

Research report

Work Programme Evaluation

Procurement, supply chains
and implementation of the
commissioning model

Technical appendices

by Pippa Lane, Rowan Foster, Laura Gardiner,
Lorraine Lanceley and Ann Purvis

Department for Work and Pensions

Research Report No 832

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Contents

Abbreviations	iv
Technical appendix A Provider research tools.....	1
Technical appendix B DWP and Jobcentre Plus staff topic guides	12
Technical appendix C Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools	21

Abbreviations

CPA	Contract Package Area
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESF	European Social Fund
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
MI	Management Information
ND25+	New Deal for claimants aged 25 years and over
ND50+	New Deal for claimants aged 50 years and over
NDDP	New Deal for Disabled People
NDLP	New Deal for Lone Parents
NDYP	New Deal for Young People
PDP	Personal Development Plan
PIP	Personal Improvement Plan
TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)
VCS	Voluntary, community and social

Technical appendix A

Provider research tools

Provider fieldwork – wave 1

SUPPLY CHAIN PRIME PROVIDERS TOPIC GUIDE

Interviewer notes

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.
Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail as appropriate.
In the interview, focus on specifics and getting examples of what the impact has been on the organisation and what they are doing about this.
Key questions are in bold and should be prioritised.

The aims of this interview are to explore:

- provider performance management / supply chain development strategies
- providers' delivery strategies, including innovation in service design, impact of competition within CPAs, and how and why provider delivery strategies vary over time (or from their original tender statements)
- the impact of differential prices and outcome-based funding, in particular on supply chain capacity for working with customers furthest from the labour market
- the range and effectiveness of DWP engagement with providers, including support for innovation, cost efficiencies and fraud minimisation
- provider perceptions of DWP activities, including: referral and sanctions processes; evidence requirements (for attachments, job outcomes and sustained outcomes); Merlin Standard, account management, performance management, and provider assurance.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank them for agreeing to talk to us.
- Explain that Inclusion have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to conduct an evaluation of the effect of DWP commissioning on the Work Programme.
- The interview will last a maximum of 1 hour.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews and their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

Organisational profile (5-10 mins)

- 1 I understand that you are a Work Programme prime contractor in [insert relevant CPAs] and a subcontractor in [insert relevant CPAs]. Can you confirm that this is the case?

[Interviewer note: find out what these are prior to the interview]

- 2 What, if any, other employment related services have you delivered in the past?

Probe for: Flexible New Deal, Employment Zones, New Deals (e.g. NDLP, ND25+, NDYP, ND50+, NDDP), Pathways to Work, Progress2Work, or other relevant service provision?

Customer volumes and geography of customers supported (just overview, not detail).

- 3 What employment related or other relevant service provision do you currently deliver?

Probe for Jobcentre Plus support contract and other DWP (e.g. Work Choice, ESF support for families with multiple problems, Mandatory Work Activity, Community Action Programme) and non-DWP funded and source of funding to establish how dependent they are on DWP funding.

[Interviewer note: Q2 and Q3 are seeking to gauge the extent of previous experience, expertise and level of dependence on DWP funding rather than exact detail.]

Work programme commissioning experience (10 mins)

I would now like to ask some questions about the commissioning model used for the Work Programme and how your organisation responded. As you will be aware, the Work Programme was the first employment programme to be procured under the ‘Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Support Services’. This was part of DWP’s Commissioning Strategy which introduced:

- Larger, longer contracts for providers
- Prime provider model
- Outcome-based funding
- Limited prescription from DWP (‘Black Box’ model)

4 What were the reasons why your organisation decided to bid for the Work Programme as a Prime provider?

[Interviewer note: Keep answers here very brief]

5 Why did you decide to bid for a prime contract rather than subcontracting for the Work Programme?

6 How did you go about selecting subcontractors to form your supply chain?

Probe: Adverts? Expression of interest forms? Formal tender exercise?

How did you evaluate potential subcontractors?

7 What were the key things you looked for when selecting subcontractors?

If necessary probe: Specialist expertise, previous working relationship with the sub contractor, financial strength, ability to cover a wide geographical area?

8 What was your organisation’s experience of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) with the Work Programme?

Probe: How was TUPE applied?

Did this have an impact on your organisation / provision / selection of subcontractors?

[Interviewer note: Primes took different approaches on whether TUPE applied. We want to understand the ongoing consequences of these decisions.]

9 Were there significant changes to your supply chain between submitting your bid to DWP and the time you started delivery of the programme?

Probe for why this happened and how this was handled – were contingencies effective?

[Interviewer note: Some VCS organisations have accused primes of naming them in their bids as ‘bid-candy’ ie with no plan of them delivering. We want to understand from prime perspective why supply chains may have changed between bidding and delivery.]

10 How effective were communications throughout the bidding process?

With DWP?

Did this change throughout the bidding process?

Suggestions for improvement?

11 How did your experience of the Work Programme commissioning cycle differ to previous experience of DWP commissioning?

[Interviewer note: for those not involved in FND or Work Choice this could have been very different to their previous experience.]

12 What changes, if any, would you like to see made to the bidding and commissioning process in the future?

Probe for changes by DWP (if appropriate: other primes), include reasons and examples.

Supply chain and delivery model (20-25 mins)

- 13 Have there been any changes to your Work Programme supply chains since programme go-live?
If so, why? (Probe for details of any leaving subcontractors, whose decision was it for them to leave (prime or sub), processes for this and the reasons).
Probe whether supply chain is competitive.
[Interviewer note: this is for changes since delivery started – question 9 refers to changes between bidding and delivery.]
- 14 Are there any forthcoming planned changes to your supply chain?
If so, what and why?
Probe around whether they feel expansion or contraction of the supply chain is expected.
Interviewer note: DWP must be notified of new Tier 1 subs but not Tier 2 subs – does this affect decisions around changes to supply chains?]
- 15 What processes and frequency do you have for reviewing your supply chain, especially the tier 2 (specialists) where there may be no or very few referrals?
Probe: What is the communication process to ensure these specialist organisations do not feel ‘forgotten’?
- 16 I believe that your delivery model involves [insert here including what types of services are subcontracted and what is provided in-house]. Is this still the case?
[Interviewer note: look at contracts to find this out prior to interview]
If model has changed since go live can you outline how and why?
- 17 Is this a standard model across all your delivery areas (including where you are a subcontractor)?
Do you prescribe this delivery model for your subcontractors?
If different models are used by subcontractors, why?
- 18 Please outline the business considerations which influenced your development of this delivery model?
How did the differential pricing model influence your delivery model?
- 19 How do you ensure your delivery model and supply chain meets the full range of customer needs?
Ask for specific examples.
Probe re: assessment / analysis of customer needs,
Tailoring services to different local labour market conditions
Collection and use of customer feedback,
Use of specialist / tier two organisations and how this is managed,
Use of personalisation of services to best meet what customers need and/or want.
Services for disabled people
- 20 How do you determine which subcontractor a participant is referred to?
Probe whether based on customer need or geography and for any use of specialist / second tier organisations (and how this is managed).
Probe for rationale behind their referral model.
Has your referral model changed since programme go-live?
If so, how and why? (e.g. based on the differing performance of subcontractors).
- 21 Do you have processes in place to facilitate the identification and sharing good practice within your supply chain?
Probe for details of these and views on effectiveness.

