

DWP information strategy and performance indicators

Government response

May 2011

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Introduction

1. The consultation sought views on the Information Strategy and performance indicators within the transparency section of the DWP Business Plan 2011-2015. It began on 24 November 2010 and ended on 31 January 2011.
2. The Department is very grateful to those who responded to the consultation. Twelve responses to the consultation were received. A list of respondents is in the next section.
3. The DWP Business Plan 2011-2015 is available on the DWP and No10 Downing Street websites at:
[DWP Business Plan 2011-2015](#)
[Transparency | Number10.gov.uk](#)
4. This document describes the comments made by respondents and provides the Government's response.

Response to the consultation

This section sets out the response to the consultation and the Government's response.

The following organisations responded to the consultation:

- Bradford City Council
- British Australian Pensioners Association
- County Councils Network
- Equality 2025
- Leeds City Council
- Mental Health Aberdeen
- Office for National Statistics
- Runnymede Trust
- St Mungo's
- TUC
- Wolverhampton City Council
- Work and Pensions Committee

Consultation questions

We invited comments on the transparency section in general and on the following points in particular:

1. Are the spending and performance measures we have used clear and helpful? If not, do you have any suggestions for better measures?
2. If the data we have said we will publish is not sufficient to help you judge the Department's performance, is there any additional or different data you would like to see?
3. What more could we do to make data available in a useful and transparent format?

Responses

1. Are the spending and performance measures we have used clear and helpful? If not, do you have any suggestions for better measures?

The responses received confirmed the validity and usefulness of proposed indicators. It was suggested that a more direct measure of child poverty and an indicator covering Child Maintenance be included.

Child Poverty

The Government's approach to child poverty is set out in its recently published strategy, [A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families' Lives](#). The strategy also set out a suite of indicators covering family resources, family circumstances and life chances that will be used to monitor progress towards eradicating child poverty. The set of indicators builds on the income targets in the Child Poverty Act 2010, to which the Government remains committed.

However, tackling child poverty goes beyond simply lifting people above an arbitrary income line. Ensuring that people have the support, incentives and skills they need in order to improve their lives and to enter and progress in work is essential. Reducing the proportion of children living in workless households is therefore central to the themes of the strategy.

Child Maintenance

The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission is a non-Departmental Body that has its own business plan and key performance measures. The Quarterly Summary of Statistics will continue to be published providing information including intake, time to clear cases, maintenance collected and arranged and outstanding arrears.

2. If the data we have said we will publish is not sufficient to help you judge the Department's performance, is there any additional or different data you would like to see?

Responses set out a number of the areas highlighted in the plan where more detailed information would be useful, including:

- delivery partners;
- costs of provision and activity.

Requests for more detailed information

A number of respondents asked for more detailed information on measures and activities included in the business plan. The business plan offers a relatively high level summary of the Department's priorities, performance measures and approach to information sharing. A range of additional information will be made available as indicated in the 'Other Data' section of the business plan, for example:

- National Statistics on DWP Benefit caseloads, on- and off-flows; Employment Programmes; National Insurance (NI) Contributions and NI Number allocations to Adult Overseas Nationals entering the UK;
- Information about the Work Capability Assessment covering the results of assessments and subsequent appeals, broken down by functional impairments and health conditions;
- Information about incomes and circumstances of private households;
- Labour market data on employment, unemployment and inactivity.

Wherever possible we will aim to break down published information; for example, by customer group, gender, age and disability. However, it will not always be possible to publish data to the level of granularity requested by some respondents. This can be due to the unavailability of data, the disproportionate cost of collecting data, small sample sizes impacting the quality/confidence of data and the need to respect individuals' right to privacy in respect of their personal data.

Information about delivery partners

More information about the Department's delivery partners was requested, with a number of respondents making particular reference to the Work Programme.

We publish a range of information already:

- Flexible New Deal figures on starts, short job outcomes and sustained job outcomes down to contract level;
- Contract tendering documentation and contracts over £10,000.

In addition, the Department will shortly be publishing information about the statistics it produces on DWP employment programme support. The Work Programme will be launched nationally from summer 2011, supported by a package of Get Britain Working measures including Work Experience and New Enterprise Allowance. The Department intends to publish as much information as possible and will aim to do so as soon as possible. While the statistics to be published will be dependent on the availability and quality of

the data from administrative systems, the intention is to provide breakdowns at contract level and about payment groups, age, gender, ethnicity, disability and geography.

Costs

A number of respondents asked for more detailed information about costs of provision and activity.

The input indicators in the business plan focus on the Department's main activities, such as the cost of processing and maintaining Jobseekers Allowance and State Pension. However, a range of additional cost information will also be published, including measures that will improve transparency by making it easier to compare costs across government, for example:

- further information about common areas of spend which will be published alongside the Department's business plan. Future updates of these common areas will also be published as part of regular reporting of business plan data; and
- ongoing monthly updates of departmental spend over £25,000.

The Department will also publish:

- additional unit cost information, for example, on social fund applications; and
- costs of delivering planned and future departmental activity, for example Universal Credit.

3. What more could we do to make data available in a useful and transparent format?

This area attracted few responses, however, the usefulness of accessible formats which allow comparisons of information between years and the inclusion of commentary and high level summaries was highlighted.

The Department will ensure that the public has access to more of the information that is used to define the delivery of its services, the effect that its programmes and activities are having and how efficient and effective its operations are. The Department is also working to improve the value of that information by making it readily available in line with Public Data Principles on the DWP website and the Government's data website (www.data.gov.uk).