



**TYNE & WEAR
CITY REGION**
EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS

TYNE & WEAR CITY REGION EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

BUSINESS PLAN

12 February 07

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Consortium is a new strategic and delivery partnership, bringing together employers, local and national government agencies, and the voluntary and community sectors, to tackle worklessness and improve employability in the Tyne & Wear City Region. Giving employers, for the first time, a lead role in designing and delivering our strategy, we are taking a demand-led approach to give people real and sustainable opportunities to find and progress in work.

Bringing together and delivering key elements of national, regional and sub-regional strategies, we are also working with communities, through Local Strategic Partnerships, to identify and meet local needs, focusing our additional help on people in the 83 most deprived wards in the City Region.

Since securing DWP development funding in October 06, we have made significant progress – establishing a shadow board; agreeing a joint strategy with commitment at the highest level from all our partner organisations; gaining joint commitment to streamlining our activities and aligning funding; and appointing our Delivery Manager, who is driving our delivery plan forward. We have agreed our overall approach, and Task Groups, drawing on the expertise of partners from throughout the City Region, are working on our detailed delivery model, to translate our proposals into action.

Throughout the City Region, there are numerous examples of good practice, delivering excellent solutions for both employers and individuals. Our approach is based largely on those which have already proved very successful on a smaller scale within the City Region, and examples are illustrated throughout this document.

We face a range of challenges – addressing low rates of employment and skills; social deprivation and child poverty; and skills shortages; and engaging a wide range of employers with vacancies as well as changing their negative perceptions of our client group. Our three-pronged strategy addresses them from the employer, individual and partner perspectives. Our innovations include:

- **for employers** – a key role in developing strategy and provision, with a clear and persuasive business offer, tailored to meet their needs and minimise recruitment risks
- **for individuals** - providing a seamless journey from engagement to in- work development
- **for partners** – a new way of working, providing a ‘no wrong door’ approach for clients and employers

Beginning with our shared strategy and commitment to aligning our funding and activities, this business plan sets out the way forward towards closer integration of partners’ services over the coming year and beyond, moving from a competitive to a collaborative culture, to make a real and lasting difference to people’s lives.

Section 1 – VISION AND STRATEGY

1.1 Our Challenge

- 1.1.1 The Tyne and Wear City Region's most significant challenge is to address the low rate of employment, which, at 70.6%, stands at 3.8% below the average for England, and significantly below the national aspiration of 80%. Within this average, there are areas where over 40% of people receive working-age benefits (Byker, Monkchester, Walker, West City, Felling, Eden Hill and Horden North). Census data shows that the employment rate in some wards is as low as 35.6% (West City, Newcastle). A legacy of disadvantage caused by the decline in traditional industries and coal mining is proving inter-generational, with new patterns of inactivity affecting the same communities which suffered most from economic dislocations in the past. The position for young people aged 17-19 mirrors ward patterns of worklessness, and the number is rising.
- 1.1.2 Worklessness is a particular issue for those without qualifications – only 39% of unqualified adults in Tyne & Wear are in employment. It is estimated that 48% of people may not be qualified to NVQ Level 2 – regarded as the minimum benchmark for employability.
- 1.1.3 Social deprivation is also a key issue, with a quarter of the population (256,000 people) living in areas ranked amongst the 10% most deprived in the country. Economic activity is around 4% below the national average (74.4%), and unemployment around 2% above.
- 1.1.4 Child poverty is a significant issue for the City Region. DWP figures suggest that 32% of children live in families whose income is below the 60% median income poverty line, and the number of couples receiving benefits with children has risen by over 5,000 in the last four years. 305,361 children live in households receiving benefits.
- 1.1.5 As the make-up of the labour market changes (for example, it is estimated that, by 2011, only 20% of the working age population nationally will be white, male, non-disabled and under 45) and many employers are experiencing skills shortages, employers must consider recruiting from a wider labour pool in order to fill their vacancies.
- 1.1.6 Demand for higher-level skills is accelerating, and the number of jobs requiring low-level skills is rapidly decreasing. As a result, some businesses are being held back by the lack of job-ready recruits, and many are turning to Eastern Europe for their staff, although it is recognised that this is a short-term solution. Whilst there is a large pool of potential recruits locally, employers do not have a positive perception of this group. A key part of our challenge is to change this perception.

- 1.1.7 Research suggests that the current infrastructure is predominantly supply-focused, and there is significant scope to bring about a transformation to a more demand-driven approach.

1.2 Our Vision

- 1.2.1 Our vision for the future is for our City Region to have a confident, motivated and skilled workforce, where employers can recruit people with the skills they need; and where all adults and young people have equal access to sustainable job opportunities, giving families an improved quality of life.

1.3 Our Strategy

Strategic Objectives

- 1.3.1 The Employment Consortium partners will realise this vision by working closely together to provide a coherent range of services, tailored to meet employers' and individuals' needs, and to provide equality of opportunity for all those in our target groups. It places employers at the heart of strategy development, to ensure that their current and future needs are identified and that we can offer people real and sustainable employment opportunities.
- 1.3.2 Working within the existing strategic framework of the National Skills Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy, Skills Action Plan and emerging Employability Framework, our strategy encompasses three main groups – employers, individuals of working age, and partner organisations. It will build upon Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) priorities and Local Area Agreements (LAAs), and will be underpinned by a detailed delivery plan, setting out how we will work together to achieve our objectives, and how our progress will be measured.
- 1.3.3 **Helping Employers**

Our objective is to help employers fill their vacancies, recruiting from our target groups, whilst minimising the recruitment risks and costs of doing so.

We will implement an employer engagement strategy that will both strengthen existing partnerships with employers and also increase the number and range of employers participating in the consortium.

We will ensure that current and future labour market needs are identified, by:

- placing employers at the heart of developing employment strategy
- working with employers to develop long-term relationships and identify ongoing recruitment needs
- identifying and communicating skills needs for individual vacancies

We will engage more employers in providing opportunities for individuals from our target groups, by:

- ensuring that the support services available to the individuals trying to access employment are specifically designed to address employer need both in the short term and long term
- promoting the benefits of recruiting from alternative labour pools to businesses and business support organisations
- providing a seamless recruitment service, tailored to employers' and sectors' needs
- effecting a 'culture change' in employers to make more opportunities available to our key clients
- reducing the recruitment risks and costs for employers

We will support business start-up and self-employment, by:

- encouraging access to the advice and support available to people considering self-employment
- ensuring this service is available and of a quality fit for purpose
- work in partnership to ensure support organisations help micro- and small businesses to develop and flourish ultimately leading to the creation of greater opportunity to recruit and retain staff

1.3.4 Helping Individuals

Our objective is to increase the number of job-ready recruits from disadvantaged areas and groups, ensuring equality of opportunity for jobless residents.