- 22 Have you undertaken any activities with your staff and / or subcontractors aimed to develop their capacity / capabilities and improve Work Programme delivery?
Probe for details of these and views on effectiveness.
Are these aimed at helping staff to deal with disabled and harder to help clients?
- 23 Have you had to address any specific concerns or disputes within your supply chain?
If so, probe for details of processes used to resolve these and views on effectiveness, e.g. are these issues now resolved?
- 24 What has been your experience with the Merlin Standard?
[Prompt: Merlin Standard Assessment (due to take place between March and June 2012), Merlin Inspection, or the Merlin Pilot Assessment?]
If been involved: Have you any specific comments on process or outcomes?
Ask all: Overall, how effective do you feel the Merlin Standard is in promoting effective supply chain development and management?
- 25 Do you work with other local partners (outside your supply chain) e.g. Local Authorities, third sector organisations, employers?
If so, what activities are undertaken?
If so, how do you work with other local partners?
Probe: are any of these contractual relationships?
Have there been any changes to these relationships since programme go-live?

Working with DWP (10 mins)

26 Which levels and sections of the Department do you have contact with?

Prompt: Account Managers, Performance Managers, Provider Assurance Team.

What impact do these relationships have on the way you work (in terms of internal processes / systems and the level / type of support you provide)?

Do you know who you need to work with on specific issues?

Do you have any opportunities to provide feedback to DWP on how it is supporting performance improvement?

27 How do you work with JCP in the delivery of the Work Programme?

Prompt: Third Party Provision Managers, Partnership Managers

What impact do these relationships have on the way you work (in terms of internal processes / systems and the level / type of support you provide)?

- 28 How integrated are the ways that DWP/JCP engage with you in relation to the Work Programme?
Probe in terms of communication and impact.

Overall impact (5 mins)

- 29 Overall, what impact do you feel the new DWP commissioning model has had on your ability to successfully deliver the Work Programme?

30 Overall, what impact do you feel the new DWP commissioning model has had on your organisation?

Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities?

How have you responded?

Have you sought to change your business model or capacity to better meet DWP's commissioning principles?

Close

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Indicate that they may be re-contacted for future waves of the evaluation and/or for other strands.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, the findings, both in the final report and in earlier drafts, will be anonymised so that no interviewees or providers can be identified.).
- Thank them for their time

Provider fieldwork – wave 1

SUPPLY CHAIN SUBCONTRACTORS TOPIC GUIDE

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Introduction

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- The interview will last a maximum of 45 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.
- Explain that we understand that they may be delivering the Work Programme in a number of CPAs, but that this issue is to focus on their experience in a particular CPA [insert as relevant].

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews and their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.

8 Technical appendices – Provider research tools

- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.
- Ask if they have any questions.

Organisational profile (5 mins)

- 1 Gather information about each organisation. Confirm information on sector and subcontract/prime elsewhere from sample.

Sector - Public, private or voluntary	
Size – number of employees	
Specialist or generalist – if specialist, which group(s)	
% of organisation’s funding from Work Programme	
% of organisation’s funding from DWP contracts	
List of other DWP (sub)contracts (eg Work Choice, Mandatory Work Activity, Community Action Programme, ESF families with multiple problems)	
Work Programme subcontract in other CPAs – yes/no	
Work Programme prime contract in other CPAs – yes/no	

Work programme commissioning experience (10 mins)

- 2 How effective were communications throughout the bidding process?
- 3 With DWP and Primes? Did this change throughout the bidding process?
Suggestions for changes?
- 4 What was your organisation’s experience of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) with the Work Programme?
Probe: How was TUPE applied? When did you become aware of TUPE arrangements? Did this have an impact on your organisation / provision?
[Interviewer note: Primes took different approaches on whether TUPE applied. We want to understand the ongoing consequences of these decisions. In the earlier Commissioning interviews some subs reported not realising that they would have to take on new staff under TUPE until after they had become WP subs and therefore decided to leave the supply chain.]
- 5 Were you named in any successful bids but subsequently not part of these supply chains? If yes, why was this? How was it handled?

Delivery model and supply chain (20 mins)

- 6 What is your current role in delivery of the Work Programme (in this CPA)?
What services do they provide?
Whether they cover rural and/or urban areas and number of claimants.
Use of any subcontractors of their own for delivery (including details).
Probe for details of how they see their role in the supply chain(s) as compared to the roles of their supply chain partners.
- 7 Is this model of provision and system(s) prescribed by your prime provider(s)?
If applicable: is your delivery model the same for other primes/when you are a prime?
Is there flexibility for innovation in your delivery model? If yes, how does this work?
Has this model changed since programme go-live? If so, how and why?
What is the impact of differential pricing for different groups?
- 8 Has there been any change to your Work Programme role since programme go-live (i.e. have you left or joined any supply chains, or started or stopped using any subcontractors of your own)?
If so, what were the reasons for this?
Prompt if necessary: level of investment required, geographical coverage required, performance issues, financial risk, inability to agree terms with prime, etc.
Are there any forthcoming planned changes to your role in the supply chain(s) or to using subcontractors of your own?
- 9 What information system(s) for managing customer information do you use for the Work Programme?
Is this system prescribed by your prime provider(s)?
How does this help or hinder your delivery?
- 10 Do you feel the delivery model allows you to meet the full range of claimant needs?
Ask for specific examples.
Probe re: assessment / analysis of customer needs,
Collection and use of claimant feedback,
Use of specialist / tier two organisations and how this is managed,
Use of personalisation of services to best meet what claimants need and/or want.
- 11 On what basis is your organisation paid for the services it provides for the Work Programme?
Probe whether the outcome based funding model is passed directly on from the prime.
[Interviewer note: tell participant that impact of the financial model will be discussed in depth next wave and we just need a brief answer in this interview.]
- 12 How are the referrals you receive determined by your prime provider(s)?
Probe whether based on claimant need or geography. Has this changed since programme go-live?
If so, how and why? What has the impact been on delivery?
Have you been receiving a higher or lower number of referrals than expected? If yes, has this changed over time?
Have you been receiving the type of referrals that you were expecting? If no, what has been different to your expectations?
What has the impact of the type and number of referrals you have received been on delivery?

10 Technical appendices – Provider research tools

- 13 How would you describe your relationship with your prime provider(s)?
Has your prime provider(s) undertaken any activities with your staff aimed to develop their capacity / capabilities and improve delivery? If yes, probe for details and effectiveness.
Is good practice shared?
Do you share experiences of what doesn't work?
If so, how does this work and how does it affect your delivery?
Have there been any specific concerns or disputes that have needed to be addressed? If yes, probe for details, processes to resolve and effectiveness.
- 14 Are you aware of the Merlin Standard?
If yes, what has been your experience with it?
[Prompt: Merlin Standard Assessment - due to take place between March and June 2012), Merlin Inspection, or the Merlin Pilot Assessment]
If been involved: Have you any specific comments on process or outcomes?
Ask all: Overall, how effective do you feel the Merlin Standard is in promoting effective supply chain development and management?
- 15 What is your relationship with the other subcontractors in your supply chain(s)?
How, if at all, is your relationship with other subcontractors influenced by your prime provider(s)?
Are you subject to competition with other subcontractors? If so, how does this work and how does it affect your delivery?
Do you share good practice?
Do you share experiences of what doesn't work?
If so, how does this work and how does it affect your delivery?
- 16 What is your relationship with other local partners (e.g. Local Authorities, third sector organisations, employers)?
Probe: are any of these contractual relationships?
Have there been any changes to these relationships since programme go-live?

Working with DWP (5 mins)

- 17 Do you have any direct contact with DWP/JCP or are communications channelled through your prime provider(s)?
Probe for details if have any direct contact with DWP or JCP including Third Party Provision Managers, Partnership Managers.
What impact do these relationships have on the way you work (in terms of internal processes / systems and the level / type of support you provide)?
What impact does working via a prime model rather than directly with DWP have on the way you work (in terms of internal processes / systems and the level / type of support you provide)?
[Interviewer note: In other DWP commissioning research, subcontractors have stated that they much prefer direct contact with DWP/JCP than through Primes, it would be useful to know if this is the case in Work Programme, or with different types of Primes. Eg, do subs of managing agent primes have some direct contact with DWP/JCP?]

