

# **The Work Programme National Partnership Forum**

**Wednesday 04 September 2013**

**Chair – Richard Aitken-Davies**

## **Attendees:**

Please see attached list.

## **Formal Opening of the Work Programme National Partnership Forum**

Richard Aitken-Davies formally opened the Work Programme Partnership Forum, welcoming Junior Johnson to the Forum. Junior joined Contracted Services Directorate in July 2013 taking over the role as Head of Work Programmes Division. Richard thanked both Derek French and Clare Elliott who have now moved into new roles.

## **Work Programme Performance Update**

A performance update was provided by DWP. Whilst it was recognised that sustainment figures are now heading in the right direction, there was agreement around the table that overall performance needs to continue to improve across all payment groups, in particular payment group 6.

There was active discussion around conversion rates and extrapolation rates. It was agreed that more work was needed to understand all the factors underlying performance in these areas, and that this would be remitted to the proposed Operations Group.

The issue of Work Programme participants who do not engage with their provider was discussed. It was agreed that a sub group would be set up to look at reasons for non engagement, application of conditionality and the impact on performance.

## **DWP Commissioning Strategy 2013**

The consultation period runs until 27 September 2013, with written responses invited. Details are at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/dwp-commissioning-strategy-2013>

## **Best Practice Group**

The meeting received a brief update on the work of the best practice group. Further details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/helping-more-of-the-hardest-to-help-into-work>

## **Universal Credit**

The forum was updated on the latest available information on the development of Universal Credit.

## **Future of the Partnership Forum**

The meeting agreed that the Forum would add most value if it was able to focus on strategic issues concerning the Work Programmes. To facilitate this, the meeting agreed to relaunch the Operations Group, with a clear remit to focus on live running issues including any referred by the Partnership Forum. The Operations Group would be chaired by the Head of Work Programmes, DWP. Members were informed that due to other commitments Richard was passing the chair of the Forum to Simon Tse, the Director of Contracted Customer Services, DWP.

## **Formal closing of the Work Programme Partnership Forum**

Richard Aitken-Davies thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the Forum.

Simon Tse, on behalf of the DWP and members of NPF would like to thank Richard Aitken-Davies for all his hard work.

## **Future Partnership Forum Meeting Dates for 2013/2014**

Monday 28 October 2013, 10.30-1.30, Room 6.37 Caxton House, London

Wednesday 8 January 2014, 10.30-1.30, Conference Room 3, Rockingham House, Sheffield.

Wednesday 9 April 2014, 10.30-1.30, Room 6.37 Caxton House, London

Wednesday 9 July 2014, 10.30-1.30, location to be confirmed

Wednesday 8 October 2014 10.30-1.30 location to be confirmed

## Membership of the Work Programme National Partnership Forum

A4E	Rehab Group
Avanta	Seetec
Interserve Working Futures	Serco
CDG	Working Links
EOS	Employment Related Services Association (ERSA)
ESG Group	DWP Contracted Customer Services Directorate (CCSD)
G4S	DWP National Partnerships
Ingeus UK Ltd	DWP Labour Market and Conditionality Directorate
Learndirect	
MAXIMUS	
Newcastle College (Intraining)	
Pertemps People Development Group	
Prospects Services Ltd	
Reed in Partnership	

**NB** names of some DWP and Provider representatives have been removed as disclosure would breach one or more of the data protection principles.