We will ensure that all working-age residents¹ have access to achieving appropriate skills to take up employment opportunities. In particular, emphasis will be on ensuring residents from our identified priority communities are aware of the training and support available and how they can access it. We will do this by:

- identifying local needs, including those of the most disadvantaged groups
- providing appropriate support in each neighbourhood to meet identified needs
- providing individual solutions including cognitive behavioural therapy
- engaging with increasing numbers of individuals from our identified targeted communities to take up relevant development and training opportunities
- ensuring that those new to, or returning to the labour market have access to achieving the necessary skills for employment or self-employment

We will provide equality of opportunity for jobless residents, by:

¹ Aged 16+

- implementing an engagement strategy which engages increasing numbers of people in our targeted communities
- ensuring the engagement strategy actively engages in new and innovative ways with organisations from the private, public and, increasingly the community and voluntary sector
- ensuring there is a widely accessible and comprehensive range of advice, guidance and support to assist individuals to progress
- increasing information about job vacancies and the skills required to access them
- ensuring access to training opportunities
- encouraging self-employment and business start-up as an option for career development

1.3.5 Working in Partnership

Our objective is to provide a seamless service to employers and individuals, offering comprehensive tailored support to match jobless residents with sustainable jobs.

We will do this by:

- aligning strategy and funding to make most effective use of resources
- providing a seamless service offer to employers and individuals
- sharing, improving and building on labour market intelligence to develop support and provision to meet employer and individual needs
- working with the transport and regeneration strands of the City Region initiative to maximise opportunities for residents

1.3.6 A detailed Delivery Plan is currently being drawn up to include activities by all partner organisations to contribute to the achievement of each of these objectives. Task Groups, comprising representatives of our partner organisations, are developing our detailed delivery models for employers and individual clients, and the processes and systems which partners need to put in place to provide a seamless service offer to all our customers. High-level proposals have been developed, as outlined in Section 3 of this Business Plan, for detailed consultation with clients, employers and partners, to enable us to produce fully-developed plans for implementing them between January and March 07.

1.4 Monitoring Progress

1.4.1 Our Target and Performance Task Group is developing detailed targets, performance indicators and milestones to measure the Consortium's progress towards achieving these strategic objectives. However, in addition to statistical performance measures, we anticipate that significant milestones in our progress will include:

2007-08

- **common framework of priorities** and structure for aligning funds agreed
- **Deprived Area Fund** allocated in line with Consortium's strategy, and targeted interventions developed
- **commissioning and procurement strategy** agreed and implemented
- **performance targets** agreed
- **performance management system** agreed and implemented
- **initiatives implemented** demonstrating a progression routeway for individuals to access vacancies identified through the consortium
- **delivery plan** agreed, being implemented and monitored
- **increasing numbers of employers** engaged and actively participating in the delivery offered by the consortium

2008-09

- **alignment of significant funding streams** operational (eg Jobcentre Plus programme provision, LSC, Single Programme, European Social Fund)

2009-10

- each aspect of our services will be marketed under a **single partnership banner**
- Consortium provides strategic direction and is a key influencer for employability initiatives

2011-12

- **complete alignment of strategy and operations** embedded in partner organisations
- the City Region **Consortium Executive Board will direct use of City Region employability funding**

1.4.2 In addition, the Consortium, as the vehicle for delivering the Regional Employability Framework (see below) will implement activities in line with the timetable which will shortly be agreed, and will be a key partner in implementing appropriate recommendations of the Leitch review.

1.5 Links with Other Strategies

1.5.1 Because of our partners' and Board Members' key strategic roles in other regional and sub-regional groups, we can ensure that there is a clear strategic fit with other national, regional and sub-regional strategies and plans, and the Consortium plays a key role in delivering employability elements of those plans. They include:

1.5.2 Regional Economic Strategy (RES)

The RES includes adopting a City Region approach and the Consortium's activities will contribute to a number of specific RES objectives, including: developing collective regional leadership; enhancing the size and skills of the workforce; raising the level of economic participation in deprived communities; and implementing the Regional Employability Framework.

1.5.3 Regional Employability Framework

The Consortium has been developed in parallel with that of the Regional Employability Framework by ONE North East and its partners. It directly reflects this framework, and will be a key delivery vehicle for implementing it.

In particular, the Consortium will take forward three key elements of the framework:

- developing an integrated offer to employers which operates across organisational and geographical boundaries to provide employers with job-ready candidates
- strengthening joint working between intermediaries at local level to improve client engagement and target priority groups
- developing a robust approach to sharing information about clients and their progression across agencies.

Alongside the Consortium, progress will continue across the region to implement other aspects of the REF, in particular:

- implementing new approaches to contracting which will embed joint case management approaches and incentivise progression
- developing more effective measures to support retention and progression in employment

At the same time, regional partners will seek to embed the progress made by the Consortium in their working practices and identify ways to spread the benefit of this new way of working to the rest of the North East.

1.5.4 The Northern Way

The Consortium's activities support the Northern Way Growth Strategy of bringing more people into work by focusing investment in areas with high concentrations of worklessness.

1.5.5 Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreements

Local Strategic Partnerships have been fully engaged in consultation about and development of the Consortium, and in contributing to our strategy and key priorities. They will play an increasing role in delivering and increasing participation at a local level, and will provide the links to ensure that local needs are addressed. The

Consortium will ensure all LSPs actively benefit from a City Region approach which will inform, direct and support delivery through the LSPs at a local level. In addition, we will ensure that the priorities and performance measures contained in relevant Local Area Agreements are consistent with, and support those of the Consortium strategy.

1.5.6 **Leitch Review of Skills**

Our Employer Task Group is currently considering the implications of the Leitch Review's recent report², to ensure that our strategy and detailed proposals are in line with its recommendations and add value to its proposed activities. However, many of our proposals are already in line with the report's findings and recommendations, including:

- strengthening the voice of employers
- a demand-led approach to provision
- helping people to find and progress in work
- addressing fragmentation in support services
- clear and easily-accessed employment and skills support
- improving the quality of provision
- partners working together to provide a seamless service to individuals and employers

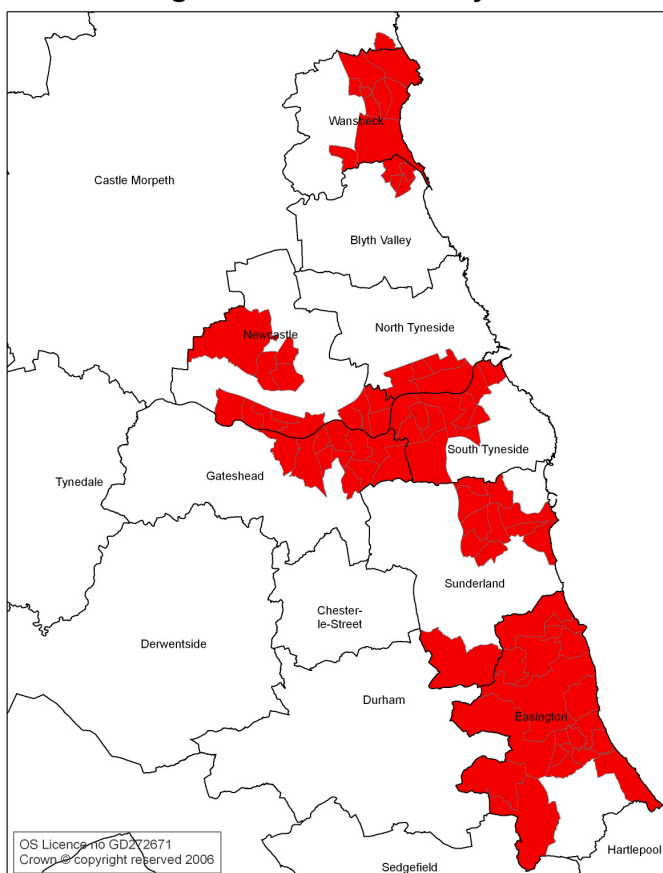
² *Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills* – December 2006

Section 2 – LOCAL CONTEXT

2.1 Local Analysis

2.1.1 The Consortium will support initiatives and influence ways of working throughout the Tyne and wear City Region (encompassing more than 200 wards in 13 local areas). The City Region boundaries are flexible and do not represent prescriptive borders across the North East, neither do they alter current governance structures.

