

Review of Youth Unemployment

- What is the role of your agency? What are its aims and targets? Are these being achieved?

DWP, through Jobcentre Plus is responsible for supporting young people aged 18 - 24 who are claiming a DWP working age benefit. This support includes job search advice, agreeing an action plan towards employment and referring to partner organisations and colleges/providers to overcome any barriers to work, as well as engaging with employers to source work experience and employment opportunities.

Our targets are predominantly around customers returning to work which we call an off flow. We are judged on the percentage off flows at 13 weeks, 26 weeks, 39 weeks and 52 weeks. We are currently exceeding our off flow targets for 13, 26 & 52 weeks but are below target on 39 week.

DWP also supports 16/17 year old customers who are estranged from their families. We offer an advisory service and support for customers to make hardship claims to both Job Seekers Allowance and Income Support. With these customers we work extremely closely with Careers South West.

See also attached 16-24, claimant count and live unfilled vacancies.

- What is your relationship with local employers?

DWP, are active in building working relationships with employers. There is a National team who work with National Employers and gain agreements that will cover their branches across the country, for example Argos and B&Q. They provide Work Experience opportunities for Young People, for up to 8 weeks.

Locally in Jobcentre Plus we have Employer Engagement Managers. They have teams that are responsible for building working relationships with the local employers, for example Sandwell Community Caring Trust. Who are working with us to provide pre-employment training for care workers and then guaranteeing interviews for vacant posts?

- What services do you provide to young people?

Within 24 hours of a customer making a claim to benefit a full diagnostic interview is arranged with a specialist 18-24 adviser. At this interview background information is collected and an action plan agreed with the young person. The majority of our young people will be referred to the National Careers Service for a Skills Conditionality interview to gain an independent assessment of their skills and to

identify any areas that need to be addressed ie numeracy, literacy or work related skills appropriate to the young person's job goal. All 18 year old customers are also mandated to attend Careers South West so we have a two pronged approach to support these customers returning to work or training. After the initial diagnostic interview the customer will then be seen usually weekly by their named adviser and their assistant adviser. At subsequent interviews the action plan is reviewed and updated and customers are signposted to the most appropriate provision to support them to overcome the barriers to return to employment.

We have regular meetings with the National Apprenticeship service. Our advisers promote apprenticeship vacancies to their jobseekers. We have just recruited 3 apprentices into Torquay JCP office. Also our Employer Advisers actively promote apprenticeships alongside Work Experience when talking to employers.

- What initiatives are provided/funded through your organisation?

See attached list of local provision, this is not exhaustive

- Have you undertaken any mapping exercise of initiative in Torbay? Or the funding for initiatives?

Jobcentre Plus works with, and refers to, the attached list of agencies who are delivering support in the Torbay area. This is list not exhaustive but gives a good flavour of the main sources of support.

DWP Work Programme providers are also located in Torbay. The prime providers are Working Links and Prospect Services. They are responsible for supporting young people aged 18-24 from the time they reach 39 weeks on JSA on their journey into work. In addition some people will be eligible for early entry to the Work Programme, e.g. prison leavers.

Devon and Cornwall District have developed a provision tool that lists all the local provision that is available to JCP customers in Torbay.

- How sustainable are the initiatives that you provide?

The majority of the initiatives and programmes that are delivered by DWP are led by Central Government policy. This means that they are public funded and are sustainable.

In Devon and Cornwall, Jobcentre Plus has a Flexible Support Fund with which we can deliver provision to satisfy the needs of Jobseekers locally. For example, Jobcentre Plus has been working with the Fire and Rescue service since October 2010. This is a programme that is funded on a needs basis.

- How well do you think your organisation integrates with others in Torbay that are providing similar services?

We have a good working relationship with Careers South West especially around our 16/17 year old customers. Torquay JCP has developed links with Princes Trust and regularly we have a Princes Trust adviser in the Jobcentre. We work well with Shekinah Mission especially around the Re-work programme to secure work placements for our customers who are the most disadvantaged.

We have worked with different partners and providers to offer innovative opportunities for our customers. The Phoenix course which is run by the Fire Service and confidence and motivation courses via Eat that Frog deserve a special mention as they change lives.

- How well do you work with the wider community partnership (for example, Police, health, voluntary sector)?

We have a good working relationship with the prolific offender team. We have a sharing information protocol with the Probation service. We also have organisations that we can signpost customers to for help with homelessness, facing homelessness, debt, drug or alcohol abuse. For example, the open access drugs service at Shrublands, or Shekinah Mission at The Leonard Stock Centre.

We have linked Personal Advisers with the Family Intervention Project, Probation, and the Care Leavers team in Torbay Council.

- What's your role with the Local Economic Partnership? How well do you think this is working?

Karen Hooper, with Phil Harrison, have met with Liz Waugh, interim Chief Executive of the LEP. They had a general discussion about communications channels. Liz said that the Board are looking at the networks across the area to consider if the 'wiring' is fit for purpose. She also said that if we wanted her to be our conduit then she was very happy for us to contact her.

Karen Hooper meets regularly with the Mayor, who is a Board member. JCP has a voice to the LEP through the Employment and Skills Boards across Devon and Cornwall