families with Complex Needs and the Small Area Budget (SAB) scheme in pooling local resources. Greater alignment will continue to develop across a range of services, including 14 - 19 year old and adult employment support, to address worklessness. We are laying the foundations for future working relationships that will ensure Birmingham City Council, Jobcentre Plus and our strategic partners meet the future challenges and opportunities of localism by delivering effective solutions to worklessness.

Bradford

54. We have been ambitious from the outset of our co-design work and we are taking the opportunity to drive a 'Think Family' approach to worklessness that is informing and supporting the worklessness and skills aspect of our Community Budget work.

55. Our work is driven by a broader local consideration of worklessness and skills from a family perspective and the intrinsic links to Children and Young People's services and their work on child/family poverty. Our approach has also sought to engage with a wider selection of partners including those who do not have worklessness as their agenda but are in contact with workless families / individuals i.e. police, housing, health etc. The Audit Commission are supporting with some cost benefit analysis work that will enable partners to consider the impact of addressing worklessness on their respective services. Driven by our local partnership arrangements, it was agreed that we would work on a pilot basis in the Manningham area of Bradford as it is one of the most deprived areas within Bradford with the highest concentration of worklessness.

56. Our co-design project is being worked up around the 'Journey to Work' with focus on those individuals furthest from the labour market. The 'Journey to Work' is based on the Shreeveport report recommended model. The Shreeveport report is a piece of work commissioned in 2007 by Jobcentre Plus to inform how DAF (Deprived Area Fund) should be used to address worklessness in the most deprived areas of the district. The information gathered and the recommendations are still relevant today.

57. Our starting point was to understand the 'Journey' those furthest from the labour market currently take. We held workshops with delivery organisations and those services that come in to contact with workless individuals to undertake mapping exercises within the selected area. We know that although there are many services offering support to overcome a variety of barriers to employment (low skills, addiction, homeless, carer etc), regardless of the barrier to employment the 'Journey to Work' is complex to navigate.

58. Our objective is, as a partnership, to work up a solution that unifies organisations and delivers a simplified and a more easily navigated 'Journey to Work'. This is one that aligns services and focuses provision to wrap around

and complement the formal offer of Jobcentre Plus, including the Get Britain Working measures, the Work Programme and bespoke support offered at neighbourhood level. By simplifying the journey to work and understanding how families with barriers to employment touch on partner organisations we can start to develop a framework that addresses both the needs of the individual and those of their families, ultimately supporting them to move closer to employment.

59. The work of co-design is intrinsically linked to the development of Bradford's Community Budget work and is one of the stands being developed to support Families with complex needs

Lewisham

60. Worklessness has been a long standing priority for the Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSP has focused resources on those furthest from the labour market, such as lone parents (Lewisham has the highest proportion of lone parent households in London) and long-term unemployed. However, following the recent recession, the focus has broadened to include youth unemployment.

61. The number of JSA claimants in Lewisham has risen significantly since the start of the recession, and is set to rise further as a result of public spending cuts and changes to welfare eligibility. In a highly competitive labour market, those with limited experience or complex barriers to employment – such as young people, long term unemployed or lone parents – may require additional support to compete for a diminished supply of jobs. Lewisham's co-design work has therefore continued to focus on those furthest from the job market.

62. As well as focusing on local need, the co-design work also aims to:

- Build on the learning from previous work – including Lewisham's Total Place pilot
- Complement upcoming changes in national policy – such as the introduction of the Work Programme and changes to the welfare system, and
- Ensure diminished resources are targeted where they are most needed

63. Our co-design work is comprised of three strands:

- **Personal Budget Project:** a project offering personalised support to long-term unemployed people, delivered by a local housing association (Hyde Housing), and co-designed by the Council, Jobcentre Plus and Hyde. The project offers greater control and flexibility to lone parents and IB / ESA claimants in the support they receive, by providing them with access to a Personal Budget. Participants are able to spend their budgets on tackling their own personal barriers to employment, supported by a case worker.
- **EmployAbility:** a partnership with Participle, London Borough of Lambeth, London Development Agency, Lambeth College, Lewisham College and

the Learning and Skills Improvement Service. The project has carried out ethnographic research into the motivation, capability and networks of Lewisham and Lambeth residents, delivering fresh insights about the current system as well as testing out new approaches.

- **Community Budgets:** Lewisham is one of sixteen areas piloting the Community Budget initiative, which aims to pool or align resources across an area to tackle the problems associated with families with complex needs. Lewisham's Community Budget approach has a strong focus on employment, and includes a 'family budget' project which aims to tackle intergenerational worklessness. This will build on the learning from the other two co-design projects, and will work with around 80 Lewisham families (over two years) with a history of worklessness. The project is being co-designed with Jobcentre Plus, with a view to launching it in late summer 2011.

South Tyneside

64. South Tyneside is located within Tyne and Wear and has a total population of 152,400. Economic growth and regeneration is key to the future of the borough and the Council has set in place plans to develop key assets such as the River Tyne, town centres and employment sites to ensure that our residents and businesses benefit from key economic opportunities. However, the legacy of the decline of traditional industries remains and creating new jobs for residents is a key priority for the Council.

65. South Tyneside has seen a significant rise in unemployment since the start of the recession, which has resulted in an extremely tight and competitive labour market. The 'Family Works' model aims to work with those furthest from the labour market to provide support to help them to re-enter the labour market and compete for jobs.

66. As well as ensuring that residents receive support that is appropriate and accessible, the co-design work also aims to:

- Develop and promote a simple and uncomplicated service to help all residents back to work
- Reduce duplication of services and maximise the investment of mainstream funding
- Ensure that services in the borough provide high quality support to residents and that they are accountable for the service that they deliver.
- Make best use of employment, enterprise and skills funding through increasing co-location of services.

Scope of the South Tyneside co-design Activity

Family Works Advisory Team

67. Jobcentre Plus have recruited and trained a team of 8 employment advisors to work in the Opportunity Centres. Their remit is to support households who are currently receiving benefits as their main source of income back into sustainable employment so that the whole household is better off in work. The

team are working with South Tyneside Homes to engage with their tenants as well as supporting residents who have been through their work capability assessment and have been assessed as being able to work. The team have a target of working with over 800 people in 12 months.

Opportunity Centres

68. South Tyneside Council are developing a number of venues to enable the delivery of employment, enterprise and skills support. The key driver for establishing the centres is to simplify the journey back to work for residents by co-locating services within communities. A menu of services has been designed in consultation with residents to ensure that they can access the services that they need to get back into economic activity. The services that will be delivered from the centres include:

- Next Step Careers Service
- Work Choice
- New Enterprise Allowance
- Work Clubs
- Enterprise Clubs
- Local VCS employment support projects

Swindon

69. Until the recession, Swindon had a strong economy with many national and international companies located in the area, higher than average wages and low unemployment. However, since the recession, young people in particular have found it difficult to get a job. To illustrate: between August 2008 and August 2009 the number of 18–24 year olds who had been claiming Jobseekers Allowance increased by 200 per cent. The Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership wanted a call to arms.

70. Plan 500 was primarily designed to support the businesses of Swindon by being the single point of entry for employers wishing to engage with young people – saving time and enabling employers to engage across 5 strands of activity and capturing employers' involvement, thus preventing multi agency approaches.

71. Developed in partnership between the private and public sector, Plan 500 has the aim of supporting routes to employment for all young people in Swindon aged 16-24.

72. The objective is to deliver 500 opportunities across 5 strands including:

- 150 work experience opportunities
- 150 apprenticeship opportunities
- 100 business mentor opportunities
- 50 work based qualifications opportunities
- 50 support to school diploma opportunities

73. Throughout the project activity, progress to targets has been monitored by the Backing Young Swindon Board. This has given the project a business sector approach that is proactive and reactive to change, enabling the activity to target and meet the needs of employers.
74. For example, in response to some employers concerns that work experience for young people may require too much support and / or supervision the Swindon Talent Pool was developed. This lists young people (usually graduates or those with advanced qualifications) in Swindon who are seeking work experience opportunities, an approach that has led to success, meeting the needs of employers and young people alike.
75. The Plan 500 project, through its promotion and delivery has developed trust with local employers and therefore is positioned to support and develop opportunities in Swindon to fully support the economic recovery.

Conclusion

76. DWP is reforming the approach to welfare and social justice. We are looking at new ways of working that will provide better and more aligned services in the communities we serve, to meet the needs of the people who most require our help. We are committed to working in partnership to co-design services that support and build on our mainstream support, to secure better value for money in local service delivery – both for us and the partners we work with.
77. Co-design will help Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities to take full advantage of current cross government changes. This includes making the most of Jobcentre Plus flexibilities, for example opportunities for co-location, outreach, and personalised, cross agency services. There is also an opportunity to work with Work Programme providers to maximise outcomes for local people and communities.
78. This report has allowed us to showcase what can be achieved, in a relatively short time to develop, test, and deliver a co-designed service. We invite Local Authorities and other partners to continue to work with us. Our door is open.
79. DWP has produced a checklist for Local Authorities and other partners looking to co-design more co-ordinated and cost effective local services.

The checklist can be found at [Annex C](#) – Tackling worklessness check list for Local Authorities.

80. The list below summarises the key points:

Build inclusive partnerships

- Gain the commitment of the whole of the Local Authority and other strategic partners to tackle worklessness
- Use your influence and support with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Enterprise Zones to tackle worklessness effectively
- Forge a strengthened business relationship with Jobcentre Plus
- Develop your relationship with your local Work Programme providers

Co-design solutions that meet local need

- Don't wait for central government to tell you what to do
- Consider developing Community Budget type approaches to tackle local priorities
- Consider the implications and opportunities of welfare reform
- Use your influence to make a reality of the Big Society locally to help tackle worklessness

Measure / Demonstrate success

- Explore opportunities with Jobcentre Plus to co-locate services, promote efficiency and give the tax payer value for money, improve the customer experience and reduce the overall public sector estate
- Explore the opportunities to tackle worklessness through better cross-agency working by sharing data more effectively
- Learn from what other local authorities and their partners are doing
- Tackle the barriers to employment growth that the market will not address itself by prioritising interventions during a time of reduced resources

Next steps for co-design

81. Although this is the final report for this co-design pilot, the areas will continue to work through their proposals and we will report on findings as they emerge - for example, we will report on the findings of cost benefit analysis and the work Bradford are doing with the Audit Commission.
82. The lines of communication will be kept open between the five areas, and there will be a final meeting later in the year to discuss progress. This will enable us to continue to identify good practice and any additional flexibility that would support further integration of services on the ground and the ongoing development of Jobcentre Plus flexibilities.
83. Beyond this, the Department is committed to maintaining communications with partners and stakeholders to bring together policy expertise and local experience, both to strengthen local delivery and national policy understanding. This will help us to identify issues which are preventing effective partnership working, share successful activities and identify factors that led to success. We are also committed to encouraging Work Programme providers to work with strategic partners including Local Authorities to understand the needs of individuals wherever they live and to develop

solutions to local problems. And we are committed to supporting the aims of the cross-Government initiatives such as Community Budgets.

84. DWP is committed to a more open and flexible approach to local partnership. We invite local partners to work with us to co-design services which will meet the needs of the people living in the communities we serve.

Annex A - DWP and Jobcentre Plus – Why co-design?

85. The Coalition Government is committed to a programme of reform, with a power shift away from Whitehall, to place it in the hands of people and communities. It is recognised that achieving and maintaining this radical shift will not happen through legislation alone. The Department for Communities and Local Government recently published *The Decentralisation and the Localism Bill: An essential guide* which sets out six essential actions in which government will deliver decentralisation and localism.

[The Decentralisation and the Localism Bill: An essential guide](#) (CLG website).

86. These are:

- **Lift the burden of bureaucracy** by removing the cost and control of unnecessary red tape and regulation, whose effect is to restrict local action
- **Empower communities to do things their own way** by creating rights for people to get involved with, and direct the development of, their communities
- **Increase control of public finance** so that more of the decisions over how public money is spent and raised can be taken within communities
- **Diversify the supply of public services** by ending public sector monopolies, ensuring a level playing field for all suppliers, giving people more choice and a better standard of service
- **Open up government to public scrutiny** by releasing government information into the public domain, so that people can know how their money is spent, how it is used and to what effect
- **Strengthen accountability to local people** by giving every citizen the power to change the services provided to them through participation, choice or the ballot box.

87. DWP has an ambitious agenda of reform to deliver, and although we remain committed to maintaining a national Welfare Benefit System and Work Programme, we are also fully committed to ensuring that services are responsive to individual and local needs and effective in supporting local people to find and move into work.

88. DWP has a central role in helping to bring down the budget deficit. A national approach to setting the framework for labour market policy is critical to the task of securing a better deal for the taxpayer from spending on welfare.

89. The two key DWP reforms which will enable localism are the development and delivery of the Universal Credit, which will simplify the welfare system and ensure that the system incentives work and that work pays; and the Work Programme, which will enable private, public and voluntary partners to come together to find local solutions to local labour market problems.

90. The Department is in the process of undergoing significant cultural changes, supported by a radical change to the Performance Management Framework,

which will support Jobcentre Plus managers in providing a service to meet the needs of the communities they are working with. The door is open to partners to tell us what they need from us, and to challenge us to respond to that local need.

What we know works

91. Both DWP and external organisations have undertaken research into what works when trying to help people into work – particularly those people with a number of barriers to work. This research has shown that, not surprisingly, there is not a one-size fits all solution. DWP recognises that imposing a degree of conditionality into receiving certain benefits, having to ‘sign-on’ and having mandatory interventions, generally works well in moving people into work.
92. Additionally, a number of positive factors have been identified that can help those with multiple barriers and they include:
 - Tackling the needs of each individual – establish the needs of each individual rather than the needs of a disadvantaged group
 - Involving the customer in the decision making process – allow the individual to feel part of the process
 - Being realistic about the labour market and the type of jobs the person could move into, and
 - Giving advisers the time and tools to work with each customer
93. Some of these approaches are being trialled through the co-design areas with Birmingham and Lewisham adopting a ‘personal account’ approach and Swindon’s work with employers.
94. Further information about what we know works can be found in the DWP Worklessness Co-design - Interim Report which was published in Jan 2011.
[DWP Worklessness Co-design Interim Report - Jan 2011](#) (DWP website)

Annex B - Jobcentre Plus support for partnerships

95. Jobcentre Plus firmly believes that partnership working at a local level remains central to the delivery of employment outcomes, the wider business objectives and statutory duties of the Department for Work and Pensions. The Government is clear the imbalance of power between Whitehall and local areas must be addressed and effective partnership working at a local level will be instrumental in supporting this transition.
96. Jobcentre Plus has 37 Districts forming seven Groups with a network of 740 Jobcentres situated at the heart of local communities with knowledgeable staff who understand local priorities. In each of the Districts there are people in place to manage and work with local partnerships.
97. Jobcentre Plus delivers services from over 1,100 outreach locations including community centres, prisons, one stop shops and GP surgeries. For example, in Droitwich, a One Stop Shop offers customers Fortnightly Jobsearch Review and general enquiry services. A sign posting service is also offered, pointing customers to the local authority, Citizens Advice Bureau and other sources of support available on the same site.
98. Co-location, the delivery of elements of Jobcentre Plus front office services from sites shared with other organisations (in our premises or partner's premises) is, along with outreach working, one of the key strands of our flexible approach to working with partners to provide the most efficient and customer focussed services that we can. In Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire local authority staff are now delivering services from the Jobcentre in Biggleswaide. Additionally, Jobcentre Plus is also considering the delivery of its services from local authority buildings in Leighton Buzzard and Dunstable as part of the same partnership. Jobcentre Plus is happy to explore the potential for similar co-location proposals if supported by a robust financial business case.
99. Clearly, partnership arrangements for Jobcentre Plus will vary depending on their location. Nevertheless, excellent examples of partnership working are emerging across the country. For example, we have supported the 'Making Headway' initiative in the South Tyne and Wear, the 'School Gates' project in Southwark and 'Families First' in Wigan amongst many others.
100. Jobcentre Plus is also responding to the new emerging partnership landscape. It continues to support and put employment and skills at the heart of economic growth, and decentralisation action, as the local partnership landscape transforms with the set up of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Involvement in LEPs will enable Jobcentre Plus to play a vital facilitation role bringing together Work Programme prime contractors and local sub contractors, including those from the voluntary and community sector to

ensure training on offer meets the needs of the local community as well as employers. The partnership landscape in Scotland and Wales will also change and our approach will evolve to support the Devolved Administrations.

101. One of Jobcentre Plus' immediate priorities is the effective delivery of the Get Britain Working measures, which will bolster the support our advisers can offer to customers. Delivery of these measures is contingent on Jobcentre Plus being actively engaged with employers, partners (including those from the Voluntary and Community sectors) and customers themselves throughout Britain.

Cultural change and the move to localised services

102. As the focus of the Department's business moves toward a more local level of delivery it is developing how it works with partners. The Department recognises the value of working in partnership and the important role they can play in helping us meet our business needs. As has been shown through the co-design pilots, the partnership culture is moving to one where DWP and Jobcentre Plus are being seen as having a key role to play in developing and supporting partnerships rather than just being the face of Government.