Overall impact (5 mins)

18 Overall, what impact do you feel the Work Programme commissioning model (Larger, longer contracts for providers; Prime provider model; Outcome-based funding Limited prescription from DWP ('Black Box' model)) have had on your organisation?

Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities?

How have you responded?

Have you sought to change your business model or capacity to better meet DWP's commissioning principles?

19 What are your future intentions with regard to DWP commissioned Welfare to Work provision?

Do you intend to try to expand your involvement in the Work Programme / other programmes in the future?

Close

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, the findings, both in the final report and in earlier drafts, will be anonymised so that no interviewees or providers can be identified.).
- Indicate that they may be re-contacted for future waves of the evaluation and/or for other strands.
- Thank them for their time.

Technical appendix B

DWP and Jobcentre Plus staff topic guides

Provider fieldwork – wave 1

PERFORMANCE MANAGERS TOPIC GUIDE

Interviewer notes

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.
Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail as appropriate.

The aims of this interview are to:

- Explore how far DWP has built its skill base in order to work more effectively in partnership with providers.
- Understand the range and effectiveness of DWP engagement with providers, including support for innovation, cost efficiencies and fraud minimisation.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank them for agreeing to talk to us.
- Explain that Inclusion have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to conduct an evaluation of the effect of DWP commissioning on the Work Programme.
- The interview will last a maximum of 1 hour.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews and their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.

- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.
- Ask if they have any questions.

Background

- 1 What is your role?
Probe for job description, grade/level and location.
- 2 How long have you been in this role (and with the organisation)?
- 3 How large a part of the work you do is related to the Work Programme?
*Probe for details of their Work Programme related duties.
Has this varied over time?
What are your duties other than the Work Programme?*

Experience of programme delivery

[Interviewer note: we are trying to understand the extent to which Performance Managers see their role as monitoring contract performance or helping providers improve their performance, spreading good practice etc.]

- 4 How are you involved in the Work Programme?
*Probe re / performance/ inspection/ contracting/ encouraging innovation and good practice
Probe for number of providers/ contracts/ size of area they are responsible for.*
- 5 How do you approach monitoring Work Programme performance?
*Probe for balance between checking MI, remote contact and visits to primes, do they visit subcontractors.
Frequency of relevant activities
Does it systematically or occasionally include discussions with participants and/or employers?*
- 6 How frequently do you undertake formal 'performance reviews' for prime providers?
Probe what is involved in the performance review and does it regularly or only occasionally involve interviews with participants and/or employers
- 7 Could you tell me about any communication links / mechanisms in place to facilitate knowledge and good practice sharing between DWP, JCP and Work Programme providers?
*If so, what are these links / mechanisms?
How effective are they?
What, if any, changes could be made to these links / mechanisms?
How realistic is it that primes will share good practice in a competitive environment?
Do you have any examples of providers sharing ideas?
How open have provider meetings been?
How many ideas have been volunteered over the last 9 months?
Are some providers more open or more closed to sharing ideas?*

- 8 What is the role of Performance Improvement Plans and in what circumstances are they necessary?
How is it decided whether PIPs are needed?
How is the content of PIPs decided and how are they followed up?
Have you implemented PIPs and how effectively have they worked with prime providers and with subcontractors?
Is there any way in which the PIP process could be improved?
How do PIPs fit with PDPs?
[Interviewer note: At the moment, all the providers have a PIP but it has subsequently been decided that this should only be the case if provider performance is falling short. So now, all providers will start out with a Performance Development Plan (PDP) - simply about making providers as good as they can be.]
- 9 What role, if any, do you have in assessing the quality of provision as well as performance in terms of attachments and outcomes?
Probe – what role do they have in monitoring the delivery of minimum service levels
- 10 How does your role differ from that of an account manager / third party provision manager?
What interaction do you have with Account Managers / tppm and the process for sharing/feeding information?
- 11 What information do you receive that you use to perform your role?
Probe for MI, contract info, sources, systems, etc
- 12 What MI do you provide?
To management, providers, etc.
- 13 Is MI accessible, timely, useful?
What could be improved?
Is this the same for both information that you receive and information that you provide?
- 14 Do you use the findings of Provider Assurance Team (PAT) Assessments and/or use the Summary of Findings report produced by the CMO from their visit?
Probe why/why not.
If yes, explore how they use these.

Working relationships with other Work Programme stakeholders

- 15 Can you describe your working relationships with the prime providers?
Probe: What level they are within the organisations, how frequent is contact, what is the subject matter of contact?
Do the contacts cover the ground they need to cover; are the relationships equal/two way, or unbalanced; who drives the contact/relationship?
If there are any problems with working relationships, what could be done to improve these?
- 16 Do you have any links with the subcontractors?
If yes, what?
If no, do you feel this is appropriate?
- 17 What impact do your relationships with prime providers and subcontractors have on the delivery of the Work Programme (in terms of internal processes / systems and the level / type of support provided)?
- 18 How do you work with other DWP/Jobcentre Plus staff to get better performance from the prime providers?

Early assessment of programme design, delivery and impact

19 Has the transition to the WP prime provider model been effective?

20 Has ‘payment by results’ and ‘black box contracting’ led to any positive or negative changes to service delivery?

If so, in what way?

21 Are the prime provider supply chains that you have knowledge of catering for all participants?

Probe for: adequacy both to meet the needs of particular client groups, such as those with mental health or accommodation issues, and in terms of geographic coverage, location of offices, etc.

Close

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, containing anonymised findings).
- Thank them for their time.

Provider fieldwork – wave 1

SUPPLY CHAIN SUBCONTRACTORS TOPIC GUIDE

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Questions in bold should be prioritised.

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- Ask if they have any questions.

Organisational profile (5 mins)

- 1 Gather information about each organisation. Confirm information on sector and subcontract/prime elsewhere from sample.

Sector - Public, private or voluntary	
Size – number of employees	
Specialist or generalist – if specialist, which group(s)	
% of organisation’s funding from Work Programme	
% of organisation’s funding from DWP contracts	
List of other DWP (sub)contracts (eg Work Choice, Mandatory Work Activity, Community Action Programme, ESF families with multiple problems)	
Work Programme subcontract in other CPAs – yes/no	
Work Programme prime contract in other CPAs – yes/no	

Work programme commissioning experience (10 mins)

- 2 How effective were communications throughout the bidding process?
With DWP and Primes? Did this change throughout the bidding process? Suggestions for changes?
- 3 What was your organisation’s experience of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) with the Work Programme?
Probe: How was TUPE applied? When did you become aware of TUPE arrangements? Did this have an impact on your organisation / provision?
[Interviewer note: Primes took different approaches on whether TUPE applied. We want to understand the ongoing consequences of these decisions. In the earlier Commissioning interviews some subs reported not realising that they would have to take on new staff under TUPE until after they had become WP subs and therefore decided to leave the supply chain.]
- 4 Were you named in any successful bids but subsequently not part of these supply chains? If yes, why was this? How was it handled?