**Tyne & Wear City Region
Targeted Communities by Ward**



However, we will focus our activities to help individuals on the ‘natural communities’ shown here, which include 83 of the most deprived wards in the City Region. They are:

- South East Northumberland
- Newcastle West & North West
- Gateshead Central
- Tyne Corridor (North)
- Tyne Corridor (South)
- Inner Sunderland
- East Durham

Labour Market and Skills Demands

2.1.2 Regional-level information on the current labour market and skills demands is given overleaf. To supplement this, in each of the seven communities identified above, the Consortium will carry out a detailed community-based analysis, and produce a report, identifying:

- labour market information at local level
- the needs of local residents, specifically the barriers which they encounter when considering looking for work

- the initiatives which are in place
- those initiatives which residents are engaging in and progressing from
- those which are delivering successfully
- those which are not making an impact in terms of employment
- why local residents are not engaging with current provision in the numbers required

- 2.1.3 This will identify gaps at a very local level, propose delivery solutions, and provide a framework for future delivery and allocation of funding. The reports will challenge LSPs to consider how best to implement the proposals, and ensure they are supported in implementing solutions based on sharing best practice and clear guidance from funding organisations, including Jobcentre Plus and LSC.
- 2.1.4 We will work with LSPs to build on their current Worklessness Plans and to develop a common framework of plans for each of the seven communities, tailored to individual neighbourhood needs, and provide priorities and a real focus for LSPs to deliver. This change will be realised by the expert input of the Executive Team and Advisory & Implementation Group to bring each plan up to the standard of the best. This work will begin in January 07.

Skills

- 2.1.5 Although much progress has been made, the skill level of adults of working age in the North East is lower than the national average, with particularly low skills in the economically inactive population. At the higher end of the skills continuum there is a lower-than-average proportion of the working age population with level 3 or above.
- 2.1.6 Disadvantaged groups which include offenders have limited skills and qualifications. 52% of male offenders and 71% of female offenders in custody do not have any qualifications. They are also among the most socially excluded and often disadvantaged in terms of access to employment and learning.
- 2.1.7 The numbers and percentage of adults without literacy and numeracy skills at level 2 are high.
- 2.1.8 Employer demand for higher level skills is increasing in the region. The number of jobs requiring intermediate and higher level skills is expected to continue to grow, while the number of jobs in occupations with low skills is projected to fall. In particular, employment projections suggest strong employer demand for qualifications at level 3 and level 4 and above.
- 2.1.9 The sectoral mix of employment and the employment structure continues to change. Currently the retail sector, engineering and manufacturing sector, hospitality and tourism sector and public services represent the largest volume of employment in the region. There has been a shift in the economy towards service sectors, offset by a decline in manufacturing sectors (though the sector remains a major employer in numerical terms). This trend is projected to continue with

increasing growth in service sectors such as knowledge intensive business services and health and social care.

Child Poverty

2.1.10 As already mentioned, child poverty is a significant issue for the City Region. We are undertaking further work to analyse the specific issues and needs of each of our seven priority communities, but initial statistical analysis shows that:

- the North East region has the second-highest percentage nationally of children eligible for free school meals (just over 30%)
- the region is second only to London in its proportion of children in workless households (just under 20%)
- the proportion of working-age households which are in receipt of tax credits is higher than any region except Northern Ireland (almost 18%)

Our Priority Client Groups

2.1.11 As part of our Expression of Interest, we carried out an initial analysis of the seven 'natural communities' identified overleaf, and identified the following priority groups:

- IB claimants
- IS & Lone Parent Claimants
- Claimants identified with basic and entry level skills requirements
- Claimants aged 50+
- BME population
- Ex-offenders or those at risk of offending
- Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)
- Low income households with children

Our statistical analysis at that time showed the following number of potential beneficiaries in these groups:

Community	Wards	Pop*	IB/SDA No	IS No	50+ JSA Recipients	Benefit** Recipients
SE Northumberland	14	37,970	4900	3420	245	8565
Tyne Corridor (North)	8	49,262	6845	6140	365	13350
Newcastle West	5	27,768	3650	3315	195	7160
Newcastle North West	4	28,007	3200	2725	135	6060
Gateshead Central	11	67,552	8095	6350	365	14810
Tyne Corridor (South)	11	58,466	6550	5345	480	12375
Inner Sunderland	10	66,902	8995	6780	415	16190
East Durham	20	75,959	11940	5900	175	18015
TOTAL TARGETED BENEFICIARIES	83	411,886	54,175	39,975	2,375	96,525

* Population – all people aged 16-74 in 2001 census, ward boundaries 2003

*** Includes all working age claimants & benefits at November 05 (source DWP Information Directorate)*

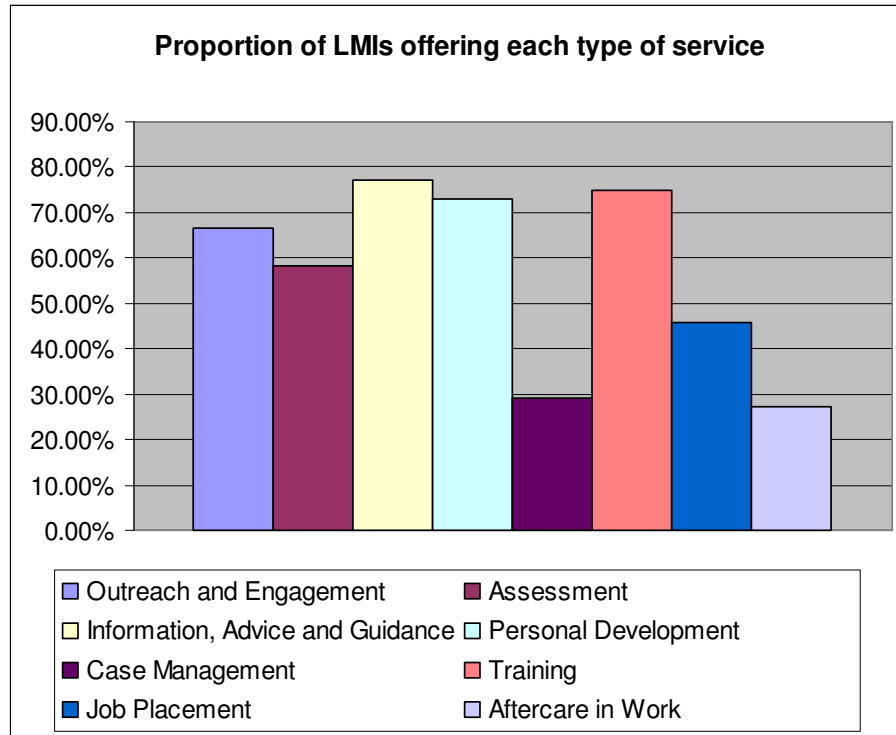
2.1.12 This analysis identified that there are varying levels of need, and that therefore we must take a variety of approaches to ensure success. The additional detailed local analysis described above (paragraph 2.1.2) will include a comprehensive review and statistical analysis of each of these communities to identify which priority client groups should be targeted, and the barriers to employment which need to be addressed. This will enable us to identify key issues and problems and help us to develop measures to demonstrate our impact, tailoring future support to address local requirements that will have greatest impact in terms of increasing the number of residents from these communities returning to work. By identifying the key issues and barriers encountered by these residents, we will target resources to specifically address them. We understand that 'one size does not fit all', so by tailoring support to local need and directing this through the relevant LSPs, we will ensure that our activities make a real impact on worklessness, and provide employers with a skilled and able workforce.