103. Despite having an excellent track record in partnerships, Jobcentre Plus is not complacent, acknowledging now more than ever, the need to come together in local communities with all our partners - service providers, Local Authorities and employers of all sizes - to find new and innovative ways to support people into work. From April 2011, building on lessons learned from pilots in four of its districts, local Jobcentre Plus managers were given more control and flexibility, allowing them to build strong local partnerships, align activity and flexible funding in - for example, Community Budgets and do more to utilise the knowledge and skills of their frontline staff. Jobcentre Plus firmly believes this approach will enable it to respond more effectively to the needs of the community and individual and provide a robust platform for progressing co-design and wider partnership activity.

104. Additionally, the Jobcentre Plus local autonomy initiative is intended to empower individual Jobcentre Plus District Managers and give them even greater freedom to manage the ways in which they will achieve their objectives. Local autonomy will enable Jobcentre Plus to respond to one of the priorities of the Coalition Government - public service reform and the devolution of power from the centre to the front line. This is a bold step in the reform of public services through which we want to increase staff engagement and the innovation of front line staff.

Involving the jobseeker

105. DWP and Jobcentre Plus are also looking to a change in how it involves the jobseeker in designing its business processes. The customer is at the centre of everything Jobcentre Plus strives to achieve so they are best placed to tell us about their needs and requirements.

106. Jobcentre Plus, using Voice of the Customer, has worked with a number of jobseekers to identify and understand their needs and how the current Jobcentre Plus processes support them. This dedicated approach has allowed Jobcentre Plus to review its processes and has already resulted in the information given during the Back To Work session being brought forward to the New Claim stage rather than customers having to wait for 6 to 9 weeks to receive it.

Annex C - Tackling worklessness check list for Local Authorities

To help Local Authorities when looking to co-design activities this checklist contains advice on engaging with Jobcentre Plus and a list of support that is available through Jobcentre Plus and Work Programme providers.

Unprecedented opportunity for Local Authorities to work with Work Programme providers:

Our main employment programme no longer comes with a centralised rulebook. We're leaving the design work to contracted providers to reflect better local needs and priorities. To succeed in this, we expect Work Programme providers to work with Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) as well as other local voluntary and community sector organisations to understand and meet the needs of individuals wherever they live. Work Programme providers will be a key strategic partner for Local Authorities. We've also set up the Work Programme contracting arrangements to allow local partners to buy in easily to the skills and expertise of our Work Programme Framework providers.

Active involvement of Jobcentre Plus in local partnerships:

Jobcentre Plus is committed to developing and maintaining strong working relationships with local partnerships, including Local Authorities and LEPs. District Managers will have greater discretion to tailor support to meet local needs, including: more scope for frontline staff to use their own judgement to help customers; capability to align small amounts of funding and resources with local partnership activity where it will have a positive affect on outcomes; and a new performance management framework which focuses not on process but exclusively on off-flow and fraud and error rates.

European Social Fund:

DWP will be commissioning employment focused provision for families with multiple problems through its European Social Fund (ESF) Co-financing (CFO) arrangements. The provision will be let through the DWP Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services. Funding for the provision is limited to England, and the support will focus on moving family members closer to the labour market.

It is our intention that Local Authorities will be the primary route to identify families that would benefit from ESF family provision, and we will expect providers and local authorities to work closely together. DWP has run a series of engagement exercises with Local Authorities, including an online call for evidence, to explore how best to deliver this provision. We will be engaging with local authorities further as the policy progresses.

Open to ideas on securing better value for money in local service delivery:

We're already exploring opportunities for co-location with Local Government and tackling problems that can't be solved by DWP alone. In many cases, co-location

of services can drive increased efficiency; value for money for the tax-payer, and an improved the customer experience. Jobcentre Plus is open to further discussion on the scope for more shared delivery and coordinated services with other local partners.

DWP to work with Local Authorities to make the best use of data in line with the DWP data sharing guidance:

We will work with Local Authorities in developing ideas around the use of customer data through 'informed consent'. This will help ensure that any data is captured and used in the most timely, relevant and appropriate way within Data Protection requirements.

[DWP guide: Data sharing to tackle worklessness](#) (DWP website)

What does this mean for Local Authorities?

Build inclusive partnerships

Gain the commitment of the whole of the Local Authority and other strategic partners to tackle worklessness

Consider how the things you do anyway can better support your local economy and tackle worklessness, for example, transport, planning, housing, supporting neighbourhoods, procurement, childcare sufficiency, role as employer .

Use your influence and support with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Enterprise Zones to tackle worklessness effectively

They have a key role in promoting private sector growth – something which is particularly important in supporting job opportunities in those areas with a high dependence on public sector employment. Jobcentre Plus are committed to working actively with Local Enterprise Partnerships through advice and guidance and joint working with Work Programme providers, colleges and others. There are opportunities to work with Jobcentre Plus to align opportunities under Getting Britain Working measures and agree action for the most disadvantaged communities.

[Get Britain Working \(DWP website\)](#)

Forge a strengthened business relationship with Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus have an extensive advisory network and outreach facilities to help people back to work across the whole of the country. For example, they deliver services from over 1,100 outreach locations including: Local Authority offices; Children's centres; libraries; prisons; GP surgeries; and mobile units. Explore with Jobcentre Plus locally the scope for using their greater local flexibility for more co-designed services, shared delivery and coordinated services. And look to discuss ways in which they might use these cost effectively in partnership with you.

Develop your relationship with your local Work Programme provider.

Through the 'black box' approach, they have considerable discretion in how they work with local partners – including Local Authorities – to get people back into work, rather than follow centralised rules. Influence them to work with you on joint

activity. They will value your local knowledge about worklessness and skills and your contacts with employers and other partners. We expect that Framework Providers will work with Local Authorities and LEPs in delivery and Providers will be free to pool resources if they wish. Bid assessment included criteria to examine how they have engaged with partners in formulating their bids and how they propose to work with them. Public partners will be able to use the Work Programme framework to purchase additional employment support.

[Preferred Suppliers for the Employment Related Support Services](#) (DWP website)

Co-design solutions that meet local need

Don't wait for central government to tell you what to do.

Work together with local partners to establish your own priorities for tackling worklessness. Consider whether you want to focus on particular disadvantaged areas and/ or specific groups, and how private sector employment growth can be encouraged. Use your local leadership role proactively to knit together your local partnership, including health, police, to tackle worklessness as part of their priorities. Work with Jobcentre Plus and Work Programme providers to find out what they are doing, their key priorities and where you can collectively add value, cost effectively. Both are strategic players in tackling worklessness locally and their advice is invaluable in order to develop a picture of any local gaps and opportunities in provision.

Consider developing Community Budget type approaches to tackle local priorities

Community Budgets were launched by the Government in 16 areas to help families with multiple problems. In these areas the Local Authorities are working to pool and align budgets to provide more integrated support for families with complex needs. Community Budgets will run from April 2011 for families with complex needs with the aim of extending these arrangements across England by 2013-14.

Consider the implications and opportunities of welfare reform

Local Authorities are well placed to bring together local partners in raising the profile and importance of tackling worklessness. And the extensive welfare reform agenda leading to the introduction of Universal Credits will impact on the way all organisations nationally and locally help people back to work – especially those with greater labour market barriers. Local Authorities will have an opportunity to think through the implications of welfare reforms and the impact on delivery locally across a range of agencies. For example, issues include a. greater need for psychological therapies for people moving off Incapacity Benefit, access to childcare and welfare rights. This will draw in support from Local Authorities, the NHS, schools, Jobcentre Plus and a host of other organisations. Getting that right will help us deliver reforms effectively and fairly against a backdrop of tight budgets.

Use your influence to make a reality of the Big Society locally to help tackle worklessness

Give recognition and support to volunteers when they try to tackle worklessness in innovative ways. Encourage local communities to bring their skills, experience and local knowledge to tackling worklessness.

Measure / Demonstrate success

Explore opportunities with Jobcentre Plus to co-locate services, promote efficiency and give the tax payer value for money, improve the customer experience and reduce the overall public sector estate

But bear in mind Jobcentre Plus/ DWP don't own estate: moving can have high 'get out' costs for them so early consultation with them on any proposals is essential. We are, however, already in discussions with Local Authorities across the country and remain very much open to discussion on approaches which might help us deliver services more cost effectively. Measure the impact of co-designed services through cost benefit analysis.

Explore the opportunities to tackle worklessness through better cross-agency working by sharing data more effectively

Find opportunities with partners to collect informed consent from jobseekers to share information. While there remain difficulties in sharing some personal data held by DWP, you might consider the options set out in DWP's Guidance on Local Data Sharing for partnerships, in the areas of 'tackling worklessness' and 'use of Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Benefit data'. Both Guides can be found through the DWP Data Share internet site. And look too, at what you might find to support operational and strategic plans in new Official Statistics which allow the identification of very small pockets of worklessness through the Census Area Output Data.

[Data Sharing: guidance for local authorities on the use of social security data](#)
(DWP website)

[Census Output Area Data on workless benefit claimants](#) (DWP website)

Learn from what other local authorities and their partners are doing

Take part in Local Government Improvement & Development's Worklessness Learning Forum and be aware of initiatives in addressing worklessness

Tackle the barriers to employment growth that the market will not address itself by prioritising interventions during a time of reduced resources

Local citizens will be concerned if your activity appears merely to duplicate what others are doing (including central government) and not deliver good value for money. We've set out an approach to support efforts to assess the value for money of worklessness interventions, in the form of our Cost Benefit Framework. This frame work is contained within the DWP Worklessness Co-Design Interim Report.

[DWP Worklessness Co-design Interim Report - Jan 2011](#) (DWP website)

Annex D - Support for co-design from the Local Government sector

Local Government Improvement and Development has played a role in support of the co-design pilots, helping to maximise the value of the initiative from a local authority perspective and spreading the learning beyond the five areas. It has acted as a sounding board and signposted parallel developments and experience in other parts of the country. There is particular interest in what the experience of the co-design pilots can offer in the future development of Community Budgets and more widely in relation to local authority roles in tackling worklessness.

LG Improvement and Development has pulled together resources to assist the pilots and make these available to the wider audience of interested practitioners. These can be found on their site at

[Local Government Improvement and Development: Worklessness: The role for Local Government](#) (Web page)

and are:

- Customer Insight and Worklessness - recent contributions to knowledge, evidence and techniques relating to the needs and experiences of customers of worklessness services
- Cost Benefit and Value for Money - materials to assist partners in assessing financial costs and benefits in planning and commissioning, business case preparation, evaluation, etc. It goes beyond worklessness in including relevant content on children and young people, health and crime reduction which matter when looking at wider social returns and potential savings to the public purse
- Co-design Evaluation Checklist – developed at the request of the pilots to provide a set of questions to help them build evaluation in from the outset and ensure the necessary evidence will be in place to assess the value of their innovations and influence future policy and practice
- Co-design pilots: relevant experience elsewhere – briefing on local ‘pilots’ in other parts of the country which have used structured approaches to innovation, including customer insight. These include initiatives stemming from Total Place and programmes such as Family Intervention Projects, Drug System Change and Child Poverty pathfinders which explore similar themes and challenges to the co-design pilots
- Tools for co-design - signposts to tools supporting partnership action planning, service design and innovation, and customer insight

The learning from the co-design pilots and from parallel developments will be promoted further through the Worklessness Learning Forum Community of Practice (CoP). Please join if you are not already registered and take advantage of the CoP to share experience and learn from others.

[Community of Practice](#) (Web page, log-in screen)

Annex E - Birmingham co-design area report



Birmingham's co-design Area summary

Introduction

Despite a wide range of employment support programmes and resources, worklessness rates in Birmingham, and in specific parts of the City, continue to remain above the national average. These high levels of worklessness, affect the quality of lives for our citizens, their families and their communities, and have an impact on the City's economic growth. As key strategic partners we are committed to addressing this issue. In developing Birmingham's co-design pilot, we recognised that current employability programmes may not be appropriate for some individuals with multiple barriers or long-term history of unemployment; particularly as traditional programmes can often be perceived as process driven rather than person-centred.

Some individuals are directed into inappropriate or non-optimum support, going through a revolving door, moving in and out of work, and through various employment support programmes. An individual's barriers to employment are not sufficiently recognised within an atmosphere of competing agencies and a silo delivery of wrap-around support services.

Our underlying premise of Birmingham's co-design pilot is that providing more of the same would not improve the numbers of people with multiple needs moving into sustained employment.

Our co-design pilot is not a blanket or standard approach for all unemployed people, but identifies those for whom a more intensive one-to-one person-centred support service would be more effective in securing sustainable employment.

Our approach is: "do the right thing not necessarily do things right", and mirrors the underlying philosophy currently being developed by Jobcentre Plus's flexible pilots.

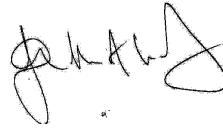
Birmingham's co-design pilot is not a short term, one-off project. It builds upon, and has been a demonstration of, effective partnership working between Birmingham City Council (BCC), Jobcentre Plus and local private and third sector organisations, in designing a new approach to tackling issues of worklessness.

The co-design pilot is integrated with, and helped shape Birmingham's Community Based Budget (CBB) approach for Families with Complex Needs and the Small Area Budget scheme in pooling local resources. Greater alignment will

continue to develop across a range of services, including 14 - 19 year old and adult employment support, to address worklessness. We are laying the foundations for future working relationships that will ensure Birmingham City Council, Jobcentre Plus and our strategic partners meet the future challenges and opportunities of localism by delivering effective solutions to worklessness.



Stephen Hughes
Chief Executive
Birmingham City Council



Jon Wright
District Manager
Birmingham & Solihull Jobcentre Plus

Area Report

1. Aim of the co-design project

The aim of Birmingham's co-design pilot is to test the premise that a more personalised, holistic approach, will be more effective for some individuals with multiple needs or long-term worklessness, than employment support programmes have been in the past. Its outcomes are:

- supporting more people faster into sustainable employment
- ensuring resilience in a competitive labour market
- significantly progressing individuals on their journey to work
- preventing young people from becoming long term workless
- achieving cost benefits for a range of stakeholders

The intention is to inform and change mainstream delivery of employment support.

The key elements of Birmingham's co-design pilot are:

- a more personalised approach, with quality, skilled advisers who can address psychological barriers and who act as advocates to ensure improved access to services, whilst assertively challenge individual assumptions
- effective aligned and responsive wrap around services
- a personalised budget approach, so that individuals are responsible for, involved in and own their individual solutions to worklessness
- effective engagement with employers to provide opportunities for employment, work experience and other Get Britain Working measures

After the initial scoping of this co-design pilot, Birmingham became one of the 16 Community Based Budget (CBB) areas, for Families with Complex Needs, and Small Area Budgets.

The co-design pilot is now integrated into, and has shaped Birmingham's CBB approach, which has provided tangible opportunities to deliver the co-design pilot achieve greater alignment of services and maximise the impact of both approaches.

2. Reason for choosing this approach:

2.1 Overall approach

Birmingham's co-design pilot is evidence based. Specifically, on the experience and perceptions from organisations involved in delivering employment support; Jobcentre Plus, Birmingham City Council (BCC) and a range of private and third Sector organisations. The findings and recommendations of BCC's commissioned research, including the Working Neighbourhoods Innovation Fund (WNF) Report by the Young Foundation and WNF evaluation by ekogen have been incorporated.

In developing Birmingham's co-design pilot, we recognised that current employability programmes may not be appropriate for some individuals with

multiple barriers or long-term history of unemployment; particularly as traditional programmes can often be perceived as process driven rather than person-centred.

Some individuals are directed into inappropriate or non-optimum support, going through a revolving door, moving in and out of work, and through various employment support programmes. An individual's barriers to employment are not sufficiently recognised within an atmosphere of competing agencies and a silo delivery of wrap-around support services.

Duplicate provision is an unnecessary cost. Repetition of intervention will impact on an individual's motivation, mistrust and lack of confidence in the services provided. Providing more of the same will not make a difference in moving those individuals with multiple barriers into sustainable employment.

Birmingham's co-design pilot is not a blanket or standard approach for all workless individuals. Assessment is crucial to understanding and identifying customers who would benefit from a more intensive, one-to-one person-centred support service, tailored to their specific needs, which in turn would be more effective in securing sustainable employment.

Once we understand an individual's needs, we can then jointly plan with them what they need to do to find work more quickly. We will support participants in achieving their goal. Being community based will enable us to call upon a range of partners to provide effective local support.

2.2 Key elements

Four key elements of the co-design were considered crucial:

- A more person-centred approach: to enable employment support advisers deliver a more flexible approach, to meet individuals needs
- A personalised budget approach: to empower individuals in designing their own solutions and using our labour market expertise to challenge solutions if unrealistic
- Effective and responsive wraparound services: recognising that whilst those services often already exist, there is not always effective alignment in delivery where it matters
- Effective engagement with employers: to ensure engagement at an early stage with employers, and the world of work, to boost motivation. Research has highlighted that many claimants become frustrated and cynical when they perceive there are no real jobs for them

2.3 Birmingham's labour market

Birmingham's labour market has two distinct profiles:

- inner-city areas, multi-racial with a young population, a high churn in and out of temporary paid employment and higher level of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants in comparison to those on long-term in-active benefits

- outer-ring areas, predominately white, with higher levels of intergenerational worklessness, NEET hotspots, and with a higher proportion of people on long term in-active benefits

From the onset, it was agreed to pilot the co-design in two different parts of the City which reflected these different characteristics, in order to test the transferability of the approach.