Delivery model and supply chain (20 mins)

- 5 What is your current role in delivery of the Work Programme (in this CPA)?
What services do they provide?
Whether they cover rural and/or urban areas and number of claimants.
Use of any subcontractors of their own for delivery (including details).
Probe for details of how they see their role in the supply chain(s) as compared to the roles of their supply chain partners.
- 6 Is this model of provision and system(s) prescribed by your prime provider(s)?
If applicable: is your delivery model the same for other primes/when you are a prime?
Is there flexibility for innovation in your delivery model? If yes, how does this work?
Has this model changed since programme go-live? If so, how and why?
What is the impact of differential pricing for different groups?
- 7 Has there been any change to your Work Programme role since programme go-live (i.e. have you left or joined any supply chains, or started or stopped using any subcontractors of your own)?
If so, what were the reasons for this?
Prompt if necessary: level of investment required, geographical coverage required, performance issues, financial risk, inability to agree terms with prime, etc.
Are there any forthcoming planned changes to your role in the supply chain(s) or to using subcontractors of your own?
- 8 What information system(s) for managing customer information do you use for the Work Programme?
Is this system prescribed by your prime provider(s)?
How does this help or hinder your delivery?
- 9 Do you feel the delivery model allows you to meet the full range of claimant needs?
Ask for specific examples.
Probe re: assessment / analysis of customer needs,
Collection and use of claimant feedback,
Use of specialist / tier two organisations and how this is managed,
Use of personalisation of services to best meet what claimants need and/or want.
- 10 On what basis is your organisation paid for the services it provides for the Work Programme?
Probe whether the outcome based funding model is passed directly on from the prime.
[Interviewer note: tell participant that impact of the financial model will be discussed in depth next wave and we just need a brief answer in this interview.]
- 11 How are the referrals you receive determined by your prime provider(s)?
Probe whether based on claimant need or geography. Has this changed since programme go-live?
If so, how and why? What has the impact been on delivery?
Have you been receiving a higher or lower number of referrals than expected? If yes, has this changed over time?
Have you been receiving the type of referrals that you were expecting? If no, what has been different to your expectations?
What has the impact of the type and number of referrals you have received been on delivery?

- 12 How would you describe your relationship with your prime provider(s)?
 Has your prime provider(s) undertaken any activities with your staff aimed to develop their capacity / capabilities and improve delivery? If yes, probe for details and effectiveness.
 Is good practice shared?
 Do you share experiences of what doesn't work?
 If so, how does this work and how does it affect your delivery?
 Have there been any specific concerns or disputes that have needed to be addressed? If yes, probe for details, processes to resolve and effectiveness.
- 13 Are you aware of the Merlin Standard?
 If yes, what has been your experience with it?
 [Prompt: Merlin Standard Assessment - due to take place between March and June 2012), Merlin Inspection, or the Merlin Pilot Assessment]
If been involved: Have you any specific comments on process or outcomes?
Ask all: Overall, how effective do you feel the Merlin Standard is in promoting effective supply chain development and management?
- 14 What is your relationship with the other subcontractors in your supply chain(s)?
How, if at all, is your relationship with other subcontractors influenced by your prime provider(s)?
Are you subject to competition with other subcontractors? If so, how does this work and how does it affect your delivery?
Do you share good practice?
Do you share experiences of what doesn't work?
If so, how does this work and how does it affect your delivery?
- 15 What is your relationship with other local partners (e.g. Local Authorities, third sector organisations, employers)?
Probe: are any of these contractual relationships?
Have there been any changes to these relationships since programme go-live?

Working with DWP (5 mins)

- 16 Do you have any direct contact with DWP/JCP or are communications channelled through your prime provider(s)?
Probe for details if have any direct contact with DWP or JCP including Third Party Provision Managers, Partnership Managers.
What impact do these relationships have on the way you work (in terms of internal processes / systems and the level / type of support you provide)?
What impact does working via a prime model rather than directly with DWP have on the way you work (in terms of internal processes / systems and the level / type of support you provide)?
[Interviewer note: In other DWP commissioning research, subcontractors have stated that they much prefer direct contact with DWP/JCP than through Primes, it would be useful to know if this is the case in Work Programme, or with different types of Primes. Eg, do subs of managing agent primes have some direct contact with DWP/JCP?]

Overall impact (5 mins)

17 Overall, what impact do you feel the Work Programme commissioning model (Larger, longer contracts for providers; Prime provider model; Outcome-based funding Limited prescription from DWP ('Black Box' model)) have had on your organisation?

Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities?

How have you responded?

Have you sought to change your business model or capacity to better meet DWP's commissioning principles?

18 What are your future intentions with regard to DWP commissioned Welfare to Work provision?

Do you intend to try to expand your involvement in the Work Programme / other programmes in the future?

Close

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, the findings, both in the final report and in earlier drafts, will be anonymised so that no interviewees or providers can be identified.).
- Indicate that they may be re-contacted for future waves of the evaluation and/or for other strands.
- Thank them for their time.

Technical appendix C

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders & leavers fieldwork – wave 1

NON-BIDDER PRIMES TOPIC GUIDE

Interviewer notes

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.

Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail as appropriate.

Key questions which must be asked are in bold

Non-bidders primes are organisations that are on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services but chose not to bid to provide the Work Programme.

Some of these may now be subcontractors in other supply chains.

In the interview, focus on specifics and getting examples of what the impact has been on the organisation and what they are doing about this.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank them for agreeing to talk to us.
- Explain that Inclusion have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- We want to ask about the experience and destination of their organisation following the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- The interview will last a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes from this interview that are used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews. Therefore their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

About the interview (READ OUT)

For this part of the research we are interested in understanding the experiences of organisations that did not bid to provide the Work Programme or were unsuccessful in their bid.

Therefore, can I just confirm that your organisation is on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services but did not bid to deliver the Work Programme as a prime provider? *If they bid but were unsuccessful use 'Unsuccessful Primes guide'.*

In this interview I'd like to focus on your experiences of the DWP commissioning process and reasons for not bidding for the Work Programme as a prime provider.

Organisational profile (5 mins)

- 1 Can you please tell me about briefly about your organisation?
Prompt for
 - organisation's type: public, private or third sector.
 - organisation's size: turnover and approximate numbers of employees.
 - geographical coverage
 - urban and/or rural areas
- 2 What, if any, other employment related services have you delivered in the past?
Probe for: Flexible New Deal, Employment Zones, New Deals (e.g. NDLP, ND25+, NDYP, ND50+, NDDP), Pathways to Work, Progress2Work, or other relevant service provision?
Customer volumes and geography of customers supported (just overview, not detail).
[Interviewer note: Q2 and Q3 are seeking to gauge the extent of previous experience, expertise and level of dependence on DWP funding rather than exact detail.]
- 3 What employment related or other relevant service provision do you currently deliver?
Probe for Jobcentre Plus support contract and other DWP (e.g. Work Choice, ESF support for families with multiple problems) and non-DWP funded and source of funding to establish how dependent they are on DWP funding.

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

Work Programme commissioning experience (15 mins)

I would now like to ask some questions about the commissioning model used for the Work Programme and how your organisation responded. As you will be aware, the Work Programme was the first employment programme to be procured under the ‘Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Support Services’. This was part of DWP’s Commissioning Strategy which introduced:

- Larger, longer contracts for providers
- Prime provider model
- Outcome-based funding
- Limited prescription from DWP (‘Black Box’ model)

4 What were the reasons why your organisation applied to be on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services in 2010?

5 **What were the reasons why your organisation didn’t bid for the Work Programme as a Prime provider?**

Prompt: revenue too low, financial risk too high, concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, did not fit with company ethos, etc.

Probe whether they ever considered bidding and, if so, in what areas and why and when they decided not to.

[Interviewer note: this is the key question in this guide. Probe for details and examples e.g. why were financial risk too high, how did they assess this and reach this decision when others did not?]

6 **Did you seek to become a subcontractor for the Work Programme?**

If no to Q6:

7 **What were the reasons why you didn’t seek to be a subcontractor?**

Prompt: financial risk too high, concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, did not fit with company ethos, terms and conditions from the prime not acceptable, funding or revenue too low, etc.

Probe whether they ever considered expressing an interest to a prime and, if so, why they decided not to.

Probe for details and examples of how they reached this decision.

If yes to Q6:

8 What were the reasons why you sought to be a subcontractor?

Interviewer note: Keep answers here very brief.

9 What subcontracting opportunities did you pursue?

Probe: number of areas/ primes expressed an interest with.

10 What type of service did you seek to provide?

End-to-end, specialist?

Was this specified in the expression of interest?

Type of contract (call-off, formal)?