2.2 Current Provision

2.2.1 Several mapping exercises have already been carried out for various purposes throughout the City Region. The Consortium has taken some time to consider these and has carried out a short mapping exercise of provision involving all partners, including the public, private and community sectors. However, none of the current mapping information provides a clear picture specific to the City Region.

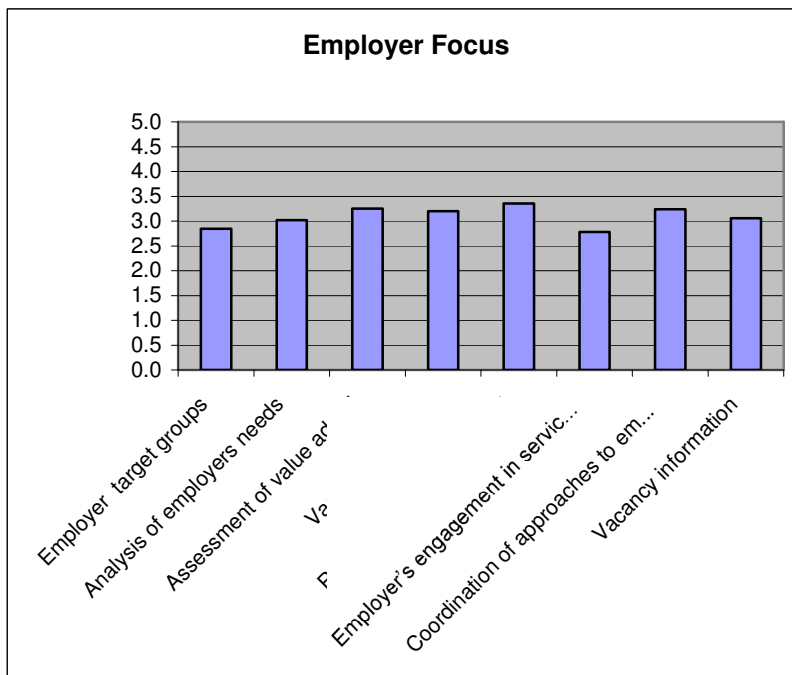
2.2.2 In particular, the Regional Employability Framework (REF) (commissioned by ONE North East from consultants Rocket Science), has carried out a huge amount of mapping both of provision and funding availability. The REF is being developed as a result of similar work in Scotland, where an employability framework is now in place. Analysis of the results is currently being carried out, and initial findings suggest that:

- a large amount of partners' provision was tied up in relatively low-value, geographically-spread contracts;
- providers felt they could be better at engaging both disadvantaged clients and employers;
- most organisations were getting less than half their clients into sustainable work; and:
- more could be done to facilitate individuals' progression through the support structures and to help them remain in employment.



Proportion of Labour Market Intermediaries offering each type of service
[Source: Rocket Science survey]

The chart below shows providers' own assessment of the level of their current involvement in design and provision of services to employers



2.2.3 Mapping work has also been undertaken by the Tyne & Wear City Region Commissioning Group to inform a development plan for Tyne & Wear, which will

again be informative for the Consortium. Much of this work is centred around the sub-region's LAA targets set for each Local Authority area.

2.2.4 Organisations including Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, Business Link, LSC, Local Authorities and ONE North East have all carried out their own organisational mapping and provided information for the Consortium's use. (See Annexe 1).

2.2.5 The Consortium's Client Task Group has carried out an analysis to summarise this vast amount of information, and concluded that:

- the information provides a useful overview of provision
- a huge range of provision is in place, and is being accessed by a great many residents
- whilst generally available to all residents to a degree, provision can be exclusive by geographical area, target group membership and availability at local level
- information suggests that gaps exist at either end of the progression route for individuals – ie engagement and outreach, and aftercare and progression
- there is a huge willingness from all partners to be able to map clearly and direct residents between provision for clear progression
- the work carried out is too detailed to include in full in this business plan, but has informed our strategy and delivery plan

2.2.6 In response to these findings, the Task Group has identified a number of areas for further development, including:

- working as part of the REF to inform mainstream and other available funding to develop new provision to meet identified gaps
- carrying out more detailed mapping in a form which is fit for purpose for the Consortium
- carrying out a benchmarking exercise to define value for money, which will inform future commissioning activity
- working with LSPs and local communities to carry out a detailed analysis of our target communities, as described in paragraph 2.1.2.

Section 3 – PROGRAMME DESIGN

3.1 Approach and Programme Design

3.1.1 Based on the key elements of our strategy, outlined in Section 1, the Consortium will offer:

Employers:

- A key role in developing strategy and provision
- A clear and appealing business offer
- Demand-led tailored recruitment solutions
- Simple access to partners' services
- Workforce development support

Individuals:

- Simple access to all partners' services
- Real, flexible solutions to addressing their needs
- A 'Safety Net' of comprehensive sustained support
- Demand-led opportunities
- Solutions based on evidence and best practice
- Progression routes from engagement to in-work development

Partners:

- Joint strategy and planning
- Joint contracting
- Shared performance management framework
- Improving quality of provision
- 'No wrong door' approach

Much of this approach is based on our track record of successful delivery and builds upon and develops good practice which has already proved successful on a smaller scale. This section includes a number of examples of good practice to illustrate this approach.

Task Groups are progressing each of these aspects of our approach to ensure that our offer is clear and attractive to our customers, and, most importantly, to develop partners' processes to ensure that we can deliver a seamless service.

