

The Work Programme National Partnership Forum

Wednesday 9 July 2014

Chair ~ Andrew Thomas

Attendees:

Please see the membership list at [Annex 1](#) ~ all members were represented

Formal Opening of the Work Programme National Partnership Forum

Andrew Thomas formally opened the Work Programme Partnership Forum and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Andrew explained the strategic changes within Work Programmes Division (WPD) to all attendees to clarify where communications would come from within the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

Andrew went on to confirm that future forum dates, once agreed, would remain fixed and if providers could not attend, they should send an empowered deputy.

- Furthermore, forums would be held alternatively in Birmingham and London.

Work Programme Performance

Andrew thanked Providers for their efforts that have resulted in improved performance and recognised the need for more joined up working. Andrew highlighted the recent improvements that had been implemented, such as the performance dashboard that will improve how MI is reported.

Andrew explained that DWP want to better understand the drivers of performance and their importance in understanding performance variation. In order for DWP to do this Andrew stated that DWP will be asking Providers for more detailed information around their caseloads, failed to attend rates, resources and other performance drivers.

Andrew also explained that DWP are trying to gather more accurate data on Job Entries using Real Time Information (RTI) and will feed back to the Forum when this is up and running.

DWP Communications and Media

The forum was updated on how the Work Programme Communications team are utilising Work Programme Good News Stories and working with providers to maximise local coverage and how the team plan to work with ERSA in developing a media campaign with providers.

Progress of the package of changes

Feedback was provided on the work currently being undertaken regarding contract changes.

DWP explained that all contract changes have to have Minister's approval. There are a number of stakeholders involved. DWP are holding meetings with providers, to discuss further what the changes will mean for and the intention is for DWP to share with providers a prospectus to clarify the package of changes.

Future Programmes

DWP are currently considering Work Programme Plus and are looking at building on the current model and have a list of questions to work through. Providers will be key stakeholders in this. There was also a discussion around how other Government Departments will fit into this process and also bringing in the expertise from large Employers and groups like the CBI.

Framework and Category Management

The Forum was updated on the refocus of DWP's Commercial Directorate. A new structure has been implemented, which introduces Category Management teams.

Providers were thanked for their contribution to the commissioning strategy which will be published shortly, the broad themes of which are; market structure and stewardship, how we use information, transparency of data, partnership working, capability and performance.

Update from the Operations Forum

Following a short update, DWP explained how future Ops forums will have a particular theme to ensure that best practice and performance related issues are discussed and shared.

Provider hot topics

It was agreed that most of the topics providers raised have been covered within the meeting. There was a discussion around the referral volumes being lower than originally expected which affects business planning.

DWP are in talks with the Ministry of Justice about transforming rehabilitation.

Formal closing of the Work Programme Partnership Forum

Andrew Thomas thanked everyone for their attendance, asked providers to consider and feed back to him if the format of this forum is working.

Forum closed in line with the agenda at 13:30

Annex 1

Membership of the Work Programme National Partnership Forum

DWP Contracted Employment Provision Directorate (CEPD)

DWP Category Management

DWP Communications

DWP Finance Business Partners

Employment Related Services Association (ERSA)

A4E

Avanta

CDG

EOS

ESG

G4S

Ingeus

Interserve Working Futures

JHP Group Ltd

Maximus

Newcastle Collage Group (Intraining)

Pertemps People Development Group

Prospects Services Ltd

Reed in Partnership

Rehab Jobfit

Seetec

Serco

Working Links

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