What were the funding terms (outcome based or service fee?)

11 Were you successful in becoming a subcontractor

Probe for whether they were unsuccessful in their EOI with the prime or whether the prime’s bid was unsuccessful with DWP, or if successful extent of subcontracting role.

[Interviewer note: Keep answers here brief as not main focus of this interview.]

24 Technical appendices – Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

- 12 How effective were communications throughout the bidding process
Prompt: for both the Framework and Work Programme. Did this change throughout the bidding process?
Suggestions for improvement?
- 13 How did your experience of the Work Programme commissioning cycle differ to previous experience of DWP commissioning?
[Interviewer note: for those not involved in FND or Work Choice this could have been very different to their previous experience.]
- 14 What, if anything, would DWP have needed to do differently in order for your organisation to have submitted a bid for the Work Programme as a prime provider?
- 15 **What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the bidding and commissioning process in the future?**
Probe for improvements by DWP (if appropriate: other primes), include reasons and examples.

Work Programme commissioning impact and destination (10 minutes)

- 16 **In general, what impact do you feel the new DWP commissioning model has had on your organisation?**
Including both the framework and the overall commissioning model.
Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities? How have you responded?
- 17 **Have you sought to change your business model or improve your organisation's capability in order to meet DWP's commissioning principles?**
If no, why not?
If yes, how? Probe around following areas: supply chain management, improved performance (more job outcomes), partnership working, investment in staff capability, financial strength/access to capital.
If yes, why? Probe around whether a result of not bidding as a prime or (if applicable) being unsuccessful as a sub.
How successful has this been?
[Interviewer note: Probe for details and examples here]
- 18 **In general, how commercially attractive is the DWP commissioned Welfare to Work sector at present?**
Probe for examples, reasons and WP in particular.
- 19 How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme as a prime provider will impact on the future of your organisation?
Probe: will this affect delivery of other employment related provision?
[Interviewer note: some may be delivering the Work Programme in another area as a subcontractor, so probe for local and wider impacts.]
- 20 How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme as a Prime provider will impact on the future of service delivery for customers?
Probe: will your services be lost or replaced by someone else? In what way will your lack of involvement be detrimental to customers?
[Interviewer note: Keep answers here brief and ask respondents to justify responses, e.g. why their lack of involvement is detrimental?]

21 **What are your future intentions with regard to DWP commissioned Welfare to Work provision?**

Do you intend to try to:

a) *enter the supply chains for the Work Programme in the future? For example, to deliver on behalf of another subcontractor or prime? If not, why not?*

b) *provide other programmes? If not, why not?*

If neither, what other sectors or types of work do you intend to turn to and why?

Close

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, containing anonymised findings).
- If delivering the Work Programme in another supply chain, reiterate that organisations delivering the Work Programme may be contacted about their experiences of this next summer.
- Thank them for their time.

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders & leavers fieldwork– wave 1

NON-BIDDER SUBCONTRACTORS TOPIC GUIDE

Interviewer notes

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.

Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail as appropriate.

Key questions which must be asked are in bold

Non-bidder subcontractors are organisations who were involved in the delivery of legacy programmes (New Deals, Employment Zones, Flexible New Deal, Pathways to Work or Progress2Work) or the Jobcentre Plus Support Contract but were not named in any prime's bid for Work Programme. This will include those that did not try to join a supply chain and those who tried to join a supply chain but failed.

In the interview, focus on specifics and getting examples of what the impact has been on the organisation and what they are doing about this.

Introduce yourself and thank them for agreeing to talk to us.

About the interview (READ OUT)

For this part of the research we are interested in understanding the experiences of organisations that did not bid to provide the Work Programme or were unsuccessful in their bid.

Therefore, can I just confirm that your organisation is not currently delivering the Work Programme?

If yes, terminate the interview and explain that at this stage we are only interested in the views of organisations that were unsuccessful or did not seek to deliver the Work Programme. They may be contacted next year when interviews are carried out with organisations delivering the Work Programme.

Can I also confirm that your organisation was not named as a sub-contractor in a bid for the Work Programme?

- *If named as a sub in a primes bid that was unsuccessful, use 'unsuccessful subcontractors' guide.*

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

Did you try to join a prime's supply chain?

- *If tried to join a supply chain but was not named in the primes bid, use 'unsuccessful subcontractors' guide.*
- *If they did not try to join a supply chain, use this guide.*

In this interview I'd like to focus on your views of the DWP commissioning process and its impact on your organisation.

Introduction

- Explain that Inclusion have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- We want to ask about the experience and destination of their organisation following the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- The interview will last a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes from this interview that are used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews. Therefore their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

Organisational profile (5 mins)

1 Can you please tell me about briefly about your organisation?

Prompt for

- *organisation's type: public, private or third sector.*
- *organisation's size: turnover and approximate numbers of employees.*
- *geographical coverage*
- *urban and/or rural areas*

28 Technical appendices – Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

- 2 What, if any, other employment related services have you delivered in the past?
Probe for: Flexible New Deal, Employment Zones, New Deals (e.g. NDLP, ND25+, NDYP, ND50+, NDDP), Pathways to Work, Progress2Work, or other relevant service provision? Customer volumes and geography of customers supported (just overview, not detail).
[Interviewer note: Q2 and Q3 are seeking to gauge the extent of previous experience, expertise and level of dependence on DWP funding rather than exact detail.]
- 3 What employment related or other relevant service provision do you currently deliver?
Probe for Jobcentre Plus support contract and other DWP (e.g. Work Choice, ESF support for families with multiple problems) and non-DWP funded and source of funding to establish how dependent they are on DWP funding.

Work Programme commissioning experience (15 mins)

I would now like to ask some questions about the commissioning model used for the Work Programme and how your organisation responded. As you will be aware, the Work Programme was the first employment programme to be procured under the ‘Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Support Services’. This was part of DWP’s Commissioning Strategy which introduced:

- Larger, longer contracts for providers
 - Prime provider model
 - Outcome-based funding
 - Limited prescription from DWP (‘Black Box’ model)
- 4 Did your organisation apply to be on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services in 2010?

If no to Q4:

- 5 What were the reasons why you didn’t bid?
Prompt: organisation’s size, financial capability, experience of managing a supply chain, , concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, did not fit with company ethos, etc.
Probe whether they ever considered bidding and, if so, why they decided not to.
[Interviewer note: for many organisations subcontracting will represent their natural level in the market and so for these there will be little to explore in this question]

If yes to Q4:

- 6 What were the reasons why you decided to bid?
- 7 What do you think the reasons were for your lack of success?
Prompt if necessary: organisation’s size, financial capability/ level of investment required, experience of managing a supply chain, geographical coverage required, etc.

- 8 **What were the reasons why you didn’t seek to become a subcontractor?**
Prompt: financial risk too high, concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, did not fit with company ethos, terms and conditions from the prime not acceptable, funding or revenue too low, etc.
Probe whether they ever considered bidding and, if so, why they decided not to.
Probe for details and examples of how they reached this decision.
[Interviewer note: this is the key question in this guide. Probe for details and examples e.g. why were financial risk to high, how did they assess this and reach this decision when others did not?]

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

- 9 *(If applicable)* How effective were communications throughout the bidding process With DWP and Primes? Did this change throughout the bidding process? Suggestions for improvement?
- 10 *(If applicable)* How did your experience of the Work Programme commissioning cycle differ to previous experience of DWP commissioning?
[Interviewer note: for those not involved in FND or Work Choice this could have been very different to their previous experience.]
- 11 **What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the bidding and commissioning process in the future?**
Probe for improvements by DWP and Primes, include reasons and examples, e.g. EOI process for subs.