The initial outline proposal identified a number of potential opportunities which the co-design pilot would link into. These included the existing arrangements exploring co-location at the Working Places Hub in Lozells, in inner-city Birmingham and at the Shared Services Hub at the Meadway, an outer-city area. There have been further developments triggered by different specific geographic locations when Birmingham became a CBB area. However, we have retained the focus on two distinctly different areas of Birmingham for the co-design pilot.

2.4 Integration with Birmingham's Community Based Budget approach:

Birmingham's co-design pilot has shaped and become integral to Birmingham's CBB approach.

The overall approach for the co-design had been agreed prior to Birmingham becoming a CBB. Whilst the CBB brought a focus on families with complex needs, many of the issues, concerns and indeed the approach proposed for Birmingham's co-design pilot mirrored those for families with complex needs. In particular, the importance of a holistic, person centred approach, which reduced duplication across services, and reduced the silo approach of individual service providers.

The Families with Complex Needs approach is being piloted in Shard End, an outer-ring area, with high levels of intergenerational worklessness and a NEET hotspot. Whilst many of the families initially identified, would not be Jobcentre Plus customers, as many are on long-term inactive benefits, it is acknowledged that pathways to employment will be a crucial aspect of support to these families.

Birmingham is also piloting a Small Area Budget. This is focused on the inner city area of Handsworth and Lozells. The multi agency Steering Group identified customer advice and employment as two of its key work streams, and built on the emerging partnership arrangements for co-location of services, including Jobcentre Plus services, in the Working Places Hub. Discussions had already taken place with regard to co-location, and the impetus of the Small Area Budget has progressed the integration of the co-design pilot within this approach.

The decision to integrate the CBB approach and Worklessness co-design was based on the desire to achieve greater alignment, both approaches informing each other, and the desire to thus maximise the impact of both initiatives within existing resources. Cross agency working will also bring long term dividends, and benefit both individuals and families.

2.5 Alignment with 14 - 19 employment support:

Birmingham has high levels of youth unemployment and NEETs. One of the priority actions in Birmingham City Council's Employment and Skill Action Plan, is: "preventing young people from becoming the future long-term worklessness" by ensuring greater alignment between employment support provided to both 14 - 19 year olds and to adults.

The co-design pilot has provided a tangible opportunity to explore how this can be done practically to deliver improved services and outcomes.

3. Overview:

The focus for this Pilot will be on those who are long-term workless or have multiple needs. It will test the assumption that a person centered and holistic approach would be more effective, than current employment support programmes, and be able to deliver savings in the long run.

The Pilot will have a spatial focus, in two different parts of Birmingham, and is now integrated with Birmingham's CBB approach.

A cohort of advisers from a range of organisations including Jobcentre Plus, will be trained to deliver the flexible approach designed for the pilot.

Six stages of the Birmingham co-design model:

- Awareness: initial contact
- Engagement: customer sign-up
- Assessment: information gathering
- Address barriers to work: sign post to experts to address non-worklessness issues
- Supportive Jobsearch, delivering personalised service in securing employment
- Post employment support: providing assistance to customers and employers in keeping employment

The co-design model will offer:

- a more personalised approach, with quality, skilled advisers who can pick up psychological barriers, act as an advocate to ensure improved access to services, as well as challenging assumptions
- effective and responsive wraparound services
- personalised budget approach, which involves individuals in the co-design of solutions, and
- effective engagement with employers to provide opportunities for work experience and Work Trials.

3.1 Time line of key activities:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| • Strategic Steering Group established | October 2010 |
| • Stakeholder analysis completed | November 2010 |
| • Cohort agreed | January 2011 |
| • Agencies role agreed: | January 2011 |
| • Delivery arrangements in Handsworth scoped: | January 2011 |

- Establish links to: (1) co-location (2) Community Based Budget (3) Small Area Budget January 2011
- Agree approach to: (1) evaluation (2) common assessment (3) control group (4) measures of success (5) cost benefit analysis January 2011
- Operational Implementation Group established February 2011
- Project Manager and outreach advisers identified March 2011
- Delivery arrangements in Shard End scoped May 2011
- Partnership Operational Delivery Event June 2011
- Community Consultation Event July 2011

Four different Cohorts have been identified:

- Jobseeker's Allowance recipients
- Housing Association referrals
- Community Agency referrals
- NEET referrals

Whilst we will work with customers on active benefits, particularly JSA, we will also support those customers who are:

- without work
- have one or more barriers to employment
- self referrals
- referrals from partners and community organisations
- the customer's family dependents
- in low paid employment

An initial cohort has been identified comprising customers in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance who have been unemployed for over two years who live in the Lozells & East Handsworth Ward and Hodge Hill Constituency. The project will potentially work with over 440 customers in Lozells & East Handsworth and 1500 in Shard End

Premises in Lozells & East Handsworth have been secured from mid May and we will start working in Shard End in the summer aligned to the delivery timeline for CBB. A phased engagement approach will operate beginning with customers in their local Jobcentre. This will then be followed up by a customer assessment in our outreach location, where the advisers will jointly agree with the customer a back to work plan.

Where non-worklessness barriers to work are identified, the outreach adviser will refer the customer to partner organisations to address the issue. With the customer's agreement, we will liaise with partners on progress made. The outreach adviser will continue to provide personalised support and mentoring whilst supporting the customer into work.

We will be working with a range of partners who have expertise in:

- breakdown in relationships
- drug misuse
- problem drinking

- debt problems
- severe mental health and other mental
- physical health issues.
- offenders
- asylum seekers and refugees
- carers
- 16 to 18 year olds

Where worklessness barriers are identified, the outreach adviser will agree a Work Plan with partner organisations.

Support will be offered by a range of partners who have expertise in:

- NEETs
- literacy, numeracy and ESOL
- motivation and confidence
- job hunting and self marketing
- CVs
- IT
- training and qualifications
- work experience and volunteering
- in and out of work benefit advice

The co-design pilot will be delivered through a range of locations, including:

- community venues
- Local Colleges and schools previously involved in delivering the School Gates project, and
- in individual's own homes, building on best practice developed by Midland Heart, a major RSL in the Lozells area and a member of the Project Board

A Partner event will be held for those organisations who will be delivering the outreach service. This will provide an opportunity for partners to:

- commit to the co-pilot and its intended outcomes
- gain an understanding of each others skills and expertise
- agree processes and procedures
- identify any learning and development needs

We are also planning Community Consultation Events in the both wards to consult on:

- the aims, objectives and measures of success of the project
- draw upon good practice
- utilise any local supported employment, training and educational activity not previously identified
- Identify new sources of referrals

We will be working with Jobcentre Plus and Partners who specialise in employer engagement to agree joined-up co-design employer and self employment strategies; and so maximise local and Birmingham-wide activities.

Customers will be offered post employment support on starting work or self employment.

3.2 Testing our assumptions:

The BCC Research Report: “Tackling Worklessness in Birmingham: Learning from the Evaluation of the WNF Innovation Fund” has been used as a check point:

Pathways to success:

- Identify the potential barriers your clients face, scoping work, such as focus groups can provide a clear picture of need from the outset
- Decide which barriers you could address directly e.g. free childcare or transport. Can project funds cover this or will partner organisations carry some or all of the costs?
- Think about how you can address needs that go beyond the funding or expertise of the project e.g. health conditions or disabilities. Can other service providers meet these needs?
- Identify opportunities from the outset for tailoring delivery to meet client needs e.g. providing opportunities to learn, volunteer or work on ad-hoc basis to accommodate fluctuating health conditions
- Continually re-assess how well projects are meeting client needs and revise delivery to accommodate emerging issues
- Take time to think about what approach is likely to work best in motivating the target client group – traditional styles of delivery might not suit everyone
- Consider the best way of keeping in touch with clients, texting and social networking sites may work well with some groups e.g. young people.
- Explore options for providing taster activities e.g. work visits to build confidence, experience and motivation in a gradual and non-threatening way
- Establish procedures for contacting clients who fail to attend, perseverance may pay off in preventing individuals from dropping out.”

3.3 Resources:

Birmingham and Solihull Jobcentre Plus District have provided direct resources to deliver the co-design pilot, with a project manager and a team of advisers. The City Council is contributing officer support, and a number of third and private sector organisations have offered advisers, to create a multi-organisational advisory team.

The Flexible Support Fund (FSF) is part of the Jobcentre Plus pre-Work Programme offer. The fund is a key enabler to meet individual needs in order to maximise helping people into work and will be utilised to move customers quickly into work.

The Birmingham and Solihull Employment and Skills Board is committed to aligning Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with raising skill levels and employability of local people. It will be piloting a CSR initiative as part of the co-

design pilot as a means of engaging employers in supporting people into work directly and indirectly.

4. Cost Benefit analysis:

Birmingham's co-design pilot will use the DWP benefits savings model developed to support this and other work. This will be complemented by the cost-benefit model being developed to support Birmingham's CBB approach, along with analysis of the wider costs to the public purse.

5. Barriers and Risks to delivery:

There has been substantial progress on the co-design pilot, and many of the earlier barriers or risks to delivery have been overcome. However there still remain a number of risks:

- Taking risks to do something different can present challenges, particularly in a climate where the focus is on achievement against performance targets - the tendency can often be to carry on with the known approaches rather than something new and untested
- Tensions with other drivers, for example services with a focus on safeguarding issues, may not always perceive employment issues as being core to the CBB approach, which may then limit the holistic or integrated approach being fully adopted
- Costs – there are limited if any resources to manage any risks or barriers that might arise
- Input from other organisations may become limited, as with reduced resources, organisations tend to become inward looking

6. Successes:

One of the key successes of Birmingham's co-design pilot has been the active involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, including Jobcentre Plus, BCC and a range of third sector organisations who have delivered employment support, in shaping the approach.

This has meant we have built upon a breath of expertise, including user feedback, which has strengthened the model, and ensured further involvement of those organisations in the delivery of the pilot.

The pilot has also strengthened the partnership relationship between Jobcentre Plus and the City Council, bringing both organisations closer together in the planning and delivery of the pilot. The integration with Birmingham's CBB approach has also extended Jobcentre Plus's working relationship across a range of council services, beyond the employment and regeneration directorates.

This strengthened partnership will bring long term benefits to Birmingham residents, with improved delivery on outcomes resulting from greater alignment of services.

With strong joint leadership from Jobcentre Plus and BCC, the Co-design Project Board, was able to reach agreement on the approach and operational requirements, within a short period of time, which is testimony to the commitment

and support of those involved, in addressing some of the deep seated issues of worklessness.

A project plan has been agreed and delivery on this 2 year pilot started in May 2011. In addition to Jobcentre Plus, a number of organisations have also offered advisers to the project team. The commitment of resources is a major success for the co-design pilot given the pressures of policy uncertainty and reducing resources.

The co-design pilot has also benefited from maximising all available opportunities, including the integration with Birmingham's CBB approach, alignment with 14 - 19 year old support, and the Employment and Skills Board's Corporate Social Responsibility initiative. This is not only benefiting delivery of the co-design pilot, but also ensuring longer term benefits, and placing Birmingham in a unique position to meet the scale of future challenges and opportunities of localism.

7. Evaluation:

Warwick University have offered "critical friend" support in developing and delivering the co-design pilot. We will continue to build upon this relationship in framing a robust evaluation of the pilot.

The Partnership will evaluate the effectiveness of the Birmingham pilot by comparing a Control Group of those customers engaged with the co-design pilot and a similar group not engaged with the co-design pilot in the Northfield Ward located in south west Birmingham.

8. Sustainability – maintaining delivery and exit strategy:

From the onset the co-design pilot was not viewed as a project, more an opportunity to trial and test a system change, with a clear commitment from both the City Council and Jobcentre Plus to use the findings to inform mainstream delivery of employment support.

The drive towards localism, with greater flexibilities for Jobcentre Plus Districts, will enable our local Jobcentre Plus District to implement learning from the co-design pilot across its services.

As the Work Programme and DWP's European Social Fund comes on stream it is our intention to involve and integrate the Work Programme and contracted Providers in the co-design pilot and share learning and to ensure individuals with multiple needs are more ready and able to access mainstream employment support provision.

The co-design pilot is a key action in the City Council's Employment and Skills Action Plan: Improving the offer from BCC services on employment and skills. It is providing a tangible opportunity to raise awareness and demonstrate how council services can contribute more effectively to employment and skills outcomes and inform future practice.

Integrating the co-design pilot with Birmingham's CBB approach also ensures momentum is maintained, resources maximised and learning embedded across

City Council services, not traditionally focused on worklessness issues, and those of other partners involved in the CBB approach.

A key aspect of the co-design pilot has been the links with co-location opportunities for Jobcentre Plus and other services, again ensuring on-going alignment of services.

As part of the exit strategy, we will work with our partners, in particular: Jobcentre Plus, local colleges, community organisations, Business in the Community and Prince's Trust to offer continued support to those people engaged with the pilot.

The strengthened partnership, and commitment to work differently, which has emerged through the co-design pilot, will sustain long term benefits for Birmingham residents.

9. Lessons learned

Birmingham's co-design pilot has identified a number of key learning points:

- Leadership from BCC and Jobcentre Plus has been critical in driving forward the co-design pilot, particularly at a time of shrinking public sector resources and levels of uncertainty across a range of partner organisations
- Being bold and thinking outside the box has been critical in shaping the Pilot and engagement of a range of organisations in its delivery
- Importance of engaging a wide range of stakeholders in the planning and scoping of the pilot has ensured the pilot has been shaped by experience, knowledge and evidence, and has secured the buy-in of those partners
- Involving a wide range of stakeholders also takes time, which needs to be planned in
- Whilst a number of Third Sector organisations were involving in shaping the pilot, and were committed to offering advisers to work as part of the project team, uncertainties about their future funding has meant some have not been able to follow that through
- Maximising links with other opportunities and initiatives, including co-location, Corporate Social Responsibility, greater alignment between 14 - 19 year olds and adult employment support, and integrating the co-design pilot with Birmingham's CBB and SAB approach has been critical in ensuring greater impact of the Pilot
- Having no resources, whilst a challenge, also freed up thinking, and changed the focus from "how much can we get from this fund" to "how can we contribute to this outcome"

10. Next steps

Birmingham's co-design pilot is now moving into its operational phase:

- An Operational Project Group has now been established, replacing the broader Project Board, to oversee operational arrangements
- A Cohort of advisers has been identified and training undertaken
- A range of locations has been identified and arrangements agreed
- On-going consultation with Trade Unions
- Involving local staff, for their views in shaping the pilot
- An initial cohort has been identified, and engagement to beginning in May

- Engagement with Work Programme Prime Contractors
- Further embedding the co-design within Birmingham’s CBB approach

11. Future partnership working

The co-design pilot has been critical in strengthening partnership working between BCC and Jobcentre Plus in designing more effective solutions to worklessness. The integration with Birmingham’s CBB approach has also extended Jobcentre Plus’s working relationship across a range of council services, and with other partners in the City.

Whilst there is still some way to go, there is now greater alignment between the 14 - 19 year olds and adult employment support, which will bring long term benefits in preventing young people from becoming the future workless of the City, or becoming lost in the system between young people’s services and Jobcentre Plus.

Partnership working always brings challenges in finding ways to make things work within organisation’s restrictions, and across different organisational drivers.

These challenges have further strengthened the trust, and have laid the foundations for future working relationships which will ensure Birmingham City Council, Jobcentre Plus, and our strategic partners meet the future challenges and opportunities of localism in delivering effective solutions to worklessness.

Contact for future information

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Shilpi Akbar, Assistant Director for Employment	District: Zanny Lomas
Telephone number - 0121 303 4571	Telephone number - 0121 255 8346
Shilpi.akbar@birmingham.gov.uk	ZANNY.LOMAS@JOBCENTREPLUS.GSI.GOV.UK

Case Study

A case study on Partnership working in the co-design area demonstrating the multi agencies and partners we effectively deal with.

Who did it?

In 2009, at a local operational level, the Government invited Birmingham City Council (BCC) to deliver School Gates in partnership with:

- local Schools
- Birmingham & Solihull Jobcentre Plus, and
- Regional Development Agency (RDA) through their delivery partner Business Link

As a contextual point, these organisations did not have a history of working together in Birmingham. Through its strategic planning and operational delivery, this initiative prompted new and alternative ways of working to address worklessness.

Birmingham City Council led the initiative through a Strategic and Operational Steering Group, bringing all the partners together to focus on achieving the programme's aim and objective.

At a national strategic level, the School Gates Partnership was made up of:

- Child Poverty Unit (CPU)
- Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS)
- Department for Work & Pensions (DWP), and
- Department for Education (DfE)

The initiative operated from October 2009 till March 2011 in 25 areas of across England, Wales and Scotland.

Nationally, the community organisation ContinYou was available to offer partners developmental support if required.

Why did we do it?

The School Gates Employability Initiative was part of the previous Government's strategy in reducing child poverty and to support families through the economic downturn. In June 2010, the Coalition Government made the decision to continue with the programme.

In brief, the aim of School Gates was to increase the amount of employment and enterprise support parents receive in their children's schools.

The objective was to increase the number of parents in low income families entering sustainable employment or enable families to move closer to the labour market. There was a particular focus on 'potential second wage earners' where one parent was already in low wage employment and a second parent was looking for routes to work.