Helping Employers

Giving employers a key role in developing strategy and provision

3.1.2 Our aim is to place employers at the heart of our strategy, using a demand-led approach which will provide real and sustainable job opportunities for our clients. Employer demand is crucial to the Consortium's success. Our structure, with an employer chairing our Executive Board and employer organisations' representation on both the Board and Advisory and Implementation Group (see section 4), ensures that employers have a significant voice in developing and implementing our overall strategy. Our more detailed approach actively involves employers in:

- identifying their current and future recruitment and skills needs, and working with the public and voluntary sectors to access untapped labour sources to develop potential recruits to meet those needs
- designing customised recruitment and training packages
- ensuring that employers' recruitment systems are integrated and responsive to their own and their potential recruits' current and future needs
- encouraging new employers to access a ready-made labour pool supported by existing provision
- developing appropriate aftercare support for clients entering employment

Employers will only consider employing individuals from our target groups if they are convinced that there will be an improvement to their bottom line. The Consortium is therefore developing an exciting business offer to sell its services to employers.

EXAMPLE

NHS Recruitment

Disadvantaged groups often miss out on job opportunities in the growing healthcare sector. To respond to this need, Gateshead Council and the Strategic Health Authority joined forces to develop a programme to reach disadvantaged communities to fill vacancies at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The partnership worked closely with Jobcentre Plus to develop an accredited training programme to meet the employer's and the jobseeker's needs. As a result of this pilot programme's success - 33 individuals were placed into work – the Strategic Health Authority, with partners, has developed a recruitment model to be rolled out throughout the region.

This model has been cited as best practice in the current Regional Economic Strategy.

A clear and appealing business offer

- 3.1.3 An integrated recruitment and training offer is being developed for the City Region area. This involves partners working together to provide a comprehensive package of assistance which can be tailored to employers' needs, and which can be accessed by contacting any of the partners – a 'no wrong door' approach.
- 3.1.4 In particular, we will work closely with partners to ensure that employers' demands are clearly understood and are available to inform strategies. For example, when a new or existing employer is recruiting, we will develop an individual plan for that employer which has a single point of contact, a clear service offer, a comprehensive training package, and practical support for the process. This service offer might include:
- diagnosis of skills requirements
 - agreed recruitment process - with eg open days, recruitment fairs, press release coordination
 - recruitment support – identifying suitable candidates, sifting, administration and interview support
 - training provision – tailor-made solutions for pre-employment training
 - post-employment training – through Train to Gain
 - ongoing workforce diagnostics and ongoing solutions
- 3.1.5 The North East Employer Coalition, working with Business Link, will take the lead on identifying and engaging individual or groups of employers with vacancies, gaining their commitment to our client groups, and working with them to identify and articulate their recruitment needs, as described in more detail overleaf (*Section 3.3*). These employers will act as an 'employer board', working with our Programme Delivery Manager and partners until their recruitment needs are met.

Demand-led tailored recruitment solutions

- 3.1.6 There are many examples of demand-led strategies developed by partners in the City Region (including, for example, Sage Music Centre, Debenhams, Orange, Inland Revenue and Tesco.) We will build on these to ensure that a comprehensive offer is available to employers throughout the City Region, regardless of where the employer is located.
- 3.1.7 Having identified employers' needs, the employer board will articulate them to partners and work with them to develop appropriate solutions. These may include, for example, training routeways tailored to individual employers' or sectors' requirements, where we will work with Sector Skills Councils as part of the Regional Skills Partnership. This approach has already been tested successfully in the region:

EXAMPLE

Newcastle Shop for jobs - *promoting retail as a first class career*

Based in a city centre retail unit, Shop for jobs provides an unprecedented opportunity for people to access quality training and find sustainable employment in the retail sector.

It provides a dedicated training and job brokerage service, from pre-employment, industry-specific training to workforce development training for existing employees (to NVQ 3), as well as a comprehensive recruitment, training and business support service to the retail and associated sectors. It currently provides directed training plus “hands on” training in a virtual shop environment, giving participants practical experience of merchandising, stock rotation, display, and health and safety in the workplace.

This a multi-agency partnership involving Jobcentre Plus, ONE, Business Link, Connexions, UXL (Newcastle Work Based Learning Network), New Deal for Communities, Jigsaw Training, Newcastle College, Education Business Partnership and private sector partners including Capital Shopping Centres, Marks and Spencer and John Lewis.

Providing simple access to partners’ services

3.1.8 To facilitate access to the full range of support services available from all the Consortium partners and simplify the process for employers, partners are working together to introduce a ‘no wrong door’ approach, as described overleaf. This will support the development of a preferred point of contact for employers working with the partner of their choice whilst accessing the full range of appropriate support.

Workforce development support

3.1.9 We will review workforce development support, to identify how this can be developed further to ensure sustainability of employment opportunities. As a first step, we will consider evidence from Business Link’s business diagnostic activities, to help to inform our workforce development business offer.

Helping Individuals

3.1.10 One of our key challenges is to engage greater numbers of people who are economically inactive, and to move them towards the labour market. We are developing a programme of client engagement which addresses individuals’ needs and employers’ demands.

3.1.11 Our overall approach provides comprehensive support for clients, to help them from the initial engagement stage through identifying and addressing barriers, motivation and development, pre-employment training, job search, and support when in employment. It includes:

Simple access to all partners' services

3.1.12 Currently, a range of client engagement activities and support is provided by all of our partner organisations. To enable people to identify and access the appropriate services, we are developing a 'no wrong door' approach, where partners' front-line staff can identify and understand the range of services offered and arrange access for the client to the most appropriate source of help (*see para 3.1.28*).

EXAMPLE

New Futures – Newcastle

The Newcastle Strategic Partnership has set up a company to coordinate a new partnership approach to address worklessness in the City. This represents a fundamental shift from a competitive system to a collaborative one, where providers can work together for the benefit of customers, rather than competing for outputs.

The company will coordinate strategy central to a range of elements delivered by different providers, and will coordinate delivery of services to individuals and employers. This will include coordinating client engagement activity; case management; a menu of support, tailored to address individual barriers and needs; involving employers in designing and delivering recruitment and pre-employment training; and supporting customers' development in-work.

Real, flexible solutions to addressing needs

3.1.13 Our Client Task Group is developing a delivery model which ensures a consistent and robust process of engagement, individual action planning, information, advice and guidance throughout the City Region, particularly in the identified target communities. This will include identifying individual barriers and addressing them through a menu of assistance, which will be tailored to meet individual needs. This can be built upon and enhanced in local communities to meet specific needs, and will be developed and enhanced further as the Consortium progresses.

3.1.14 A key element is to develop an "individual action plan" which is used by all partners and is transferable between organisations. This will be developed in line with an agreed assessment process, to baseline starting points and enable monitoring of progression and progress on agreed pathways. This approach will be piloted in priority communities with a view to rolling it out throughout the wider City Region.

3.1.15 To ensure that these barriers are addressed, flexibility will be required in funding provision and delivery. An example of this approach is the Global Grants programme which operates across Tyne and Wear, and which successfully delivers solutions to these barriers at a very local and individual need basis. The Consortium will aim to provide funding in a flexible manner to enable progression from an individual's point of view.

A 'Safety Net' of comprehensive sustained support

3.1.16 A key departure for the Consortium is our commitment, reflected in the Regional Employability Framework, to an integrated approach, providing comprehensive support for individual clients. Partners will work together to support individuals, developing shared standards for measuring client progress and a shared tracking system to monitor that progress, ensuring that the necessary help is provided.