Work Programme commissioning impact and destination (10 minutes)

- 12 **In general, what impact do you feel the new DWP commissioning model has had on your organisation?**
*Including both the framework and the overall commissioning model.
 Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities? How have you responded?*
- 13 **Have you sought to change your business model or improve your organisation’s capability in order to meet DWP’s commissioning principles?**
*If no, why not?
 If yes, how and why? Probe around following areas: improved performance (more job outcomes), partnership working, investment in staff capability, financial strength/access to capital.
 How successful has this been?*
[Interviewer note: Probe for details and examples here]
- 14 **In general, how commercially attractive is the DWP commissioned Welfare to Work sector at present?**
Probe for examples, reasons and WP in particular.
- 15 How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme will impact on the future of your organisation?
Probe: will this affect delivery of other employment related provision?
- 16 How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme will impact on the future of service delivery for customers?
Probe: will your services be lost or replaced by someone else? In what way will your lack of involvement be detrimental to customers?
[Interviewer note: Keep answers here brief and ask respondents to justify responses, e.g. why their lack of involvement is detrimental?]
- 17 **What are your future intentions with regard to DWP commissioned Welfare to Work provision?**
Do you intend to try to:
- c) enter the supply chains for the Work Programme in the future? For example, to deliver on behalf of another subcontractor or prime? If not, why not?
 - d) provide other programmes? If not, why not?
- If neither, what other sectors or types of work do you intend to turn to and why?*

Close

30 Technical appendices – Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, containing anonymised findings).
- Thank them for their time.

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders & leavers fieldwork – wave 1

UNSUCCESSFUL PRIMES TOPIC GUIDE

Interviewer notes

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.

Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail as appropriate.

Key questions which must be asked are in bold

Unsuccessful primes are organisations that are on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services and bid to deliver the Work Programme, but did not receive any contracts. 17 out of 35 regional preferred suppliers on the Framework did not win WP contracts. Some of these may now be subcontractors in other supply chains.

In the interview, focus on specifics and getting examples of what the impact has been on the organisation and what they are doing about this.

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and thank them for agreeing to talk to us.
- Explain that *Inclusion* have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- We want to ask about the experience and destination of their organisation following the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- The interview will last a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes from this interview that are used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews. Therefore their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

About the interview (READ OUT)

For this part of the research we are interested in understanding the experiences of organisations that did not bid to provide the Work Programme or were unsuccessful in their bid.

Therefore, can I just confirm that your organisation is on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services and bid to deliver the Work Programme as a prime provider?

If they are on the framework but didn't bid to deliver the Work Programme as a prime provider use the non-bidder prime guide.

What was the outcome of your bid(s)?

Probe for number of contracts bid for (Prime & sub contracts) and outcomes.

In this interview I'd like to focus on your experiences of bidding for the Work Programme as a prime provider which was unsuccessful. We will be capturing the experiences of organisations delivering the Work Programme in interviews next summer.

Organisational profile (5 mins)

18 Can you please tell me about briefly about your organisation?

Prompt for

- organisation's type: public, private or third sector.*
- organisation's size: turnover and approximate numbers of employees.*
- geographical coverage*
- urban and/or rural areas*

19 What, if any, other employment related services have you delivered in the past?

Probe for: Flexible New Deal, Employment Zones, New Deals (e.g. NDLP, ND25+, NDYP, ND50+, NDDP), Pathways to Work, Progress2Work, or other relevant service provision?

Customer volumes and geography of customers supported (just overview, not detail).

[Interviewer note: Q2 and Q3 are seeking to gauge the extent of previous experience, expertise and level of dependence on DWP funding rather than exact detail.]

20 What employment related or other relevant service provision do you currently deliver?

Probe for Jobcentre Plus support contract and other DWP (e.g. Work Choice, ESF support for families with multiple problems) and non-DWP funded and source of funding to establish how dependent they are on DWP funding.

Work Programme commissioning experience (15 mins)

I would now like to ask some questions about the commissioning model used for the Work Programme and how your organisation responded. As you will be aware, the Work Programme was the first employment programme to be procured under the 'Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Support Services'. This was part of DWP's Commissioning Strategy which introduced:

- Larger, longer contracts for providers*
- Prime provider model*
- Outcome-based funding*
- Limited prescription from DWP ('Black Box' model)*

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

21 What were the reasons why your organisation decided to bid for the Work Programme as a Prime provider?

[Interviewer note: Keep answers here very brief]

22 Where did you bid to become a prime provider?

May have bid in more than one area so probe for details of all.

23 **What do you think the reasons were for your lack of success?**

Prompt if necessary: price (i.e. too expensive), level of investment required, geographical coverage required, level of financial risk, inability to organise appropriate supply chain, etc.

Explore details for each bid if more than one made.

What reasons, if any, were given by DWP?

24 **Did you seek to become a subcontractor for the Work Programme?**

If no to Q7:

25 **What were the reasons why you didn't seek to become a subcontractor?**

Prompt: focused on prime bid, financial risk too high, concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, did not fit with company ethos, terms and conditions from the prime not acceptable, funding or revenue too low, etc.

Probe whether they ever considered bidding and, if so, why they decided not to.

If yes to Q7:

26 What were the reasons why you sought to be a subcontractor?

[Interviewer note: Keep answers here very brief]

27 What subcontracting opportunities did you pursue?

Probe: number of areas/ primes expressed an interest with.

28 What type of service did you seek to provide?

End-to-end, specialist?

Was this specified in the expression of interest?

Type of contract (call-off, formal)?

What were the funding terms (outcome based or service fee?)

29 Were you successful in becoming a subcontractor

Probe for whether they were unsuccessful in their EOI with the prime or whether the prime's bid was unsuccessful with DWP, or if successful extent of subcontracting role.

[Interviewer note: Keep answers here brief as not main focus of this interview.]

30 **Overall, how effective were communications throughout the bidding process**

With DWP and Subs? Did this change throughout the bidding process?

Suggestions for improvement?

31 **How did your experience of the Work Programme commissioning cycle differ to previous experience of DWP commissioning?**

[Interviewer note: for those not involved in FND or Work Choice this could have been very different to their previous experience.]

32 **What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the bidding and commissioning process in the future?**

Probe for improvements by DWP (if appropriate: other primes), include reasons and examples.

34 Technical appendices – Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

Work Programme commissioning impact and destination (10 minutes)

33 **In general, what impact do you feel the new DWP commissioning model has had on your organisation?**

Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities? How have you responded?

34 **Have you sought to change your business model or improve your organisation's capability in order to meet DWP's commissioning principles?**

If no, why not?

If yes, how? Probe around following area: were changes to supply chain management, improved performance (more job outcomes), partnership working, investment in staff capability, financial strength/access to capital.

If yes, why? Probe around whether a result of being unsuccessful as either a prime or sub. How successful has this been?

[Interviewer note: Probe for details and examples here]

35 **In general, how commercially attractive is the DWP commissioned Welfare to Work sector at present?**

Probe for examples, reasons and WP in particular.

36 **How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme as a prime provider will impact on the future of your organisation?**

Probe: will this affect delivery of other employment related provision?

[Interviewer note: some may be delivering the Work Programme in another area as a subcontractor, so probe for local and wider impacts.]

37 **How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme (in this region) will impact on the future of service delivery for customers?**

Probe: will your services be lost or replaced by someone else? In what way will your lack of involvement be detrimental to customers?

[Interviewer note: Keep answers here brief and ask respondents to justify responses, e.g. why their lack of involvement is detrimental?]

38 **What are your future intentions with regard to DWP commissioned Welfare to Work provision?**

Do you intend to try to:

e) enter the supply chains for the Work Programme in the future? For example, to deliver on behalf of another subcontractor or prime? If not, why not?

f) provide other programmes? If not, why not?

If neither, what other sectors or types of work do you intend to turn to and why?

Close

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, containing anonymised findings).
- If delivering the Work Programme in another supply chain, reiterate that organisations delivering the Work Programme may be contacted about their experiences of this next summer.
- Thank them for their time.