Background data:

- Birmingham has 85,290 children in workless families and 77,710 children in families on Working Tax Credit (WTC) giving a total of 163,000 children living in low income families
- Out of the top ten most disadvantaged Wards in the UK, Birmingham has 3
- Birmingham has diverse ethnic communities with one school having 20 languages spoken by its pupils and parents
- Birmingham is the largest single Local Authority in the UK and has in excess of 270 primary schools

How did we do it?

Support offered to parents by the Birmingham partnership included:

- a co-ordinated, tailored package of information and support to parents in schools across Birmingham
- greater awareness among parents of the support available to them in Birmingham and how they can access it
- increased motivation for parents to find work and have a clear understanding of how to pursue this goal
- increased engagement of parents with existing employment and enterprise support

The Birmingham partnership deliberately took the decision not to build up a promotional campaign, but focus on effective marketing; including leaflets in school bags, School newsletters and word of mouth.

The initiative gave Birmingham schools, BCC, Jobcentre Plus and Business Link the resources to increase their partnership working and to work together to offer parents a co-ordinated package of support to overcome any barriers to work.

Business Link Enterprise Advisers brought an expertise in self employment, advising parents on the options and funding streams.

Jobcentre Plus advisers brought an expertise on employment, training and educational opportunities and increased take-up of employment programmes.

Locating the surgeries in schools was a key element to enable parent's participation, in a place where they felt comfortable and secure.

This was a completely new area of community engagement for Schools. Any reservations Schools may have had were addressed when they saw at first hand the effective delivery of employment and enterprise surgeries and parent's reaction to the support provided.

As the programme developed, so did the partnership working. New partners included:

- Family Information Service
- Local colleges
- Non Jobcentre Plus contracted providers
- Children's Centres
- School clusters
- Family Support Workers

- Extended School Advisers
- Working Neighbourhood Fund Providers

What did we do?

- 44 schools participated
- 700+ parents contacted
- 430 parents attended
- 108 potential second wage earner parents engaged
- 94 lone parents engaged
- 9 parents in work placements and / or voluntary work
- 19 parents in work (including self employment)
- 37 parents attended an external training course
- 36 parents taken part in enterprise activities

Birmingham reported back to the Child Poverty Unit (CPU) on developments, issues, and performance. The CPU evaluated the project. The overall approach taken in Birmingham was to have nominated Jobcentre Plus / Enterprise support available to a number of appropriate schools. This worked well, especially when contact was directly with the school rather than via any hub or cluster arrangements.

Challenges for the Partnership?

For RDA and Business Link, continued to support School Gates whilst going through a number of major restructuring changes in operations and funding.

The resource issue had an impact on all the partners, not doing more for less, but doing more differently.

For Jobcentre Plus, the School Gates customer group were parents. However, participating parents were not necessarily Jobcentre Plus core customers. Some parents engaged were working in low paid jobs; some not job ready or looking for work; some were in receipt of inactive benefits or not benefit recipients.

School Gates enabled Jobcentre Plus to reach these customer groups, people without work or in low paid jobs, who Jobcentre Plus would not normally be able to meet and help.

For the Schools, worklessness was not seen as an issue that they should be actively addressing or involved with. However, where parents attended School Gates sessions, Schools reported that this increased parents' involvement with School activities generally. Those School representatives, who quickly understood the wider gains to be achieved from partnership working, achieved the most success with School Gates.

Operational issues like Criminal Bureau Checks, Child Care, Risk Assessments, IT and suitable location within the Schools, were challenges but through partnership working, were resolved.

Inviting parents to travel to a hub school was tested and found not to be effective.

Other challenges included:

- During 2010 / 2011 the RDA funded the enterprise awareness surgery. In the short term BCC will fund enterprise support for parents until the summer 2011. A long term arrangement will be identified and agreed by the Birmingham Partnership, with possible links to the DWP Worklessness co-design and Small Area Budgets.
- Partners aligning their organisational targets with School Gates targets, which did not necessarily match.
- Gaining the trust and confidence of parents and partners.

Innovation & Next steps:

- Birmingham & Solihull Jobcentre Plus with BCC support are continuing to deliver School Gates beyond April 2011
- Running Dad's School Gates surgeries
- Arranging CV, IT, Literacy & Numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) support
- Participation in holiday Play Schemes
- Good practice shared with outreach programmes and Work Programme Providers
- Linking the lessons learning from School Gates to DWP Worklessness co-design and Community Based Budgets
- Ensuring the employability link is maintained between the School and their local Jobcentre once the School Gates advisers have left
- Closer working with Schools at strategic and operational levels on understanding and addressing worklessness

Annex F - Bradford co-design area report

Co-design – Final Report



Introduction

The City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, hosted a worklessness co-design Workshop last summer for the Department of Work and Pensions and local stakeholders and I am pleased to introduce our final co-design report that outlines our work under this initiative since.

We have been ambitious from the outset of our co-design work and we are taking the opportunity to drive a Think Family approach to worklessness that is informing and supporting the worklessness and skills aspect of our Community Budget work going forward over the next few years. Our work is driven by a broader local consideration of worklessness and skills from a family perspective and the intrinsic links to Children and Young People's services and their work on child/family poverty. Our approach has also sought to engage with a wider selection of partners including those who do not have worklessness as their agenda but are in contact with workless families / individuals i.e. police, housing, health etc. Driven by our local partnership arrangements, it was agreed that we would work on a pilot basis in the Manningham area of Bradford as it is one of the most deprived areas within Bradford with the highest concentration of worklessness.

Building an innovative, productive and high value economy is one of the most important and urgent challenges facing our District. Addressing the high levels of worklessness and the many people lacking basic skills will be integral to meeting that challenge. We recognise that a strong skills base is essential to attract and retain investment and good quality, well paid jobs, to maintain and grow our manufacturing strength and to reduce worklessness. More effective partnership

work across the public sector and with employers is very much the way forward in order to deliver pathways to employment and skills that ultimately meets with employer's needs and our co-design work has been overseen by our local business led Employment and Skills Board and its operational Employment and Skills Partnership. The Local Authority will continue to provide strong leadership in driving this joint approach, working closely with all partners to make sure that we create the right environment to enable business and enterprise to thrive and to generate employment so that we can delivery against our agreed strategic objectives and priorities as outlined in our local Employment and Skills Strategy.

I am pleased to endorse our co-design activity to date and am grateful for the support of DWP, Jobcentre Plus and local stakeholders and partners in getting us this far. This report outlines the issues involved so far and our plans going forward under Community Budget developments and we hope that it supports colleagues in other districts and partnership settings to consider how such an approach may assist their development of activities to address worklessness under more progressive partnership arrangements and I firmly believe that the Community Budget approach gives us that opportunity.

Tony Reeves

Chief Executive

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

2. Area Report

2.1 Aim of co-design project

The overriding aim is to put the alignment of partnership work at the heart of addressing worklessness and to work up a process from a blank sheet which consider the needs of the whole family as people move along the journey to work. By aligning sector priorities, educating partners about the benefits of supporting people into employment and focusing reduced resources we can tackle worklessness which in turn will impact on many of the related issues faced by Bradford.

Worklessness is a complex policy area with individuals and families often presenting multiple barriers to employment to a range of support agencies. We know that there are some parts of the delivery chain which focus very narrowly on the immediate difficulties of a person or family because of the ways in which agencies are funded. Often the public contract and performance regime does not encourage publicly funded agencies to engage with other problems their customers might experience.

With changes to the Welfare System, the introduction of the Work Programme and local funding streams coming to an end (many of which have been used to help address barriers to employment in the past) the employability support framework is evolving. Couple this changing landscape with public sector spending cuts and reduced budgets it is important that the services evolve too to meet the needs of the district on a more effective and value for money basis. This drives the need to work with a range of partners and organisations in order to address worklessness, some of whom may not have traditionally considered worklessness as their agenda.

It is imperative that partners are aligned to focus on services which compliment and 'wrap around' the mainstream provision offered by Jobcentre Plus and that limited funds are not used to duplicate an offer which is already provided and funded. This directs an objective of the co-design project towards shifting traditional practices and engaging with partners to do things differently. As Bradford has no allocated resources or budget to develop this project a key aim is to deliver results through partnership commitment. By engaging those partners who will benefit from a reduction in the levels of worklessness (I.e. Police – Less anti social behaviour, Health – healthier lifestyles) and those who fund some of the services which offer support to overcome barriers, securing their commitment to work up the co-design model affords us a working team who can steer the development of co-design and disseminate activities and information within their domain.

Another consideration for the project is the ability for it to inform, align with and link in to the development of work undertaken under the Community Budget banner. Bradford is one of 16 Local Authorities currently working on a Community Budget Model. To keep up to date with the development of Community Budget and to ensure the co-design models links with and complements the Family First Community Budget work a representative close to co-design and the Employer

and Partnership Manager from Jobcentre Plus, who Chairs the Employability and Co-design Action group, sit on the reference group for Community Budgets. As this model is also in its infancy it is important that the worklessness co-design model is constructed with enough flexibility to accommodate the Community Budget strategy as it evolves.

These two pieces of work interlink through the principles of addressing the needs of families with barriers. The evolving concept of Community Budgets will work with those families which have complex needs and is building on existing good practice, such as the work of the Bradford Family Intervention Project. It also seeks to improve the support and services that partners provide and this will be done by: removing inefficiencies; adding value to these services; driving cost out of the system; whilst matching these services to what will create better outcomes to families with complex needs, and the communities and neighbourhoods around them.

The approach for Bradford's Community Budget, as with co-design, builds on our Total Place methodology. The starting point for both strands of work is to define the scope of the prototype by mapping the support and services currently delivered to families and neighbourhoods. The difference being that whilst Community Budgets will focus on those families with multiple complexities, co-design's primary focus is addressing barriers to employment and moving people closer to the labour market by also considering the influence of their surrounding environment and family. Both projects are working closely with probation, Children's Services, health and social care, police, housing and other partners in order to drive forward a cohesive strategy.

2.2 Theme

Our Think Family approach is driven by a broader local consideration of worklessness and skills from a family perspective and the intrinsic links to Children and Young People's services and their work on child / family poverty. Addressing the issue of worklessness and moving people in to work goes some way towards enabling families to lift themselves out of poverty over time. Children from households that have parent / parents in work are likely to be higher achievers at school. In turn they are likely to leave school with better qualifications and skills and are therefore more likely to secure employment. By developing a coherent Journey to Work which considers the needs of the family and moving more people towards employment we start to construct a more affluent district which in its self starts to address some of the broader, related issues faced by Bradford.

2.3 Reason for choosing that theme

We know that there are families in Bradford who have experienced an intergenerational cycle of worklessness and deprivation. These families can include individuals with a range of barriers to work i.e. low educational attainment, low skilled or no employment, limited aspirations and low expectations of success, children at risk of harm, teenage pregnancy, anti social behaviour, repeat homelessness and offending. Many of these individuals and / or families are in

contact with several organisations be it as part of a formal process or informal support mechanism.

An agency may be satisfactorily achieving all of its throughput targets, but might not think about other risk factors which may occur in the family, such as domestic abuse in the home, criminal behaviour or a parent with a low level mental illness, all of which can create a barrier to a customer moving towards work. Services dip in and out of their customers' lives almost on a 'specific needs' basis, and sometimes will complete their service delivery and then "drop" them on the doorstep of the next service provider. We know that this results in multiple interventions for some families involving many case workers and can lead to disillusionment and withdrawal from socio-economic activity.

As previously highlighted, with changes to the Welfare System, the introduction of the Work Programme and local funding streams coming to an end (many of which have been used to help address barriers to employment in the past) the employability support framework is evolving. As funding becomes more scarce it is imperative we rationalise the Journey to Work, driving out cost and using available funds most efficiently to add value by wrapping around, not duplicating, the mainstream, nationally funded provision of Jobcentre Plus.

This becomes even more poignant when you consider: -

Disregarding those who are economically inactive there are approximately 25,000 people of working age in Bradford who are unemployed. Following the Work Capability Reassessments we estimate that around another 20,000 people will be required to become more economically active over the coming four years. In addition, considering other factors such as lone parents with young children and the forecast population growth within the District, the numbers of people actively seeking work are set to increase significantly at a time of reducing public sector resources.

Because of this, co-design will focus on those who are furthest from the labour market. Those people in receipt of inactive benefits (e.g. those on Incapacity Benefit and Lone Parents whose young child is seven years old or five years old) who will be required to look for work over the next few years will be entering the Journey to Work a long way from the labour market and because of this we are turning our focus on these individuals and their families as the target audience for co-design.

By choosing the Think Family approach we seek to drive the alignment and coordination of supporting workless people along the journey to work. Working with partners across the district, and including those organisations who don't traditionally address worklessness as an issue i.e. Police, Health, that have contact with workless individuals, we can dovetail with the District's work on Community Budgets and offer a more coordinated support package to families with complex needs.

2.4 Overview / flow chart of design

The co-design project is being worked up around the Journey to Work with focus on those individuals at the far left of the model. The Journey to Work is based on the Shreeveport report recommended model. The Shreeveport report is a piece of work commissioned in 2007 by Jobcentre Plus to inform how DAF (Deprived Area Fund) should be used to address worklessness in the most deprived areas of the district. The information gathered and the recommendations are still relevant today.

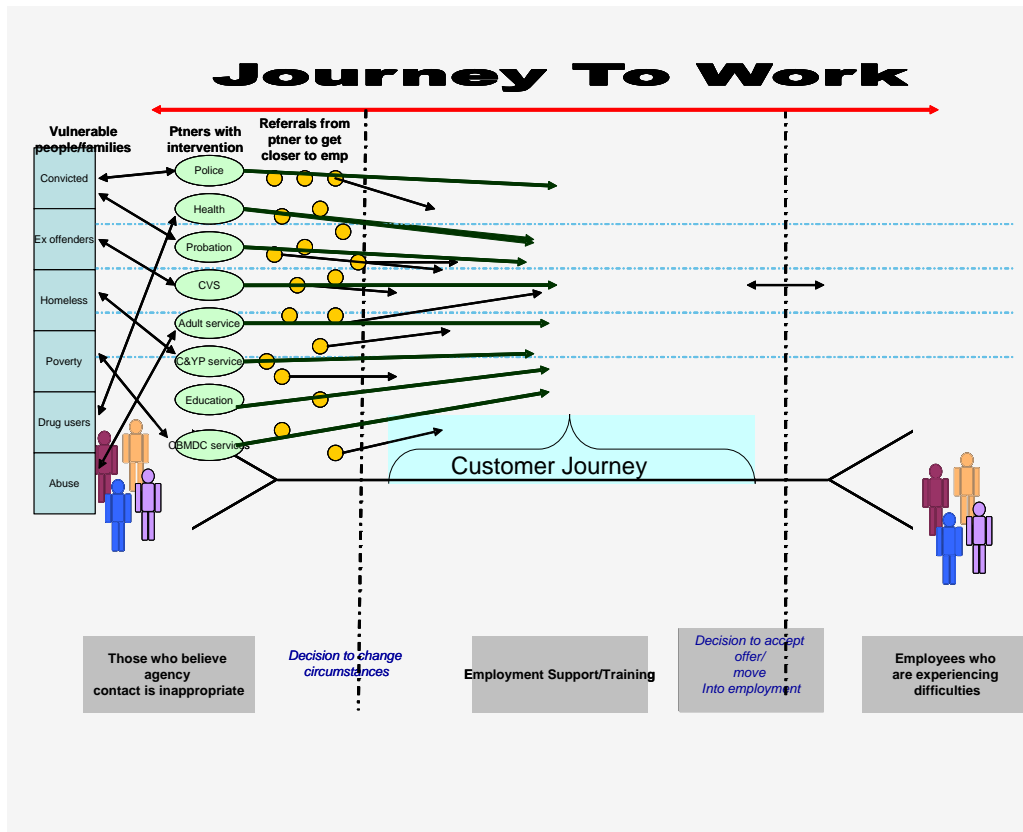
The model (Diagram 1) is split in to three stages and reflects a customers Journey to Work moving either from left to right or right to left.

The three stages represent:

First Stage (left hand side of the model) – People furthest from the employment market, those not looking for work and not engaged in formal training or support that would help bring them closer to employment. Barriers include – Mental / physical health issues, poverty, chaotic life style, addicted to substances, homeless, language, generational unemployment, no motivation towards employment, debt etc.

Second Stage (Middle section) – Those who have made the decision to look for work and are engaged in employability support or training and have either addressed some of their barriers to employment or are working to address their barriers in order to gain employment. They are motivated to move towards work. Support includes – job search activities, the Jobcentre Plus Offer, the Work Programme, employability support programmes, up skilling, training towards qualifications and contracted resources such as the locally available Transition Fund all of which enables the individual to remain motivated and focused towards employment.

Third Stage (Right hand side of the model) – Those who have been successful in gaining employment but may be experience difficulties which could lead to them becoming unemployed if not addressed. This stage would normally consist of post employment support to enable the individual to remain in employment or provide additional support in a redundancy situation. Difficulties may include – managing a health condition in the workplace, transition from benefits to a wage, childcare issues, main carer etc.