EXAMPLE

Wansbeck Works – a Multi-Agency Approach

Wansbeck Works! takes a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to addressing worklessness in a district with high levels of benefit dependency and economic inactivity. It brings together all key delivery agencies under a common brand, establishing multi-agency teams to provide a seamless and holistic service to workless residents, with the aim of helping more residents into training, sustainable employment and enterprise. It focuses on engaging those who are 'hardest to reach' and helping them to move closer to the labour market.

A management structure steered by key stakeholders and under-pinned by an extensive network of partners ensures partners work together to add value and improve the quality of delivery. Clear communications, data sharing, good referral mechanisms and training strategies provide the foundations of the model. Training will ensure that front-line staff of all partner agencies can identify appropriate services for the client and make an effective referral.

Working collaboratively maximises capacity and provides a more effective delivery mechanism than would be achieved by agencies working in isolation. The model is piloting an approach with potential for roll- out in other areas of the region with high levels of worklessness.

Demand-led opportunities

3.1.17 We will work closely with the NE Employer Coalition and other employers identified through our partnership networks to ensure that opportunities identified for our clients are demand-led, leading to sustainable jobs with engaged employers.

EXAMPLES

The Construction Employment Integrator (CEI)

This pilot, initiated through Tyne & Wear Together, is designed to achieve 2,500 job outcomes between 2006 and 2010. It uses regeneration programmes to provide a unique opportunity for long-term unemployed people to find sustainable work in the construction industry. Having defined construction industry needs up to 2010, the pilot was developed by the National Employment Panel, Regeneration Board, NE regional strategic partners and the Local Authority Economic Development Groups. It coordinates a package of measures and provides demand-led training, to recruit local unemployed jobseekers into major capital construction and related activities, using the new approaches to public procurement. The CEI comprises a functional team, which based in the Local Authority and is responsible to a board of Local Authority, regional and industry partners, chaired by a senior manager from the construction sector.

Go Forward – Contact Centre Routeway

This exemplifies how a partnership approach can develop innovative solutions to meet employer demand, by offering support to disadvantaged jobseekers. Originally for New Deal customers, this was initiated through a public, private and employer partnership (Local Authority, Jobcentre Plus, Sunderland City College, the voluntary sector and local employers). It has resulted in the development of a new Level 2 qualification – now recognised nationally – and the programme is now open to all customer groups, and is achieving more than 85% success rate into employment.

3.1.18 Our 'client journey' is described in more detail in section 3.2.

Solutions based on evidence and best practice

3.1.19 Throughout the region there are numerous examples of good practice delivering excellent solutions for both employers and individuals, and consequently addressing worklessness and increasing the employment rate. We will ensure that good practice is shared with all partners and interested parties to ensure time and finance are not wasted "piloting" approaches previously tried and tested. This will result in quicker delivery set-up and achievement of results.

Progression routes from engagement to in-work development

3.1.20 As a development of the individual action planning process, progression routes for individuals will be identified in order to continue skills development and career progression, ultimately helping businesses to grow and survive. Sector Skills Councils are currently developing progression routeways which will inform and support the Consortium's approach, and we will play a key role in ensuring these are implemented and supported by businesses.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- 3.1.21 The third key element of our strategy is a new way of working more closely in partnership to coordinate our strategy and services and improve our performance. This is built upon:

Joint strategy and planning

- 3.1.21 Consortium partners have already agreed a joint employability strategy, as outlined in Section 1, and are working on a shared delivery plan to achieve it. Relevant actions and commitments will be incorporated into partners' individual operational plans, but as the Consortium progresses, our employability strategies and plans will be increasingly coordinated, aligned and integrated. Some of our partners (eg Jobcentre Plus, LSC and ONE North East, Local Authorities) are already committed to joint planning, and we propose to extend this further, to include, for example LSPs in the future. Our role in the Tyne & Wear City Region will also enable us to coordinate our plans with those of the transport and regeneration initiatives as the latter are established, maximising opportunities and providing a single strategic focus for the City Region.
- 3.1.22 In the City Region there are already examples of local joint planning and delivery within local areas driven by cross-boundary partnerships, as well as within LSPs:

EXAMPLES

Tyne and Wear Together

Tyne and Wear Together has delivered a consistent approach across Tyne and Wear, built on best practice delivery across five local authority boundaries. The partners identified gaps in mainstream provision, and created appropriate interventions for unemployed Tyne & Wear residents. This delivery has developed a consistent approach to information, advice and guidance provision. Particular success of this model is the alignment of sub-regional funding from ONE with local funding accessed through LSP's.

STEP

At a local level, LSPs are already delivering partnership solutions to addressing worklessness and employer recruitment needs. In South Tyneside, the LSP employment sub-group STEP has secured substantial funding to deliver employment priorities. These have been agreed by the partnership and delivered through the public, private and community and voluntary sector. The partnership directs commissioning and performance management of this delivery.

A joint contracting framework

3.1.23 We are developing a joint contracting strategy for employability provision, based on the successful delivery of Tyne and Wear Together.

Example

Commissioning Framework – Tyne & Wear Together

A joint commissioning framework is currently in place for Tyne and Wear Together (which includes most Consortium partners). This provides a joint contracting solution to implementing new provision. It involves:

- partners agreeing service provision required
- agreeing detailed specifications
- North Tyneside Council as lead authority, coordinating commissioning work and financial/performance management
- implementing commissioning methods with transparent and robust decision-making processes, carried out by an agreed partnership
- the lead authority dealing with contracting arrangements
- monitoring contracts appropriately

This method has been successful from both an individual authority and a wider partnership perspective.

It is anticipated that the Consortium's approach will be based on this model.

3.1.24 As partners have ongoing contractual commitments, which are due for review at different times, the strategy adopts a phased approach to aligning and developing our future activities. This includes:

- an overall strategy, action plan and timetable
- a framework to align strategies when individual partners' contract reviews permit
- consulting the Executive Board/AIG when partners are undertaking contracting rounds to ensure that duplication is avoided and gaps are filled
- a commissioning framework for new/flexible funds, including DAF, to enable joint decisions to be made on where resources should be targeted
- wherever possible, enabling partners' clients to use one another's provision
- moving from a competitive to a collaborative culture
- investigating future opportunities to work more closely together

Shared performance management framework

3.1.25 It is our intention to develop a shared client and performance management system, which is IT-based and can be accessed by partners. Resources have been identified in our DWP seed-corn funding to research requirements thoroughly from January 07, with a view to commissioning appropriate arrangements during the 07-

08 operational year. We envisage that this system will be used both to provide a common performance monitoring system, and to track client progress towards work, rather than simply job outcomes, recording the various interventions and support provided partners. This will enable us to provide continuous, comprehensive support and avoid duplication or gaps, and to support the REF recommendations on case management, providing real evidence of progression and ensuring clients are not lost in the system or become disengaged. It is dependent on being able to share client data between partners, as outlined in our enabler request no 1.