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders & leavers fieldwork – wave 1

UNSUCCESSFUL SUBCONTRACTORS TOPIC GUIDE

Interviewer notes

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.

Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail as appropriate.

Key questions which must be asked are in bold

Unsuccessful subcontractors are organisations who sought to become a subcontractor for the Work Programme but did not achieve a place in any successful supply chains. N.B. This will not capture providers who attempted to join a bidding prime's supply chain but failed. These will be picked up as 'non-bidders'.

In the interview, focus on specifics and getting examples of what the impact has been on the organisation and what they are doing about this.

Introduce yourself and thank them for agreeing to talk to us.

About the interview (READ OUT)

For this part of the research we are interested in understanding the experiences of organisations that are not delivering the Work Programme. This may be because they did not seek to provide the Work Programme or were part of an unsuccessful supply chain.

Therefore, can I just confirm that your organisation is not currently delivering the Work Programme?

If yes, terminate the interview and explain that at this stage we are only interested in the views of organisations that were unsuccessful or did not seek to deliver the Work Programme. They may be contacted next year when interviews are carried out with organisations delivering the Work Programme.

Can I also check that your organisation was included in the supply chain of a prime provider bidding for the Work Programme whose bid was unsuccessful?

- If they didn't try to join a supply chain, please use the 'subcontractors non-bidders' topic guide.
- If yes, use this guide.

In this interview I'd like to focus on your experiences of the DWP commissioning process and its impact on your organisation.

Introduction

- Explain that Inclusion have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- We want to ask about the experience and destination of their organisation following the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- The interview will last a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes from this interview that are used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews. Therefore their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

Organisational profile (5 mins)

- 1 Can you please tell me about briefly about your organisation?
Prompt for
 - *organisation's type: public, private or third sector.*
 - *organisation's size: turnover and approximate numbers of employees.*
 - *geographical coverage*
 - *urban and/or rural areas*
- 2 What, if any, other employment related services have you delivered in the past?
Probe for: Flexible New Deal, Employment Zones, New Deals (e.g. NDLP, ND25+, NDYP, ND50+, NDDP), Pathways to Work, Progress2Work, or other relevant service provision?
Customer volumes and geography of customers supported (just overview, not detail).
[Interviewer note: Q2 and Q3 are seeking to gauge the extent of previous experience, expertise and level of dependence on DWP funding rather than exact detail.]
- 3 What employment related or other relevant service provision do you currently deliver?
Probe for Jobcentre Plus support contract and other DWP (e.g. Work Choice, ESF support for families with multiple problems) and non-DWP funded and source of funding to establish how dependent they are on DWP funding.

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

Work Programme commissioning experience (15 mins)

I would now like to ask some questions about the commissioning model used for the Work Programme and how your organisation responded. As you will be aware, the Work Programme was the first employment programme to be procured under the ‘Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Support Services’. This was part of DWP’s Commissioning Strategy which introduced:

- Larger, longer contracts for providers
 - Prime provider model
 - Outcome-based funding
 - Limited prescription from DWP (‘Black Box’ model)
- 4 Did your organisation apply to be on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services in 2010?

If no to Q4:

- 5 What were the reasons why you didn’t bid?
Prompt: organisation’s size, financial capability, experience of managing a supply chain, concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, did not fit with company ethos, etc.
Probe whether they ever considered bidding and, if so, why they decided not to.
[Interviewer note: for many organisations subcontracting will represent their natural level in the market and so for these there will be little to explore in this question]

If yes to Q4:

- 6 What were the reasons why you decided to bid?
- 7 What do you think the reasons were for your lack of success?
Prompt if necessary: organisation’s size, financial capability/ level of investment required, experience of managing a supply chain, geographical coverage required, etc.
- 8 What subcontracting opportunities did you pursue?
Probe: number of areas/ primes expressed an interest with.
- 9 What type of service did you seek to provide?
End-to-end, specialist?
Was this specified in the expression of interest?
Type of contract (call-off/spot purchase, formal)?
What were the funding terms (outcome based or service fee?)
(If they did not succeed in joining a supply chain)
- 10 **At what stage were you unsuccessful?**
Probe for how far negotiations had reached with prime and whether they completed an expression of interest?
(If they did not succeed in joining a supply chain)
- 11 **What do you think the reasons were for your lack of success?**
Prompt if necessary: price, level of investment required, geographical coverage required, inability to agree terms with prime, etc.
Probe for what prevented their organisation from getting onto a supply chain compared with other organisations.
(If they joined a supply chain that was unsuccessful with DWP)

38 Technical appendices – Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

- 12 What do you think the reasons were for the prime provider's bid being unsuccessful with DWP?
Prompt if necessary: price (i.e. too expensive), level of investment required, geographical coverage required, level of financial risk, inability to organise appropriate supply chain, etc.
Explore details for each bid if more than one made.
What reasons, if any, were given by DWP?
- 13 **How effective were communications throughout the bidding process**
With DWP and Primes? Did this change throughout the bidding process?
Suggestions for improvement?
- 14 **How did your experience of the Work Programme commissioning cycle differ to previous experience of DWP commissioning?**
[Interviewer note: for those not involved in FND or Work Choice this could have been very different to their previous experience.]
- 15 **What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the bidding and commissioning process in the future?**
Probe for improvements by DWP and Primes, include reasons and examples e.g. EOI process for subs.

Work Programme commissioning impact and destination (10 minutes)

- 16 **In general, what impact do you feel the new DWP commissioning model has had on your organisation?**
Including both the framework and the overall commissioning model.
Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities? How have you responded?
- 17 **Have you sought to change your business model or improve your organisation's capability in order to meet DWP's commissioning principles?**
If no, why not?
If yes, how? Probe around following areas: improved performance (more job outcomes), partnership working, investment in staff capability, financial strength/access to capital.
How successful has this been?
If yes, why? Probe around whether this was the result of being unsuccessful as a sub?
[Interviewer note: Probe for details and examples here.]
- 18 **In general, how commercially attractive is the DWP commissioned Welfare to Work sector at present?**
Probe for examples, reasons and WP in particular.
- 19 How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme will impact on the future of your organisation?
Probe: will this affect delivery of other employment related provision?
- 20 **How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme will impact on the future of service delivery for customers?**
Probe: will your services be lost or replaced by someone else? In what way will your lack of involvement be detrimental to customers?
[Interviewer note: Keep answers here brief and ask respondents to justify responses, e.g. why their lack of involvement is detrimental?]

21 **What are your future intentions with regard to DWP commissioned Welfare to Work provision?**

Do you intend to try to:

g) enter the supply chains for the Work Programme in the future? For example, to deliver on behalf of another subcontractor or prime? If not, why not?

h) provide other programmes? If not, why not?

If neither, what other sectors or types of work do you intend to turn to and why?

Close

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, containing anonymised findings).
- If delivering the Work Programme in another supply chain, reiterate that organisations delivering the Work Programme may be contacted about their experiences of this next summer. **NB should not be applicable for this sample group.**
- Thank them for their time.

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders & leavers fieldwork – wave 1

SUPPLY CHAIN LEAVERS TOPIC GUIDE

Interviewer notes

This document is a guide to the principal themes and issues to be covered.

Questions can be modified and followed up in more detail as appropriate.

Key questions which must be asked are in bold

Supply chain leavers are organisations that were in a prime provider's supply chain at the start of Work Programme delivery, but have since left the supply chain.

They may be delivering the Work Programme in another supply chain.

In the interview, focus on specifics and getting examples of what the impact has been on the organisation and what they are doing about this.

Key questions which must be asked are in bold

Introduce yourself and thank them for agreeing to talk to us.

About the interview (READ OUT)

For this part of the research we are interested in understanding the experiences of organisations that were in a prime provider's supply chain at the start of the Work Programme delivery, but have since left the supply chain.