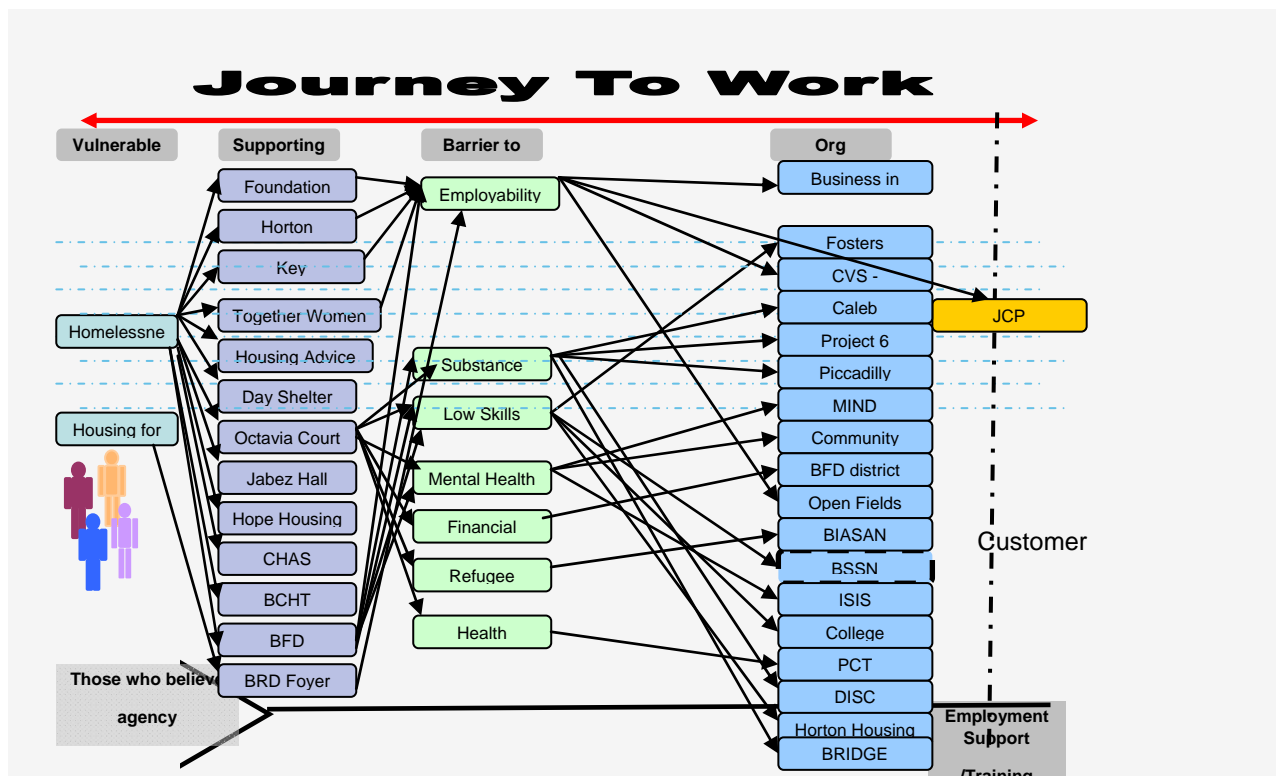
(Diagram 1)

A mapping exercise has been undertaken within a small sample area of Manningham, a part of the district which is one of the most deprived areas within Bradford with a high concentration of worklessness, to establish where duplication and gaps in employability support currently exist for vulnerable people and those furthest from the labour market.

From this exercise it is already emerging that there is a significant amount of duplication of services and resources. The model below (Diagram 2) is a snapshot of those services available to a homeless person living within our pilot area and who may or may not be claiming Jobseekers Allowance. This exercise was repeated across other vulnerable groups and shows that the journey from far left of the model towards employment can often be complex and does not necessarily consider multiple barriers of an individual or their families.

By identifying where duplication of services exist we can start to simplify this journey by aligning services and focusing provision to wraparound and complement the formal offer of Jobcentre Plus (including the Get Britain Working measures), the Work Programme and bespoke support offered at neighbourhood level. By simplifying the journey to work and understanding how families with barriers to employment touch on partner organisations we can start to develop a framework that addresses both the needs of the individual and those of their families, ultimately supporting them closer to employment.

(Diagram 2)



Following on from this exercise we held a workshop on 10th May to further establish what duplication of services / funding occurs, how they overlap with the formal offer of Jobcentre Plus and what issues these organisations perceive or experience when accepting people from or referring people on to other organisations for support.

The workshop was well attended by a diverse range of partners who come in to contact with workless individuals; - Colleges, Police, Community support organisations, Housing Children & Young people Service.

Whilst we have not yet had the opportunity to collate the information gathered and utilise it to inform the next steps some common themes emerging are:

- Too many organisations to know what they all do and who they should refer to (so some just do it them selves creating duplication)
- The different language / jargon used within niche organisations is confusing to an external organisation
- Customers are asked to complete a referral form and some kind of assessment form from most services
- Services recognised that they don't focus on worklessness as an outcome but can see the benefits of doing so if the had the tools / knowledge

(Similar issues have been raised during Community Budget work and were raised during Total Place work).

Organisations cited the following as an outcome for them:

- Improved family relations
- Gaining a qualification

- Getting a job
- Improved confidence
- An acceptable behaviour contract

The outcomes listed demonstrate the priorities for some of the organisations attending the workshop i.e. Qualification = college, getting a job = employment services, acceptable behaviour contract = police, and whilst they are individual to each organisation when considered in the context of an individual or a family each outcome would contribute to moving them closer to the employment.

Having captured some of the thoughts around co-design from those organisations who come into contact with workless individuals, a proposed improvement would be to have a community hub that is funded by and co-ordinates referrals from organisation to organisation. Services could also have a representation in the building i.e. a community police officer, a health worker, a housing offer etc for people from the community to access directly. This would provide another opportunity to address the barriers of worklessness.

This proposal not only offers an opportunity to streamline the referrals process and simplify the Journey to Work it would enable us to test the viability of a Community Hub within the Community Budget objective of working with families with complex needs.

2.5 Cost Benefit Analysis - proposed and / or actual

The Audit Commission are working with us to produce a framework for cost benefit analysis (CBA) which can be used as a predictive tool to demonstrate the benefits of adopting a co-design approach. It is aimed at organisations whose primary function is not focused on worklessness but who would see benefits were they to work more in partnership with others. The framework will also be applicable for use as an evaluative tool to be used to show the value of adopting new approaches.

Initial discussions suggest that there will be five stages to this work:

- develop a method for capturing costs and benefits
- develop fitting cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness models
- collect data
- run the analytical model with the data, and
- consideration of policy implications

The Audit Commission has offered to develop the first, second and final stages on a 'pro bono' basis, as they intend it to be a test for application as it will benefit the wider public sector in the medium to long term. In this way the Commission will assist with the development of the most appropriate model or models to assess the costs and benefits of our work with worklessness.

The initial specification provided by the Commission sets out a timetable in which the work would be completed by the end of June 2011. This timetable remains relevant if it is decided to complete a full predictive CBA based on the collection of new costing information.

However, given the possibility that this exercise will not take place, an alternative timetable may be required.

Table 1 Sets out milestones that include the running of a full predictive CBA based on new costing information. Table 2 sets out a timetable for the work if a full predictive CBA is not included.

Table 1: Timetable including full predictive CBA

Activity	By whom?	By when?
Development of a CBA framework that can be used for both predictive and evaluative work	Audit Practice	13 May 2011
Cost data collection	Bradford MDC	10 June 2011
Operation of analytical model	Bradford MDC	During June 2011
Consideration of policy implication	Audit Practice with Bradford MDC	By 30 June 2011

Table 2: Timetable excluding full predictive CBA

Activity	By whom?	By when?
Development of a framework setting out potential benefits of co-design work	Audit Practice	13 May 2011
Development of an evaluative CBA framework	Audit Practice	31 May 2011
Consideration of policy implication	Audit Practice with Bradford MDC	10 June 2011

Outputs

The Commission will:

- Provide a report containing both predictive analysis and the evaluative framework; work closely with the Council to ensure that the operation and requirements of the evaluative framework is fully understood; and present findings to senior stakeholders in Bradford.

Partners locally will:

- Collect the data and run the model during the implementation of our worklessness co-design work.

Data collected throughout the development of Community Budget model will also contribute to the development of a flexible CBA model. The Commission may also then provide more support to help us reflect further on the policy and strategic implications of the work.

2.6 Barriers and Risks to delivery

Work is being led by the Skills and Employment Team within the Housing, Skills and Employment Department of Regeneration and as such is undertaken on top of the day job. This means that no additional resources have been deployed. We have a robust and broad employment and skills network led by our Employment and Skills Board (ESB) which is part of our Local Strategic Partnership and have had established political, executive and partnership (including employer) buy in from the outset.

Co-design is being driven by the Employability and Co-design Action Group which is attended by senior managers from the organisations that come in to contact with workless people and is chaired by the Employer and Partnership Manager for Jobcentre Plus. The group reports to the Employment and Skills Partnership (chaired by the Principal of Bradford College) which in turn reports to the ESB.

There is some scepticism about the impact of the co-design work, which coupled with the pressures on the public purse means the need to reform and develop more progressive partnership arrangements is paramount, particularly for those families who experience multiple interventions (and the workless who navigate the journey to work) as well as for publicly funded stakeholders and partners. This requires significant investment and we are driving the model with outreach appointments to sub-group members and stakeholders in order to secure the required information and commitment outside of formal meetings.

Gathering information from partners and delivery organisations is enabling us to work up a model acceptable to all partners and community groups. By establishing buy-in at every stage we are reducing the risk of partners becoming disengaged. As co-design is being worked up by partners on top of day jobs, through the Employability and Co-design Action Group partners disengaging with the process could risk bringing it to a halt.

These are busy times as most public sector organisations are experiencing budget cuts and restructures. We do have a strong partnership group, however co-design is not always their top priority when it comes to prioritising where their resources are best utilised.

2.7 Successes

- Establishing buy-in from Executive, member and partnership
- Establishing buy-in from partners who don't traditionally consider it their role to address worklessness
- Placing co-design squarely within the remit of the Employability and Co-design Action Group with clear reporting lines to ESP and ESB

- Maintaining skills and employment as a transformational priority in the review of the local strategic plan (known locally as Big Plan 2)
- Linking co-design with developing Community Budget work
- Positioning co-design activity within the local Employment and Skills Strategy Delivery Plan, and
- Maintaining commitment from partners to engage with co-design and having their commitment to apply their reduced resource to this process

2.8 Lessons learned

- The required vision, focus, passion and energy required to lead such an approach at this difficult time for all involved with public services
- Need to stay with and build on the added value of co-design that is recognised and shared in the partnership setting
- Invest in the leg work between formal meetings on a one to one basis to reinforce message and buy in
- As co-design work is in addition to 'day jobs' consistent commitment and contribution from partner organisations is difficult as their resources deplete and they deal with their own internal organisational pressures
- Time and resources are limited which means progress is reliant on partners fulfilling agreed actions. This does mean progress can often be slow as partners have limited resources to deploy. Having a dedicated person to co-ordinate activities and drive progression forward, engage with community organisations and undertake the necessary day-to-day leg work would enable speedier progress

2.9 Next Steps

- Test the idea of a Community Hub with partners and workless groups
- Two further Voice of the Customer workshops:
 1. 1-To engage with workless groups to establish what does/doesn't work when offering support towards employment and to test the idea of a Community Hub
 2. 2-To engage with community and service organisation to work up the idea of a co-funded Community Hub
- Assuming the Community Hub proposal is broadly acceptably, develop a simplified journey to work map around the hub and work to align partners' priorities and resources
- Establish common objectives and measures
- Work through the Cost Benefit Analysis framework with co-design partners, work up the framework and apply learning from the methodology to support CBA of Community Budget on a pragmatic and fit for purpose basis
- Use learning from our local co-design approach to inform and support the partnership activity required for Community Budget and the alignment and pooling of appropriate resources
- Work on co-design to date and its contribution to the local Employment and Skills Strategy and Community Budget has in part supported the local case for a Transition Fund and Bradford Council have allocated £1.5m to undertake a series of projects to address local employment and skills needs. co-design work going forward will inform the Transition Fund and

the Delivery Plan against the objectives and priorities outlined in the Employment and Skills Strategy

- Work to identify funds which could support the work of co-design

2.10 Future Partnership working

Partnership working is paramount to addressing some of the issues of worklessness within Bradford. To this end, whilst Jobcentre Plus, Bradford Council and partners are able to commit resources to this process the drive towards the vision of co-design will continue.

The underpinning principles of our co-design work to date will continue to drive more effective engagement and coordination of route-ways to mainstream worklessness services. The Work Programme and Jobcentre Plus services under Get Britain Working represent the mainstream offer in Bradford. The co-design approach will continue to work with non traditional organisations supporting adults in a worklessness situation to ensure that they have a clear and shared understanding of the pathway map to local bespoke and mainstream skills and employment provision. This provision will be coordinated with Community Budget activities to avoid duplication and drive more effective use of public resources.

2.11 Contacts for further information

CBMDC	Jobcentre Plus
Joanne Hainsworth	Diana Towler
Skills and Employment Project Manager	Employer and Partnership Manager & Chair of Employability and Co-design action Group
Tel: 01274 410107 or 07582 109030 joanne.hainsworth@bradford.gov.uk	Tel: 07971 996876 diana.towler@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov

3. Jobcentre Plus Case Study

Communities and people are at the centre of our Worklessness co-design work with support shaped around the family offering a more simplified journey towards and into sustainable employment. Co-design will ensure that the service available to families in Bradford is personalised whilst also meeting the needs of its most disadvantaged communities.

Worklessness cannot be addressed by one single organisation and requires a range of organisations to work together in partnership. Partnership working is at the core of co-design in Bradford and is enabling Jobcentre Plus to build on those strong links already developed in Bradford i.e. Local Authority, Colleges, Community and Voluntary Sector. Furthermore, it is opening up additional opportunities to work with other partners who do not necessarily have worklessness as part of their remit i.e. Police, Health services.

Although co-design is still at a relatively early stage in Bradford, the Jobcentre Plus offer is at the centre of our co-design model with partners aligning their services to compliment and wraparound the Customer Journey. With Public

Sector spending challenges, changes to the Welfare System and diminishing funding streams, it is essential that we develop new ways of working in partnerships to address worklessness that offer both a cost effective local solution and avoid duplication of provision.

Some valuable lessons have already been learned from our initial work in the pilot area of Manningham and the feedback from the workshop held on the 10th May went some way towards understanding how to these lessons can be taken forward. This is reflected in the comments under section 2.8 and 2.9. It is apparent that not all partners / organisations share a common understanding of the Jobcentre Plus Offer / Customer Journey. As we progress with co-design it does afford Jobcentre Plus the opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of this offer / journey and how partners can better align their services around it. The mapping work in Manningham realised our suspicions that there is a complex array of services already in contact with families but with little or no co-ordination of these multiple interventions to address the total needs of the family unit.

The Community Hub is an exciting proposal and we look forward to exploring the opportunities this could bring to simplify the Journey to Work not only for unemployed people moving closer to work but also for those organisations who support them to overcome their barriers.

We aim to keep the co-design Model flexible enough to fit with the evolving Community budget framework. As with co-design the Community Budget team have engaged many partners in developing the Community Budget approach so far and bring with them their knowledge and energy to the process. These engagements demonstrate the strength of partnership work in the district and the ambition to integrate both Community Budget and co-design into a new operating model for the District, and one that will wrap around and compliment the Get Britain Working Measures and The Work Programme offer of Jobcentre Plus.

I am pleased to sit on the Community Budgets Reference Group and to chair the Employability and Co-design Activity Group. Both are demonstrating strong partnership work bringing both new and existing partners to the table.

I look forward to further developing the co-design work in Bradford as we develop new ways of working together and design a new approach to tackling worklessness that will ultimately improve the lives of families in our most disadvantaged communities in Bradford.

Diana Towler

Employer and Partnership Manager

Jobcentre Plus

Annex G - Lewisham co-design area report



When addressing challenging and persistent social issues, it is easy to resort to tried and tested methods which appear to have worked in the past. When things don't seem to work so well, we often tweak the system, exert more pressure on it, or spend more money on it. The policy instruments we deploy have often evolved from an organisational or professional standpoint: services are designed to meet specific challenges from the point of view of that service. This approach can have a tendency to narrow the scope for interventions or support, and reduce the possibility of dealing with the individual citizen and their circumstances holistically.

Worklessness has been a priority for the council and its partners in Lewisham for some time. In 2009 - 10, our Lewisham Strategic Partnership applied the Total Place concept to worklessness, and began to unpick the system of support for out-of-work citizens in Lewisham. We did this by listening to people's experiences and understanding their barriers to finding work. We uncovered a fragmented system, with a lack of focus on the ultimate outcome. Instead, each element of the system was incentivised to deliver outputs to satisfy its funder. The result for those seeking support is often a feeling of frustration and of being disempowered. Any sense of choice or shared responsibility for achieving outcomes is lost.

Our work with Jobcentre Plus builds on this learning. We've recognised that there is no simple solution to worklessness, and that no single agency is able to tackle it alone. We need to start from a deeper understanding of the complexity of people's work motivations.

That's why we've recognised the importance of working with public, private and voluntary agencies – and, most importantly, with the citizens themselves – to design new approaches from the perspective of the user. This form of “user-led change” is central to our approach to reforming public services locally, meaning full collaboration on tailoring support to the motivation and capability of individuals, to achieve better outcomes. What we are learning from our co-design work is that working in this way can provide fresh insights into how entrenched problems can be resolved.