Improving the quality of our provision

3.1.26 Many of the Consortium partners have excellent provision, but we recognise that the quality varies throughout the City Region, and we are adopting a phased approach to bringing all of our providers up to the standard of the best. In tandem with developing a joint contracting framework, as outlined above, we will:

- Work with partners to agree and adopt shared quality standards for all our providers
- Work with providers to introduce and adopt these standards
- assessing the possibility of rationalising the existing quality frameworks used by Consortium partners in line with the Quality Improvement Agency for Lifelong Learning report of June 05
- Identify and share best practice via the Advisory & Implementation Group
- Investigate the introduction of annual quality awards for providers

‘No Wrong Door’

3.1.27 Feedback from individual clients, employers and our own operational staff indicates that the vast range of our services and provision is confusing and that it is often difficult to identify the right help at the right time, to provide comprehensive and continuous support which people need. Clients and employers in particular find accessing the right help can be time-consuming, and can involve contacting several organisations, which can itself be a barrier to their engagement.

3.1.28 The Consortium partnership is addressing this by introducing a ‘no wrong door approach’, both for individual clients and for employers. This means that whichever organisation is contacted will either provide the required support or will signpost the enquirer directly to the appropriate contact. To achieve this, we are:

- redesigning our administrative processes
- developing a directory of partners services and provision, to enable our staff to identify the appropriate contacts and support
- scheduling joint awareness sessions for our front line staff, beginning in March 07, to enable them to understand the range of services, make contacts, and work together more closely

EXAMPLE

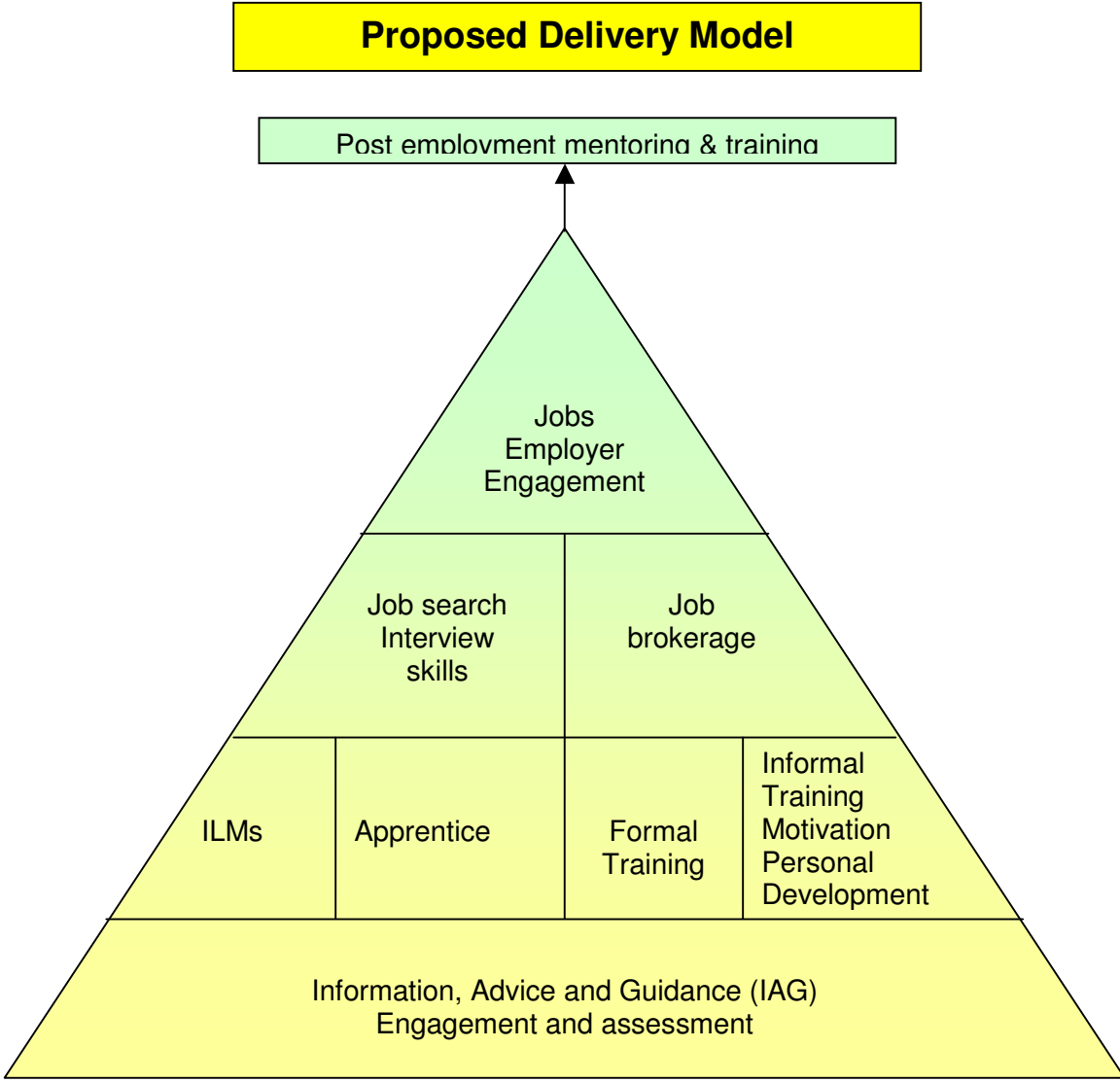
‘Together we can work’ in Northumberland

This initiative, begun in 2005, involves Business Link, Connexions, Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council in working together to provide seamless support for workforce development in the County. Employers and individuals can contact any of the four organisations, and receive information about the services of any of the three others. Staff will identify what help is required and arrange for a specialist from the appropriate partner organisation to contact the enquirer.

For employers, this provides easy access to a full range of support, tailored to their needs, from recruitment and skills training, to management and leadership development. For individuals, a single contact can provide access to careers and jobsearch advice, vacancies and training – from basic skills to higher levels of learning. Partners’ staff have benefited from the opportunity to meet, share information, and learn about one another’s services, enabling them to refer clients to one another and provide a more comprehensive package of help.

3.2 Key Programme Elements

3.2.1 Our Client Task Group has identified a high-level delivery model, based on best practice and piloted in South Tyneside, as shown below, and we are now in the process of consulting key stakeholders in detail about this model.