Can I just confirm that your organisation was in a Work Programme supply chain, but has since left that supply chain?

If no, (still in (all) supply chain(s), terminate interview and explain that at this stage we are only interested in the views of organisations who have left a supply chain. They may be contacted next year when interviews are carried out with organisations delivering the Work Programme.

(If yes) Are you still delivering the Work Programme as a subcontractor in another supply chain? Probe for regions and size of contracts.

This interview will focus only on your experiences of leaving a supply chain and the commissioning process. We will be capturing the experiences of organisations delivering the Work Programme in interviews next summer.

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

Introduction

- Explain that Inclusion have been commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- We want to ask about the experience and destination of their organisation following the commissioning of the Work Programme.
- The interview will last a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Participation is optional and they can stop the interview or decline to answer specific individual questions at any time should they wish.

Confidentiality and Consent

- Explain that the findings will be written up into a report for DWP which will be published in the DWP Research Report Series.
- Any views and quotes from this interview that are used in the report will be combined with views and quotes from other interviews. Therefore their name and organisation's name (or anything else that could identify them) will not be used.
- We are undertaking this work on behalf of DWP but no information that could identify them will be shared with DWP.
- We would prefer to record the interview as this helps us to capture exactly what they have said. Ask if they are comfortable with that.
- **Ask them to verbally confirm that they understand the purpose and confidentiality of the research and that they are happy to take part.**
- Ask if they have any questions.

Organisational profile (5 mins)

- 1 Can you please tell me briefly about your organisation?
Prompt for
 - *organisation's type: public, private or third sector.*
 - *organisation's size: turnover and approximate numbers of employees.*
 - *geographical coverage*
 - *urban and/or rural areas*
- 2 What, if any, other employment related services have you delivered in the past?
Probe for: Flexible New Deal, Employment Zones, New Deals (e.g. NDLP, ND25+, NDYP, ND50+, NDDP), Pathways to Work, Progress2Work, or other relevant service provision?
Customer volumes and geography of customers supported (just overview, not detail).
[Interviewer note: Q2 and Q3 are seeking to gauge the extent of previous experience, expertise and level of dependence on DWP funding rather than exact detail.]
- 3 What employment related or other relevant service provision do you currently deliver?
Probe for Jobcentre Plus support contract and other DWP (e.g. Work Choice, ESF support for families with multiple problems) and non-DWP funded and source of funding to establish how dependent they are on DWP funding.

Work Programme commissioning experience (15 minutes)

I would now like to ask some questions about the commissioning model used for the Work Programme and how your organisation responded. As you will be aware, the Work Programme was the first employment programme to be procured under the 'Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Support Services'. This was part of DWP's Commissioning Strategy which introduced:

- Larger, longer contracts for providers
- Prime provider model
- Outcome-based funding
- Limited prescription from DWP ('Black Box' model)

4 Did your organisation apply to be on the Framework for the Provision of Employment Related Services?

If no to Q4:

5 What were the reasons why you didn't bid?

Prompt: organisation's size, financial capability, experience of managing a supply chain, , concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, did not fit with company ethos, etc.

Probe whether they ever considered bidding and, if so, why they decided not to.

[Interviewer note: for many organisations subcontracting will represent their natural level in the market and so for these there will be little to explore in this question]

If yes to Q4:

6 What were the reasons why you decided to bid?

7 What do you think the reasons were for your lack of success?

Prompt if necessary: organisation's size, financial capability/ level of investment required, experience of managing a supply chain, geographical coverage required, etc.

8 How did your organisation go about becoming a sub-contractor for the Work Programme?

Probe for whether they utilised existing relationships or built new ones?

The number of areas they bid for, how many were successful?

9 How was the relationship with the prime provider(s) at that stage?

10 How effective were communications throughout the bidding process

With DWP and Primes? Did this change throughout the bidding process?

Suggestions for improvement?

11 When did your organisation leave the supply chain?

12 Why did your organisation leave the supply chain?

Prompt if necessary: performance related issues, concerns about TUPE costs and liabilities, level of investment required, geographical coverage required, level of financial risk, inability to agree terms with prime, etc.

[Interviewer note: critical we get this information from every respondent in detail]

Probe: whose decision was it to leave – prime or subs? If prime how was this communicated and what was the process? E.g. if performance related issues did this follow a set of performance management process?

Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

- 13 **What, if anything, could have prevented your organisation from leaving the supply chain?**
- 14 **How did your experience of the Work Programme commissioning cycle differ to previous experience of DWP commissioning?**
[Interviewer note: for those not involved in FND or Work Choice this could have been very different to their previous experience.]

- 15 **What improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the bidding and commissioning process in the future?**
Probe for improvements by DWP and Primes, include reasons and examples, e.g. EOI process for subs.

Work Programme commissioning impact and destination (10 minutes)

- 16 **In general, what impact do you feel the new DWP commissioning model has had on your organisation?**
Probe: has it created barriers or opportunities? How have you responded?
- 17 **Have you sought to change your business model or improve your organisation's capability in order to meet DWP's commissioning principles?**
If no, why not?
If yes, how? Probe around following areas: improved performance (more job outcomes), partnership working, investment in staff capability, financial strength/access to capital.
If yes, why?
How successful has this been?
[Interviewer note: Probe for details and examples here]
- 18 **In general, how commercially attractive is the DWP commissioned Welfare to Work sector at present?**
Probe for examples, reasons and WP in particular.
- 19 **How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme (in this region) will impact on the future of your organisation?**
Probe: will this affect delivery of other employment related provision?
[Interviewer note: some may be delivering the Work Programme in another area as a subcontractor, so probe for local and wider impacts.]
- 20 **How do you think the fact that you are not involved in the Work Programme (in this region) will impact on the future of service delivery for customers?**
Probe: will your services be lost or replaced by someone else? In what way will your lack of involvement be detrimental to customers?
[Interviewer note: Keep answers here brief and ask respondents to justify responses, e.g. why their lack of involvement is detrimental?]
- 21 **What are your future intentions with regard to DWP commissioned Welfare to Work provision?**
Do you intend to try to:
 - i) enter the supply chains for the Work Programme in the future? For example, to deliver on behalf of another subcontractor or prime? If not, why not?
 - j) provide other programmes? If not, why not?*If neither, what other sectors or types of work do you intend to turn to and why?*

Close

44 Technical appendices – Unsuccessful bidders, non-bidders and leavers research tools

- **Ask if they have anything to add.**
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Reiterate how interview information will be used (a report for DWP, ultimately due for publication in the DWP Research Report Series, containing anonymised findings).
- If delivering the Work Programme in another supply chain, reiterate that organisations delivering the Work Programme may be contacted about their experiences of this next summer.
- Thank them for their time.

This report presents qualitative and quantitative research findings from the first phase of commissioning-focused research as part of an evaluation of the Work Programme, which was introduced across England, Scotland and Wales in June 2011.

The qualitative fieldwork was conducted in six of the eighteen Work Programme contract package areas, between late 2011 and summer 2012. This involved in-depth interviews with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Jobcentre Plus staff, and service providers inside and outside of the supply chain. The quantitative research involved a national online survey of Work Programme subcontractors. Together, the research examines the initial procurement process and the effects of the financial models and incentives used by DWP and prime providers to maximise performance.

This is the second in a series of evaluation reports aiming to understand experiences of the Work Programme from the point of view of claimants, Jobcentre Plus staff and provider staff, and to establish the extent to which the programme leads to additional employment outcomes. This research is part of a comprehensive evaluation of the Work Programme, commissioned in 2011 to provide an independent assessment of delivery and claimants' experiences and outcomes. Crucially, as an evaluation of a minimum prescription programme, the research focuses on how the Department's commissioning approach impacts on the provider market and influences service design and delivery.

If you would like to know more about DWP research, please email:
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