As one of sixteen areas chosen to prototype the Community Budgets initiative, we are now building on what we've learned to implement new approaches. Our aim is to work with our citizens to help them find solutions, and access opportunities, to unlock their potential and transform their lives.

Barry Quirk

Chief Executive

London Borough of Lewisham

1. Introduction to our co-design work

1.1 The Lewisham context

Lewisham is an Inner London borough, covering an area of 13.4 square miles stretching from the Thames at its most northerly point to Bromley in the south. Lewisham is the 15th most ethnically diverse local authority in England: over 170 languages are spoken in the borough, and two out of every five Lewisham residents are from a black or minority ethnic background. Within Lewisham schools the proportion is even higher, over 70% of pupils from a black or minority ethnic background. Although there is affluence in Lewisham, the borough does have high levels of socioeconomic deprivation. Lewisham is ranked 31st for deprivation in England, with over a third of our 166 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the 20% most deprived. We have the highest rate of lone parent households in London, 17.8% of all households are lone parents compared to 9.7% in London and 11.6% in Inner London. This has a significant bearing on social and labour market policy and also on relative income levels locally.

Good transport connections to the wider London economy are important to our citizens. The borough is exceptionally well connected through excellent transport links to central London and fast access to Canary Wharf, London City Airport, the new international terminal at Stratford, and the future London Olympics related developments.

Of Lewisham's overall resident workforce (of around 115,000), 31% work in Lewisham and 69% travel outside of the borough for work – this is the highest ratio of external commuting of all the London boroughs. Lewisham has one of the highest proportions of its residents working in the public sector in London (30.5%), and nearly 40% of all jobs within Lewisham are in the public sector. With the exception of a few large food retail businesses (there are five Sainsbury's in the borough) and some medium sized office supply businesses, the private sector economy comprises mainly small and medium enterprises in the traditional supply and retail sectors.

Worklessness has been a long standing priority for the Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP). Our co-design work builds on our learning over the last few years. The LSP has focused its resources on supporting those furthest from the labour market, such as lone parents and long-term unemployed – our intention has been to complement mainstream provision and focus on local need.

However, following the recent recession and subsequent slow economic growth, we have broadened our agenda to include youth unemployment. Interventions introduced across the LSP have included:

- over 500 apprenticeships delivered by Lewisham College
- a further 100 apprenticeships created across the partnership through the Mayor's Apprenticeship Scheme
- 400 jobs (of six months each) created for long-term unemployed 18 - 24 year olds through the Future Jobs Fund. 54% of participants remain in employment, and only 38% have returned to claiming benefits

- support for young people not in education, employment or training through the Mayor's NEETs Programme. 17 of 19 recent graduates have already secured places at college, gained employment or secured further training opportunities
- allocation of over £3m worth of Working Neighbourhoods Fund to projects targeting those furthest from the job market. Projects funded have included an estates-based outreach project run by a consortium of housing associations, and a project providing personalised support for people with mental health conditions
- additional funding to tackle worklessness provided through the Mayor's Recession Fund, which was set up to help mitigate the effects of the recession on Lewisham's residents and businesses
- creation of a Lewisham providers' forum to promote joint working between agencies with a role to play in tackling worklessness
- a Think Family project aimed at supporting workless parents with complex needs into employment, training or education

In particular, the focus on young people has helped to keep both the proportion of NEETs and the proportion of JSA claimants aged 18 - 24 in Lewisham well below the London and national averages.

1.2 What we have focused on, and why

Our co-design work in Lewisham has continued to focus on those furthest from the job market. We have chosen this approach for three main reasons:

Local need

Following the recent recession, the number of JSA claimants in Lewisham has risen from 5,675 in April 2008 to 9,618 in March 2011: a rise of nearly 70%. The claimant count is set to rise further over the next few years, as a result of public spending cuts, the migration of Incapacity Benefit claimants to JSA, and changes to eligibility for lone parent claimants. In a highly competitive labour market, those with limited experience or complex barriers to employment – such as young people, long term unemployed or lone parents – are likely to face significant disadvantage, and may require additional support to compete for a diminished supply of jobs.

Our research

Work carried out by the LSP over the last few years – including customer insight and ethnographic research as part of our Total Place pilot – has highlighted that:

- there is a clear need for personalised, flexible support for those furthest from the labour market
- there has been mixed success in identifying and addressing customers' underlying barriers to employment (e.g. health, housing, family influences etc) – either by employment and skills providers or wider public sector providers
- rigid eligibility criteria for courses is seen by customers as a major barrier to receiving appropriate support, and

- there has been considerable duplication in the type of support offered to the long-term unemployed, with little evidence of success

Introduction of the Work Programme

The Work Programme presents a radical shift in the way that employment support is provided; we have sought to design our solutions to complement rather than duplicate the incoming Work Programme model. For example, although the Work Programme will help to equalise support across different types of benefit claimants, there is scope to design local solutions to work with those with the most complex needs prior to engagement with the Work Programme, or to target those who are not eligible for the Work Programme but who are motivated to work.

1.3 Our three strands of co-design activity

Our co-design work has comprised three strands:

Personal Budget Project: a project offering personalised support to long-term unemployed people, delivered by a local housing association (Hyde Housing), working closely with the Council and Jobcentre Plus. The project offers greater control and flexibility to lone parents and IB / ESA claimants in the support they receive, by providing them with access to a Personal Budget.

Participants discuss their own barriers to employment with a case worker, who supports them to spend their Budget on interventions which will help them to overcome these barriers and find work. Interventions might include, for example, specific training courses or qualifications help with childcare, work-related equipment, psychological therapy, or help with physical health issues – on the proviso that they are not available elsewhere for free. Use of budgets form part of an agreed action plan, which participants are expected to formally sign up to.

EmployAbility: a partnership with Participle, London Borough of Lambeth, London Development Agency, Lambeth College, Lewisham College and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service. The project has carried out ethnographic research into the motivation, capability and networks of Lewisham and Lambeth residents, delivering fresh insights about the current system as well as testing out new approaches to improving employability.

Community Budgets: Lewisham is one of sixteen areas piloting the Community Budget initiative, which aims to pool or align resources across an area to tackle the problems associated with families with complex needs. Our proposal includes a ‘family budget’ project which aims to tackle intergenerational worklessness, and which builds on the learning from the other two strands.

Through the three strands of work, we aim to:

- build on our strong track record of working in partnership to deliver new approaches
- listen to what customers have told us – in particular through our Total Place work

- adapt to major policy changes – such as the introduction of the Work Programme and changes to the welfare system, and
- as resources become scarcer, ensure we are targeting resources where they are most needed

2. Overview of our co-design work

2.1 The design process

For each strand of work, collaborative design has been an integral part of the process:

Personal Budget Project

The project derives from our Total Place pilot, which recommended trialling a personal budget model to support lone parents and IB / ESA claimants into work. We secured a small amount of funding via the Local Innovation Transition Fund (LITF), as part of a programme of activity across six areas.

We tied the project to an existing Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) project, delivered by a consortium of housing associations led by Hyde Housing. This enabled us to use all of the LITF money for personal budgets, rather than having to allocate a proportion for staff and management costs (which were already covered under the WNF project).

The project has been designed by a steering group consisting of representatives of the Council, Jobcentre Plus and Hyde. As part of the research phase, we consulted projects which have introduced personal budgets in other policy areas, such as homelessness, substance misuse and social care.

Using the learning from the research phase, we devised a guide for staff, covering issues such as:

- Eligibility: participation is voluntary, but clients must have been unemployed for 12 months or more, and not be mandated to engage with the Work Programme
- Use of budgets: the aim is not to be overly prescriptive around use of the budgets – with the main criteria being that the money is specifically used to help someone access work, and that support purchased through the budget is not available elsewhere for free. To help manage risk, the steering group is asked to sign off completed action plans.

Referrals into the programme are from a variety of sources:

- Jobcentre Plus advisors: the majority of referrals so far have come from IB / ESA, lone parent and DEA advisors
- Direct recruitment: as the project is being delivered by Hyde on behalf of a consortium of housing associations, this has enabled us to make the most of their knowledge of and access to workless social housing tenants
- Referrals from other providers: we have publicised the project through our existing Provider forum, to encourage referrals from other providers in the area

The purpose of the Personal Budget is to encourage the jobseeker to define their own success criteria and a pathway to employment which they themselves can navigate. The role of the case worker is to support them to build their own capability to solve their own challenges.

Employability

This project has been led by a partnership of Participle, Lewisham and Lambeth Councils, Jobcentre Plus, Lewisham and Lambeth Colleges, the London Development Agency and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS).

There have been two main phases of the work:

- User research and analysis: Participle spent a six week period carrying out ethnographic research into a range of people's lives across Lewisham and Lambeth. The research also included spending time with employers and colleges to identify opportunities and potential solutions
- Prototyping new solutions: this phase built on the opportunities identified during the first phase and tested new approaches to improving employability

There has been a spirit of collaboration across partners during both phases. Fortnightly workshops have been attended by partners, where ideas and opportunities are discussed and emerging issues addressed. The Colleges have contributed class time and facilities to help test out new approaches. Jobcentre Plus allowed Participle to base themselves within Jobcentres to directly recruit participants, while Jobcentre Plus advisors were flexible in their definition of steps taken to look for work, to enable JSA claimants to participate fully in the prototyping of solutions. In addition, they were willing to explore options for customers to sign on at a different location, and move interview times, to ensure participants could commit to activities arranged by Participle.

Community Budgets

We are in the early stages of co-designing our Family Budget project with Jobcentre Plus. The project is being funded through pooled funding from a variety of sources, which includes Department for Education Exemplar Project funding. Jobcentre Plus are contributing 'in kind' support, including:

- Jobcentre Plus advisors ring-fenced to work on the project
- Jobcentre Plus to analyse existing data to identify target families for the project; advisors will approach families directly to ensure compliance with data protection legislation
- family brokers will work directly with Jobcentre Plus advisors to agree the support provided to participants prior to referral to the Work Programme. This will include, where appropriate, a case conference approach involving other agencies

2.2 Summary of progress so far

Personal Budget Project

The project is in its early stages, taking referrals from Jobcentre Plus advisors and from other providers in the area – as well as recruiting participants directly through door-knocking and local publicity.

The early signs are positive: the personal budgets have enabled participants to access support which they would not have been able to access otherwise – for example, the costs of specific training courses or qualifications which are linked to known job vacancies, or costs of childcare.

As the project is testing out a new approach, the steering group is working closely with the project manager to discuss and sign off clients' action plans, to ensure appropriate use of personal budgets. Furthermore, members of the steering group are actively involved in boosting referrals, by publicising the project across jobcentres and among other local providers.

EmployAbility

During the research phase, Participle worked in depth with 30 participants across Lewisham and Lambeth. This included spending time with them at their homes or as part of their everyday life, exploring their motivations and aspirations, as well as their work history and barriers to progress. Participle also spent time with 25 employers in both boroughs, ranging from small SMEs to larger corporations, to assess their existing and potential contributions to the system.

The second phase built on opportunities identified during the research phase: working with the colleges, Jobcentre Plus, the Council and a range of employers and other contacts, Participle have tested out a range of new approaches. These have combined personalised, one-to-one support with web-based solutions, to build people's momentum, connections and ability to create their own opportunities. Participants opted in to the prototype service, many being recruited directly at a Jobcentre in Lewisham.

The project has delivered a rich analysis of the motivations, aspirations and capability of people who are out-of-work. It has also illustrated the personal and systemic barriers faced by people who are out of work. Segmenting participants according to their motivation and relative employability – rather than their age or benefit type – has underlined the importance of taking different approaches to different customers according to the barriers they face. The project has also tested ways to unlock unemployed people's capabilities and motivation by drawing on resources of employees and employers.

Community Budgets

We are in the early stages of co-designing a Family Budget project with Jobcentre Plus, which will form part of our Community Budgets approach in Lewisham. The project will be targeted at around 80 Lewisham families (over two years) where nobody is in employment, and where there is a history of intergenerational worklessness.

The project will build on the learning from our other co-design activity. For example, as with the Personal Budget project, families will have access to a

discretionary pot of money to spend on support or interventions to help them into employment. They will be supported by a 'family broker', who will provide intensive support and challenge, as well as helping them to spend the Family Budget. There will be a strong focus on activity: where families are stuck in a rut, lacking momentum and direction, the broker will provide challenge as well as broker opportunities to build networks and expand horizons.

2.3 Our learning so far

Our Total Place work showed us that from an individual's perspective, the 'system' they are faced with can often appear complex and inflexible, leaving them feeling lost and with little control over the support they receive. A genuinely collaborative approach can help to unpick some of the complexity and paradox within the system, and help to simplify support so that it is designed around the needs of the individual rather than the demands of the system.

Furthermore, a collaborative approach to problem solving can avoid a situation – highlighted in our Total Place report – in which service redesign is carried out from a professional or institutional standpoint, without fully considering the overall customer route map. This limits the options for change to piecemeal solutions, which can paradoxically add to the overall complexity of the system. An approach which puts the individual or family in control of the support they receive is far more likely to meet their needs and lead to change.

Our co-design work has led us to explore in detail the relationship between the user and the current system. In particular, we have learned that:

- among those furthest from the job market, there is a lack of momentum and direction: many are 'stuck', with a vague goal but no idea how to achieve it
- many long-term unemployed people lack connections, which is exacerbated by a lack of opportunities within the current system to mix with employers and employed people
- the transactional nature of employment support means that people are often fitted to a job, with little thought to sustainability or career progression, or equipping the individual with the soft skills to make the most of opportunities put in front of them

These issues point to the need for a more personalised system of support, which we have put at the heart of our co-design work.

3. Next steps for our co-design work

The next stage for our three strands of work

Personal Budget Project

The project is due to run until the end of September, by which point we aim to have worked with around 40 participants. We are also committed to evaluating the project, including carrying out cost benefit analysis.

EmployAbility

The research, analysis and prototyping carried out during the project have given us fresh insights into the motivation and capability of jobseekers in Lewisham, and potential approaches to improve their employability. The learning we have gained from the project will inform our future work, including our Community Budget.

Community Budgets

We are currently working with partners, including Jobcentre Plus, to design the new Family Budget project, with a view to launching it in late summer 2011.

4. Contact for further information

Joel Hartfield, London Borough of Lewisham

Joel.hartfield@lewisham.gov.uk

Jobcentre Plus Case Study – Co Design

Jobcentre Plus has been a proactive member of the Lewisham Strategic Partnership Board for a number of years, and through the co-design work, we have further strengthened our strong working relationships with partners in Lewisham.

We have had an integral role in designing the Personal Budget project – providing referrals direct from our Disability Employment Adviser, Lone Parent and IB / ESA advisors; advising on the availability of current help; and signposting opportunities where there is free support already available.

During the EmployAbility project, we have provided space within our Jobcentres for Participle to directly recruit customers. We have also minimised our demands of customers to enable them to participate as fully as possible in the project.

In addition to the co-design projects, Jobcentre Plus also co-sponsors the Lewisham Providers Forum. This comprises around 100 organisations with a role to play in tackling worklessness in the borough. The forum holds information sessions for practitioners on key topics of interest, such as employment support for customers with learning disabilities and ex-offenders. It has increased organisations' awareness of provision outside their own sphere and had a beneficial effect in improving signposting and referrals.

In addition, through the e-newsletter circulated to forum members and through regular meetings we have been able to have a closer and richer dialogue with our partners over key changes to policy. Jobcentre Plus have provided a number of presentations on topics of interest such as IB Reassessment and Get Britain Working measures. Both of these have generated follow up interest including work experience placements and Work Club leads.

Jobcentre Plus has also been involved in Action Learning Sets for the Think Family Prototype. This is a project where a case worker has worked closely with vulnerable families to tackle a range of issues, including employment. We have been able to provide practical support by linking the key worker with advisers who are conducting existing interventions with customers, to avoid duplication. In

addition, the Partnership Manager has advised on current programmes and possibilities for customers.

Jobcentre Plus has been involved in the School Gates Pilot. Working with Rushey Green School and St Mary's School, the adviser has helped parents to move closer to the labour market, and has achieved a number of job outcomes and training starts. Successful partnerships have been developed with schools, and we are discussing how this work can be developed in the future.

Jobcentre Plus has also been involved in co-designing a pre-Work Programme Training Offer with Lewisham College, which started in April 2011. Courses are closely linked to demand in the area, covering areas such as Basic Skills, Retail Hospitality and Information Technology.

We are also closely involved with local Drugs Providers and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team in providing an integrated approach to customers leaving treatment and wishing to return to work, including piloting an approach based around office champions. We are also developing links with the Reducing Re-offending pilot currently being delivered by the Council and Ministry of Justice.

We work closely with partners to deliver work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for young people and NEET customers in Lewisham. We have been heavily involved in the production of an Apprenticeship Plan for the borough. We ran group sessions in Jobcentre Plus during the recent apprenticeship week to inform customers about upcoming opportunities, and have built good links with the National Apprenticeship Service. The links we have developed have enabled us to provide a work experience opportunity for a customer which was turned into a full apprenticeship – despite the employer initially requesting a qualified candidate.

Jobcentre Plus involvement in the co-design work reflects our excellent working relationships with partners across the borough. Over the coming months we will be co-designing the Family Budget project, which forms part of Lewisham's Community Budget. We have agreed to provide ring-fenced practical support in delivering the project – helping to identify and recruit families, and working alongside family brokers in delivering pre-Work Programme support.

Annex H - South Tyneside co-design area report



Unemployment, low aspirations, health inequalities and regeneration are serious issues for our borough. The stress of poverty on individuals can be devastating, affecting health, wellbeing and equality.


We are doing a lot to improve prosperity in South Tyneside, but we recognise doing more of the same is unlikely to produce the step change needed to solve these complex issues. To address deprivation across the borough we must align with partners to achieve the best possible outcomes for residents.

The co-design process has provided the opportunity for South Tyneside Council and Jobcentre Plus to have important discussions about what employment services need to be delivered to support our ambitions for a more prosperous South Tyneside.

Participating in the pilot has allowed us to reduce our spending on employment services, whilst still having the confidence that residents will continue to receive a high quality, effective service. It has been about more than saving money. We have developed a mature partnership that will help us tackle future challenges by doing things once and together.

Our co-design project will provide an essential service to residents by ensuring specialist advice is available to those who need it, when they need it and in a place where they can easily access it.

The project is an excellent example of how local authorities and partners such as Jobcentre Plus can work together to co-design services for their communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Swales". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Martin Swales
Chief Executive

South Tyneside Council

Foreword

Family Works provides employability support for individuals and families who have little or no experience of work, many of whom have experienced inter-generational worklessness. South Tyneside is located within Tyne and Wear and has a total population of 152,400. Economic growth and regeneration is key to future of the borough and the Council has set in place plans to develop key assets such as the River Tyne, town centres and employment sites to ensure that our residents and businesses benefit from key economic opportunities. However, the legacy of the decline of traditional industries remains and creating new jobs for residents is a key priority for the Council. To ensure that residents and businesses benefit from the investments being made to regenerate South Tyneside, it is vital that services to help people back into work are designed to reflect the needs of the area and that they are accessible. South Tyneside has clusters of neighbourhoods where there are high concentrations of worklessness, locally these have been classified as Employment Priority Areas (EPAs) which have levels of worklessness in the top 10% nationally under the Index of Deprivation. The aim of Family Works is to address generational unemployment in South Tyneside.

In recent years South Tyneside Council and Jobcentre Plus have worked closely together to develop resource and expertise to deliver outreach employment programmes to support individuals furthest from the labour market back into work. The approach has been successful and South Tyneside has seen a significant reduction in long term lone parent and incapacity benefit claims. The expertise, good practice and reputation developed in South Tyneside has now being transferred into the new Family Works programme.

This expertise includes individual self assessment, goal setting and action planning which puts customers at the centre of the decision-making process from which action plans are drafted and taken forward. It is a process which, although completely bespoke to the customer's needs is also Jobs First in its approach. Advisers have flexibility in their approach and deliver within a framework of targets and benchmarks. As a result we are confident this project will deliver the outcomes required to address family and generational unemployment in a sustainable way.

The good practice that will be taken forward into the Family Works project is high quality, community based delivery that offers a menu of employability support and solutions based services that address key barriers that prevent people from going back to work (e.g. finance, childcare, access to college courses) in one location. During the consultation process with residents about the design of the service, it was identified that residents want a service that keeps a job as the key focus and that they want to be supported and challenged by an employability service.

Summary

The partnership between South Tyneside Council and Jobcentre Plus is built on a shared objective of ensuring that residents employability needs are

comprehensively met and that all public funding is pooled to produce the best outcomes.

The welfare to work landscape has changed significantly and will change again with the implementation of the Work Programme and the changes to the Jobcentre Plus offer.

The co-design process has facilitated genuine partnership working in relation to service planning and service design, the legacy of the Family Works project will be that it provides a blue print for public services to work together in a transparent way that ensures that residents benefit from the collaboration. The real benefits to South Tyneside are that employment services are being delivered in a flexible and credible way that is convenient for residents to access the service.

Family Works in South Tyneside will provide an intensive employability support service in the community which will compliment and add value to the Jobcentre advisory service. Delivered with partners, Family Works will provide a holistic employability approach for our mutual customers.

Family Works Advisers will seek to caseload whole families where possible, however family eligibility is not prescriptive recognising the multiplicity of family lifestyles and networks within tight-knit, local communities.

Working with Family Units provides the opportunity to harness group dynamics to demonstrate the gains to be had via employment and offer support accordingly to a whole family unit.

Co-design area summary

The Family Works delivery team will be led by Jobcentre Plus and comprise of eight multi skilled advisers and a management and support team.

Advisers will be deployed across South Tyneside based in areas where there are concentrations of workless households.

Delivery will be exclusively from the Opportunity Centres to deliver an integrated service in the community.

All customers will complete a Family Works registration and sign the Family Works “Promise” – a statement of obligations from the adviser to the customer and vice-versa. All customers will complete the Rickter Scale Self Assessment and an Action Plan will be agreed with the resident to map their journey back to work. The advisory team will explore the family circumstances of all referred customers and offer support to those aged 16+ regardless of benefit status but especially focusing on those where there is a claim for a working age benefit. This will be offered at every intervention / interview and where taken up a family caseload will be established.

The progress of all customers within the Family Works caseloads will be reviewed every month and analysed for activity to ensure each individual is making progress towards employment.

Jobcentre Plus will deliver services for 800 eligible customers as part of the integrated Family Works service. In addition partners will also be able to directly refer customers to the Family Works team.

Work has commenced to extend referrals from South Tyneside Homes as well as health professionals in the Borough.

Advisers will be operating virtual budgets made up from a variety of public funding sources, these will be analysed to contribute to a detailed cost benefit analysis of the service.

Progress on Barriers

At this point it has not been possible to lift out Jobcentre Plus delivery in its entirety into outreach due the mandatory activity that may need to be completed. Therefore where sanctions are required these will be applied in the Jobcentres.

South Tyneside Council are working to identify the remaining sites for the Opportunity Centres and reach agreement with partners about the co-location of services.

DWP Localism Offer

Jobcentre Plus is providing the financial resources to pay for staff and programme costs and South Tyneside Council is investing in an coordinating the development and operation of the Opportunity Centres in terms of marketing, premises and infrastructure to deliver the service in the community.

Conclusions

Family Works has been delivering for one month, and has achieved 14 job entries, this is an excellent achievement given the current economic climate.

The emerging relationship with South Tyneside Homes is developing and is a positive template upon which to build relationships with other local partners i.e. other, smaller Housing Associations (Home, William Sutton) and Social Services, which will help deliver a community based service.

For further information contact:

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Annex I - Swindon co-design area report



Introduction by Gavin Jones, Chief Executive Swindon Borough Council

Swindon has a forward-looking business community that has established and led the development of Plan 500, the key aim of which is to be the single point of entry for employers who wish to engage with young people aged 16-24 in Swindon, with the outcome of encouraging aspiration and delivering routes to employment.

As Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council and Chairman of Forward Swindon, I have fully endorsed the co-design activity that has enabled Plan 500 and which has established a true partnership between the private and public sectors to achieve success. Plan 500, through its activity and partnership working, has added value to the achievements of our local schools, colleges and training providers in opening up and creating new opportunities for work experience and essentially, linking these experiences of work to the qualification pathways that are available to develop careers.

The mentoring programme has been especially well received by the business community who have actively participated in the training and are currently giving their time to mentor young people to find, or keep them in, employment. Our business mentors can be deemed as true advocates of a Big Society approach.

Finally, if proof were needed that co-design works, Apprenticeship starts for 16-18 year olds in Swindon have increased by 65% compared to the level at this time last year, and we have the 3rd highest number of young people in the South West registered on the 'Apprenticeship Vacancies Online'. This is 4.2% higher than the regional average and 0.3% above the national average.

Swindon is truly leading the way with this innovative project which will continue to go from strength to strength.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Jones', written in a cursive style.

Gavin Jones

Background

Swindon's co-design project focuses on the employer engagement agenda. Although young people directly benefit from the approach, the partnership has co-designed new approaches to engage local businesses in the public sector agenda of work experience, Apprenticeships, Diplomas, mentoring and qualifications.

The Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership (SSEP) developed Plan 500 to respond to this marked increase in Youth Unemployment and asked Caroline Hallatt (of Nationwide Building Society) to establish and chair a new group called Backing Young Swindon (BYS). BYS membership now consists of:

- Nationwide Building Society (Chair and Large business rep)
- Jobcentre Plus
- Westlea Green Square Housing Association (Medium business rep)
- Swindon Business News (Small business rep)
- Forward Swindon
- National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)
- GWE Businesswest (including Business Link)

The Board was established to ensure that all key strategic partners were involved. Subcontractors and deliverers were not included as it was considered desirable not to involve any partner with a commercial interest when developing the new approaches.

The BYS focus was to design, develop and deliver solutions to Swindon's dramatic increase in youth unemployment. The expertise of this group and ability to target resources led to the creation of 'Plan 500' which was launched to business in August 2010 at an event hosted by Nationwide Building Society.

Plan 500 addresses the needs of the young people of Swindon by finding simple but effective engagement mechanisms for local businesses. By creating a light touch, single employer channel, Plan 500 has been able to encourage employers, who find engaging with the public sector both confusing and time consuming, to do so in a way that allows them to both benefit and to contribute. The project provides employers with potential employees who have the skills needed to develop and deliver their business, and provides practical and real opportunities that are specifically designed to help reduce youth unemployment.

The Plan 500 Model

During the 12 month life of the project, Plan 500 will generate 500 new work related opportunities. Extreme care is being taken to ensure that all of these opportunities are additional to those generated through normal business. The opportunities have set targets and these are outlined in the table below:

50 more businesses linked to Diploma schools

Swindon schools are delivering Diplomas in these subjects:

- Business, Administration & Finance
- Construction & the Built Environment
- Creative & Media

- Engineering
- Hair & Beauty Studies
- Hospitality
- Sport & Active Leisure

Employers are being encouraged to contribute to the student experience by engaging in extracurricular activity such as Q&A sessions in schools, vocational presentations, workshops, work experience, enterprise initiatives etc

50 young employees achieving a work based qualification

Linked to the Raising Participation Age pilot work in Swindon it is important that young people are actively engaged in a development activity and we have therefore included a target to encourage employers to continue the personal or vocational development of young members of their workforce. Activities that contribute to this target include:

- Train to Gain funded activity
- On-sold qualifications following employer contacts for apprenticeships or business advice
- Added value qualifications achieved by FJF employees

150 new work experience opportunities in Swindon businesses

Prior to the Get Britain Working measures, Backing Young Swindon identified work experience as a key activity to improve the employability of unemployed young people. Plan 500 work experience can be:

- Up to 2 weeks for Year 10 or Year 11 students
- 2 – 8 weeks for 18-24 year old JSA customers
- any appropriate length of time for other unemployed young people or Plan 500 mentees
- Work experience opportunities for the Swindon Talent Pool

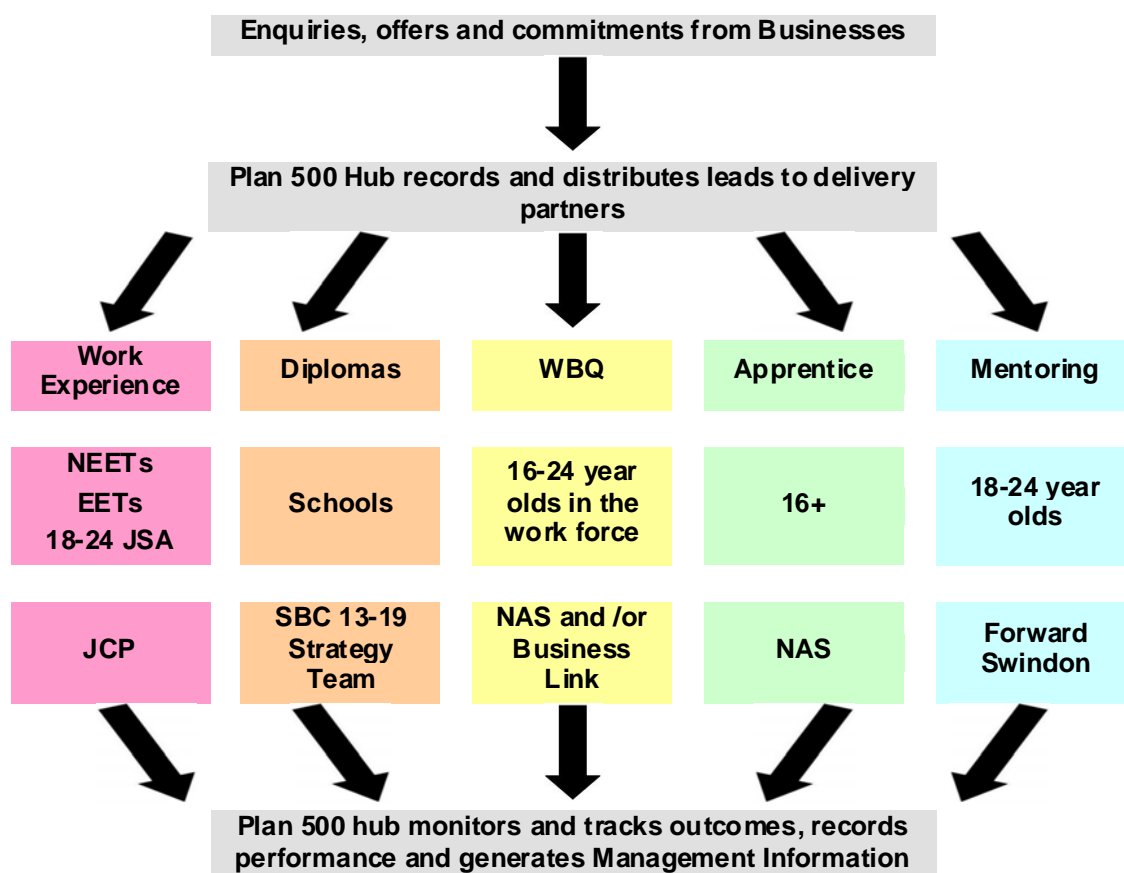
100 young people being mentored by members of the Swindon business community

Plan 500 has commissioned bespoke training for business leaders in Swindon. The training equips participants with a range of skills and tools required to act as a mentor for at least two young people. Mentees are most likely to be those currently fulfilling Future Jobs Fund posts with the aim to reduce the number of FJF employees returning to benefits by 10%.

150 new apprenticeship opportunities

Swindon was highlighted as an apprenticeship black spot but the work of Plan 500, coupled with a concerted effort by the National Apprenticeship Service has seen significant improvements in the level of employer take up of apprenticeships with 102 of the 150 opportunities created by the mid-point.

The model is simple and relies on a single point of contact for employers committed to the effort. Enquiries and commitments come via a web based channel where they are recorded and referred to the partner best place to deal with them. The model below illustrates how referrals are processed:



Funding

Swindon does not receive any additional funding towards solutions for worklessness (for example Working Neighbourhoods Fund), and so has had to work closely with its partners, and target resources strategically to address the increase in youth unemployment. Therefore, in a climate where public funding is likely to be reduced dramatically, Swindon is ideally placed to highlight what areas can do locally, in partnership to develop together solutions to worklessness without additional funding.

Resources allocated to Plan 500 include in-kind funding from all partners to cover the work of the Backing Young Swindon Board where members are actively involved in delivering activities that contribute to the effort. These have included preparation and consideration of tenders, hosting meetings, reporting performance, engaging employers, acting as ambassadors, attending events etc. Forward Swindon Ltd (the Economic Development & Regeneration Company) provides Officer Support to the Board in the form of the Backing Young Swindon Project Manager – partly funded by the FJF top slice, REIP funding for Tackling Worklessness and PRG Reward Grant.

Measuring the success of Plan 500

Plan 500 is about creating 'opportunities'. Therefore the method that the Board uses to measure if Plan 500 is achieving its targets is demonstrated in the table below (correct as of 06 May 2011):

500 Opportunities:	Employers registered	Opportunities created
100 Mentoring	51	40
150 Apprenticeship	28	102
150 Work Experience	36	56
50 Work Based Qualifications	6	5
50 Diploma support to schools	10	37
Total	130	240

It should be noted that an employer can be registered for one strand or multiple strands. Therefore, the total of employers registered should not be used as a calculation that would suggest 130 separate businesses in Swindon are registered.

In addition, it should also be noted when measuring the success that for example, one employer registered in the Apprenticeship strand may then offer (for example) 50 Apprenticeships.

The aim is that Swindon's Plan 500 evaluation will provide quantitative and qualitative data.

Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)

The Cost Benefit Analysis model for Swindon is currently in development and is expected to measure the impact of Plan 500 in three ways.

- The financial savings made to the public sector by using a single approach to employers across the 5 Plan 500 themes when compared with the value of resources deployed by partners, including schools, to achieve the same number of opportunities for individual organisations
- The cost, to employers, of engaging with multiple agencies including those associated with recruitment into vacancies, engaging apprentices, engaging work experience candidates
- The cost to the public sector had the beneficiaries of Plan 500 activity not entered employment or training or returned to / remained on benefits following Plan 500 interventions

Barriers and Risks to Delivery

Initially, identifying and agreeing the key deliverables was difficult in the early stages and the group was challenged to broaden its target group to include young adults along with the original target group of NEETs.

In addition, work on the performance management structure and processes started too late prior to the soft launch to businesses and some re-thinking resulted, most notably focussing only on the employer side of the offer has made the model fit for purpose.

However, in attempting to deliver a simple, single employer offer, partner organisations have been torn between the needs of the partnership and the primacy of their organisational requirements, particularly national marketing

campaigns, specific targets and operating models/requirements. The local Jobcentre Plus District committed early in the process given the freedoms it enjoys as a Delegated Flexibilities pilot area. The journey for other organisations such as the National Apprenticeship Service has been longer.

The project also started a long time before the impact of public sector spending cuts was considered. Latterly, this has become an issue with some of the delivery funding streams disappearing for example Train to Gain for work based qualifications and the Diploma entitlement to schools.

In addition, although councillors and the Chief Executive are fully committed to the Plan 500 concept – due to the restructure of the Local Authority and potential redundancy consequence the Local Authority's Human Resources has not yet agreed to develop a formal apprenticeship pathway for their staff. The Local Authority is the largest employer in Swindon so it would set a positive example to the private sector of the Local Authority's commitment to Plan 500. However, it should be noted that there are good examples within the Local Authority of departments actively encouraging and engaging in developing apprenticeship opportunities.

Changes in personnel, including the resignation of the original project manager of Plan 500 has also meant that the programme stalled temporarily in the autumn of 2010. A secondment from Jobcentre Plus and then a subsequent secondment from the Local Authority 13 - 19 Team, from December 2010 until the end of May 2011 of a specific project manager has reinvigorated the effort.

One significant risk to delivery was mitigated when the business mentoring contract failed to deliver any outcomes by January and as a result was terminated. An alternative provider was quickly identified and approved, and a bespoke delivery programme was designed and implemented. Given the short timescale, currently a total of 20 business mentors have now been trained and the majority matched to a mentee. Feedback of the actual training activity, for which delegates are required to give up a full day of their time has been overwhelmingly positive, and has attracted further sign up as a result of word of mouth within the business community.

Successes

A particular success of Plan 500 has been the continued commitment of the Board members, not least, the representatives from the private sector who have remained focussed on achieving the defined outcomes whilst at the same time understanding and driving the need to adapt and respond to changing situations.

This has possibly been achieved by the strong leadership of the Board Chair, Steve Blore of Nationwide (and Caroline Hallatt before him) representing large businesses. Phil Bowley of Green Square Group (representing medium sized employers), has also thoroughly embraced the concept of Plan 500, for example enabling the availability of a company training room to a provider to deliver an induction session to young people about to participate in work experience.

In terms of adapting to change and seeking to continually improve, Plan 500's reactive and proactive stance has been able to provide a new and improved model to support the achievement of work experience targets. With the removal of the funding to Local Authority's to fund block work experience within schools, Plan 500 has been able to position itself to support schools with delivering work experience in a variety of ways, suitable to individual schools and indeed individuals within those schools. For example, Plan 500 would act to support schools who decide to deliver a work experience week whereby employers or Sector Skills Councils could participate in schools activities to talk about the variety of career pathways within their sectors and link this knowledge to the types of qualifications required to follow this route to employment.

A specific example is that of the linking of the House of Fraser national Store Support Centre that is located in Swindon with a school and our 2 local colleges to work on an Information Technology project activity each year that will eventually be used as a resource by House of Fraser personnel. Young people from the school and colleges will be supported to understand a real working environment over an academic year that delivers a business outcome, an opportunity that will surely support young people to develop a career pathway by evidencing industry experience.

The Plan 500 Board also carries with it the ethos of opportunities for all young people. For this reason, and through actively listening to what employers have said about work experience, Plan 500 has developed the 'Swindon Talent Pool'. This has meant that Jobcentre Plus has provided a dedicated person to identify young people on benefits who have Higher Education qualifications. Details are collated about their level and type of qualification, and what their aspirations of a career may be. Through the network of employers that Plan 500 has access to, young people can then be 'actively marketed' to companies to offer them work experience, with the hope that this may lead to a job opportunity. The Swindon Talent Pool is available to all young people to join with Higher Education qualifications – not just those on benefits.

The Local Authority monitoring group on which Plan 500 is represented has noted a significant upturn in participation in Apprenticeships. The data demonstrates that Swindon is 65% up on 16 - 18 year old Apprenticeship starts on the same time last year. Plan 500 activities can be identified as a key contributor to that improvement in target – a trajectory that means we will over achieve the ambition that the National Apprenticeship Service has established for Swindon for 2010 / 11.

Locally, the successful training programme that trains the business mentors has been widely promoted by the business community through the media (newspaper and BBC Wiltshire Radio) and word of mouth through business networks, i.e. FSB, GWE Businesswest (including Business Link), and the Chamber of Commerce.

Once the mentors have been trained they are given their mentoring agreement and the name and contact details of the mentee (young person) who has selected

them. All mentors have been asked to commit to mentoring at least 2 young people. Meetings take place during business hours on a monthly basis and should last no longer than 6 months in total. The focus of the mentoring is purely on enabling the young person to find a job / stay in a job. This is achieved through advice around their CV's, interview skills, job search etc. Although a priority to young people seeking work, a business mentor can be accessed by all young people in Swindon to support their career progression.

Evaluation of the pilot

Evaluation of achievement of the 500 opportunities for the pilot as stated above is continuous. Progress to targets are scrutinised by the Board members at the monthly BYS Board meetings, and actions agreed and monitored.

As Plan 500 is about 'opportunities', we also rely on feedback from partners and stakeholders where either something has had a negative impact, or where we have had successes. This type of anecdotal reporting is recorded and will be utilised to provide evaluation reports where a funding stream has been accessed and an evaluation is required, i.e. REIP funding and funding to support the Raising of the Participation Age (see below for more detail on both).

Plan 500 is fortunate in having good access and support from the local newspaper the Swindon Advertiser, where case studies and promotion of Plan 500 is given copy alongside the jobs pages on a Thursday. These articles have been filed as further 'case study' evidence. In addition, a new small business representative has been appointed to the Board who is the editor of the Swindon Business News, an on-line and paper based product, which will also be utilised to further promote Plan 500.

In addition to the Board meetings the following methodology is followed in gathering quantitative and qualitative evidence to provide information for evaluative purposes:

Apprenticeships:

- Bi monthly strategic meetings led by the Local Authority with NAS, Local Authority, Plan 500 and Jobcentre Plus
- Includes interrogating the data provided by the NAS data team to enable effective tracking of progress in Swindon, by age, numbers on programme and top ten frameworks

Work Experience:

- Schools - Reliant on the goodwill of school and college contacts on when Plan 500 employer introductions have been facilitated, whether these are then converted to actual experiences of work for young people
- Employer work experience - Once an employer has completed a work experience form (similar format to a job opportunity) this is passed onto Jobcentre Plus for them to promote to young job seekers who may wish to access the work experience opportunity
- The Swindon Talent Pool – the employer is emailed the details of young people that have a Higher Education qualification within the employers

sector. The employer will respond if they are interested, and if the young person is on benefits, this referral is then handed onto the Jobcentre to manage. Otherwise, Plan 500 manager manages the relationship / introduction

Mentors:

The opportunity for mentoring in the first instance has been offered to young people who are on the final 6 months of the Future Jobs Fund (FJF). In Swindon we know that 60.7% of young people who have completed their FJF have remained in employment. With the additional support of a business mentor we are aiming to improve this figure by at least 10%. An analysis at the end of the 6 months will enable us to see if the money invested in training the business mentors will demonstrate a cost benefit if the statistics demonstrate an achievement of or towards this nominal target.

- All attendees of the formal mentor training are required to complete an evaluation form at the end of the day session. This information is analysed, recorded and any action taken where necessary to improve the process / course content etc
- The mentee selection of their mentor is recorded and filed. Mentees are requested to identify a mentor from a sector that interests them, who may be of most benefit to them in their career development
- A mentoring agreement is mutually agreed and signed between the mentor and mentee and a copy given to the Plan 500 manager. This provides a record of agreed contact methods, place and frequency of meetings and what the mentoring will and won't cover
- Mentoring continues for a period of up to 6 months with a suggested frequency of meeting of one face to face contact per month
- The mentor is responsible for informing Plan 500 manager once the mentoring process is complete and of any outcomes / successes that have been achieved during the process
- All mentors, following their training informally agree to mentor at least 2 young people for a maximum of 6 months

Work Based Qualifications:

Due to the removal of Train to Gain funding, this aspect of the Plan 500 target has been incredibly hard to achieve.

- Following consultation with the Skills Funding Agency and NAS, it was agreed that the NAS Board representative would look back through all of the Plan 500 employer referrals to ascertain if any of the training provider relationships that NAS had facilitated had also provided the opportunity for the training provider to on- sell to the employer some work based qualifications. To date NAS report that no additional qualifications were delivered to employers who signed up to an Apprenticeship.

Diplomas:

Following the removal of the Diploma entitlement and funding for schools Diploma's, more and more schools and colleges in Swindon have indicated that

following the completion of the current cohort, no further delivery of the qualification will be provided. Therefore, this element of schools support has decreased and will likely no longer exist in the future.

- Plan 500 in the early stages was supportive in facilitating introductions to schools of employers in the Diploma field that was being delivered. For example, a joint activity between the College and local schools delivering the Business, Administration and Finance Diploma enabled a 'Meet the Dragons' event. This entailed local entrepreneurs from the Enterprise subgroup of the SSEP, giving up half a day of their time to feedback on (student project) business presentations given to them from groups of students.

Sustainability – maintaining delivery and exit strategy

Forward Swindon as the 'owners' of the targets (contained within their 1 year delivery plan) and with 6 months to go until completion have been assessing the sustainability of the model and / or any potential exit strategy. It is easily apparent that Plan 500 has positioned itself to enable effective contribution to numerous other project activities to maintain a joined up approach.

Below is a diagram that was submitted as a briefing paper to the Client Team Meeting, which oversees the work of Forward Swindon and is an indicator of how Plan 500 may position itself to add value to the local economy.

Diagram: Sustaining Plan 500



Raising the Participation Age (RPA)

The Education and Skills Act 2008 increased the minimum age at which young people in England can leave learning. Swindon has recently been awarded Phase 3 funding for the locally led RPA project, outlined by the Department for Education, which will investigate the local arrangements that need to be in place to successfully deliver the increase in the participation age (in education or training) to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015.

This legislation places a duty on employers in that where the employer is not providing accredited training, an employer taking on a 16 or 17 year old for more than 20 hours per week for more than 8 weeks will be required to:

- Check the young person's evidence that they are enrolled in some part time accredited learning before they start work
- Agree reasonable hours of work so the young person can access training for the equivalent of a day a week

If an employer is in breach of these duties, the Local Authority would ultimately have powers to enforce them. Plan 500 through its contact with employers is positioned to communicate this message, and to support employers in meeting the requirements.

Plan 500 may be positioned to carry out as part of Phase 3 an initial review of work and recommendations from other areas and a review on work with employers, translating jobs without training into jobs with training/Apprenticeships and working with employers.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

The Wolf Report (the Review of Vocational Education) strongly recommended the requirement for local employers to contribute to qualification design and recently approved LEP bids have demonstrated the facilitation for employers to have more direct engagement with junior and secondary schools to enable their influence on locally taught skills and qualifications.

In addition, the visit to Swindon by Lord Baker to promote the potential for a Swindon University Technical College (UTC) could potentially be actively developed through Plan 500 and a LEP.

Heritage Board

Plan 500 is in early discussions to work proactively with the local Heritage Board to develop a Green Academies Project (GAP) which has been developed by the National Trust and seeks to provide work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for young people including the young unemployed.

Future Jobs Fund

FJF closed on 31st March with all allocated roles of 336 jobs fully filled. Plan 500 is using the trained business mentors to work with the young people on FJF as we know that 60.7% of young people who have participated in the FJF go on to remain in employment. With the added support of a Business Mentor we are aiming to improve this outcome by at least 10%.

South West REIP Worklessness Fund

Funding of £31k was approved for this project last year when the focus of the work was very much on establishing an Employment and Skills Board. However, with all of the changes in government and a refocus on priorities a revised bid has been submitted and approved for Plan 500 support activity.

This funding will therefore be used to create a publicity event that will celebrate the halfway to target at a business breakfast. The event will be further used to engage employers and consult with them on perceived barriers to engagement.

A Plan 500 presentation was delivered to the SW Councils in March, and feedback from that event was unanimously positive. Local Authorities are particularly impressed at the simplicity of Plan 500 and the effectiveness and positive reach across public and private sectors has generated great interest from partners across the region.

Lessons learned

Plan 500's innovative approach has benefited from being led by the private sector in that it is commercially reactive and adaptive to change; but this pressure to get the project going quickly at the start worked against the public sector resource available, and a hasty 'launch to business' in August 2010 was a mistake in that the mechanism for referral was not refined enough (i.e. at the very beginning it tried to be a service for young people and employers). In addition, the 'sign up' facility through the website was not 'live' so employers could not register online, therefore early interest from some in the private sector waned. This, combined with the resignation of the project manager in the early autumn meant that Plan 500 began to suffer from a reputation that it was not delivering.

Re-launching a product with the same name to the same market is always going to be a hard task, whatever the product. Therefore, Plan 500 has in effect only been delivering targets successfully since January 2011, and in particular since its' successful promotion by the Board Chair at the SSEP Conference and promotional stand, manned by Board members at The Business Show in early February 2011.

However, it should also be acknowledged that selling the idea to key partners / employers needs to be embedded over time – the Plan 500 concept is not easily understood immediately. Employers often fear it is too good to be true (free staff resources!), or that they will sign up to something that doesn't meet their business need. Barriers need to be clearly understood – each organisation will have different ones, and solutions explained/offered/developed. There can be a solution to all barriers.

The BYS Board have therefore approved a celebration business breakfast event by way of acknowledging achievement of the half way mark. It is anticipated that local media will cover the event and that it will provide another opportunity to highlight to employers the advantages of engaging with Plan 500, the difference that they can make to young people by providing opportunities, and to enable

employers to actively engage in determining the type of qualifications delivered locally that will act to provide their workforce of the future.

Next Steps

One Swindon is now exploring how to build on the Plan 500 model by developing an all ages Single Employer Gateway for Swindon. It is anticipated that this initiative could extend the approach to vacancy filling, business support, enterprise networks and workforce development for Swindon Businesses.

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Case Study of Partnership Working in Swindon

Child Poverty Agenda

In 2003 Jobcentre Plus appointed Childcare Partnership Managers to help support the growth of local childcare provision. They worked alongside childcare partners and employers to meet the childcare needs of unemployed parents.

The Childcare Partnership Manager's role changed as Local Authorities and Jobcentre Plus collectively focussed on tackling Child Poverty. The introduction of Children's Centres and the PSA 9 delivery activity were key areas on which the partnership was formed and developed.

In Swindon, the Childcare Partnership Manager and the Sure Start Partnership have worked closely together over a number of years to develop a selection of partnership based initiatives

Jobcentre Plus / Surestart Partnership Agreements

We have written and agreed formal partnership arrangements between our organisations since 2004. These have been reviewed and updated regularly. The 2010 Partnership Agreement has been made with Sure Start on behalf of the Children's Centre Managers giving a clear point of contact for both Strategic and Operational activities.

Link Adviser and Outreach arrangements with Children's Centres

Every Children's Centre has always had a named Jobcentre Plus adviser with which the Children's Centre staff can liaise to resolve general and specific issues for parents. In some instances, Jobcentre Plus advisers have conducted regular outreach sessions in Children's Centres to engage parents in return to work activity.

European Social Funded Provision

In 2007 Jobcentre Plus, worked closely with Swindon Sure Start Partnership when preparing for the 2008 ESF Funding round. As a result, Jobcentre Plus developed a specification and subsequently invested in provision designed specifically to support Children's Centres with their requirements to support parents into work. **The Journeys to Work** programme provided advisers to work with all workless parents within the Children's Centre catchments. Journeys to

work performance is above profile with April 2011 data showing cumulative outcomes of 179 job starts date is against a whole programme target of 170. The programme completes in June 2011.

Vacancy Information Boards

Jobcentre Plus commissioned and funded of Vacancy Information boards for the original Neighbourhood Nurseries and Early Excellence Centres in Swindon. Since then, Swindon Surestart Partnership has funded further boards, designed and commissioned by Jobcentre Plus, for Children's Centres. These boards are utilised to display details about work, jobsearch and local vacancies in each Children's Centre. Jobcentre Plus provides latest vacancy bulletins for display on these boards and has coached Children's Centre staff on accessing the Jobcentre Plus internet vacancy database so that they can further support their parents.

Childcare Tasters

Jobcentre Plus and Swindon Sure Start Partnership agreed to promote the use of formal childcare and support the sustainability of childcare settings in the Swindon area. The Sure Start Partnership funded Childcare Tasters to:

- enable parent or carer to settle a child at chosen registered childcare provision before starting work
- reassure parents of the benefits of formal childcare
- enable parent or carer to attend a job interview
- enable parent or carer to attend induction or training prior to starting work
- be used in a childcare setting that has vacancies to help with the sustainability of that setting e.g. Childminder, Day Nursery or Out of School Club

Jobcentre Plus advisers referred their customers to the Children's Information Service (subsequently Swindon Sure Start Partnership) who worked with the customer to source the most appropriate childcare for their children, liaise with the childcare provider and make arrangement for invoices to be paid by Swindon Sure Start Partnership.