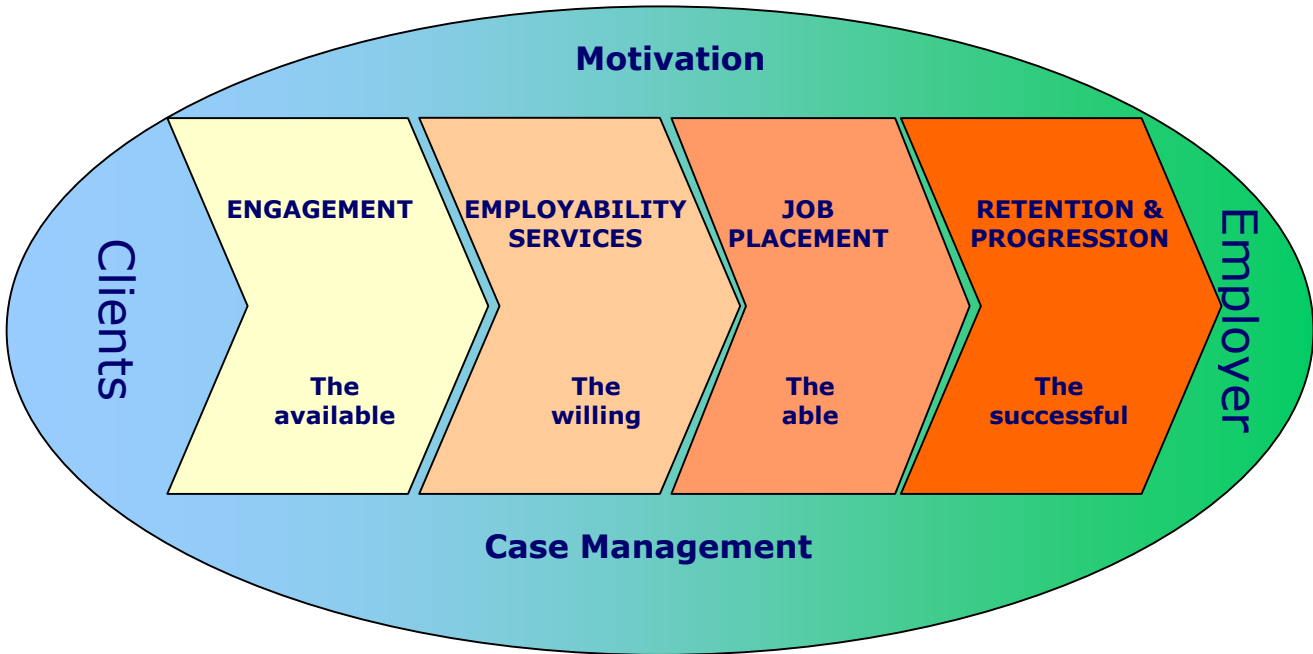


3.2.2 One of this Task Group’s priorities from January 07 is to develop the processes and systems required to turn this model into reality. The results of the local analysis of each community, described in section 2.1, will then be used to inform development of our detailed provision, so that it can be tailored to meet the needs of individuals, employers and priority groups.

3.2.3 Much of this work will be directed through existing LSP delivery. However the Consortium will support LSP’s where activity requires to be increased or changed in order to deliver this. A review of each LSP’s current delivery will take place in order to ensure value for money and identification of best practise. This will also address duplication and overlap of delivery.

3.2.4 Delivery of support mechanisms will be tailor-made to address individual clients' needs and employers' requirements.

3.2.5 Our Client Journey



I Engagement

We recognise that, although many of our partner organisations are involved in engaging clients, we need to do this more effectively, to reach those in the heart of our targeted communities. We will address this by developing a co-ordinated engagement and referral strategy. This will be flexible and designed to meet varying local needs in each area, and will use the specific expertise of partner organisations. We will include 'pre-vocational' training and volunteering - important routes to engagement - which we need to use more effectively.

This will ensure, inter alia, increased engagement and referrals through the Community and Voluntary Sector.

EXAMPLE

North Tyneside

North Tyneside Council, through the 2005/06 Tyne and Wear Together programme, transformed the way they delivered services to workless clients by commissioning the Voluntary and Community Sectors (VCS) to deliver Information Advice & Guidance (IAG). This was made possible by using Neighbourhood Renewal Funding to support the VCS to achieve the national Matrix quality standard and to train VCS employees in NVQ Levels 2,3 & 4 in IAG (also a national requirement for the delivery of IAG).

II Employability Services

This will be a flexible menu of provision, which will vary from client to client according to individual needs, offering support and training, including:

Personal Support to address barriers, eg:

- condition management (physical and mental health, disabilities, addictions)
- money management
- managing caring responsibilities, access to affordable services
- managing lifestyle transitions (for eg care leavers, offenders and the homeless)
- help with childcare (eg working with children’s centres) and travel

Training

- Personal (eg lifeskills, basic skills, motivation and behaviour)
- Vocational
- Job search
- Interview and application completion skills
- Communication
- IT NVQ level 2 (not necessarily completed before recruitment)
- Software training specific to employers needs

Training Pipeline

Whilst wherever possible training will be demand-led, to meet the needs of specific employers, we will also need to work with clients to provide a pool of job-ready people to meet the needs of smaller businesses and those who cannot specify their longer-term recruitment requirements. We will therefore provide basic skills, personal development and motivational training etc to our priority clients to ensure that they are in a position to take up demand-led training as employers with vacancies are identified.

III Job placement

This is the focus for our work to engage employers – matching our priority clients to employers’ needs. We recognise that we need to take a more streamlined and proactive approach in our marketing to employers. Whilst we will focus on providing job-ready candidates, there is an ongoing need to support entry into employment through job placements, wage subsidies (ie New Deal), supported employment etc.

IV Retention and progression

We are developing proposals to place a greater emphasis on helping individuals to remain in and to progress in work, in line with our commitments under the Regional Employability Framework. This may include:

- specialist support for employers in managing employees with disadvantaged backgrounds
- specialist in-work support for employees
- access to education and training for career progression (eg Train to Gain)

V Case Management and motivation

A new approach which we are exploring for the longer-term, encompassed in the Regional Employability Framework, is to develop integrated case management, offering seamless provision to ensure clients' smooth progression along this journey. Each client would be assigned to a case manager from one of the partners, who would take the lead on diagnosis and action planning, and would monitor and drive progress. This system would need to be underpinned by a common client tracking and referral system.

Addressing duplication and fragmentation in provision

3.2.6 The Client Task Group will develop a comprehensive mechanism for ensuring that provision is streamlined to meet needs and avoid duplication, optimising the use of partners' resources. However, we are exploring the following activities which will contribute to this:

- a joint contracting strategy and framework to align partners' funding and resources, with a phased implementation as contracting rounds permit, and including consultation with the Executive Board and AIG as contracts are considered to ensure that they are complementary
- key stakeholders working with prime contractors to assess contracts against gaps/duplication
- potential joined-up delivery – wherever possible, permitting access to provision by partners' clients
- a directory of partners' services, for use by all partners' staff

3.3 Employer Engagement

Current Arrangements

3.3.1 Effective engagement with employers is vital in order to gain their commitment to provide the necessary vacancies leading to sustainable jobs for our target groups.

3.3.2 Currently a large number of organisations, including public and voluntary sector representatives and training providers, are separately engaging employers in the field of employment and skills, with consequent duplication of effort and the potential for confusion from an employer perspective. There are multiple overlaps with different organisations offering similar services to employers. However, there are equally obvious gaps, eg Business Link, with its relatively large resource and high level of interaction with employers, has no specific remit for recruitment, whereas they play the leading role in brokering workforce development provision.

3.3.3 Information gained in the process of working with employers has generally been retained by the organisation receiving it, rather than shared between organisations with similar objectives to inform future labour market strategies.

Our Proposals

Sharing Labour Market Information amongst Consortium Partners

3.3.4 One of the key features of the Consortium’s strategy is that partners will work together to share information and streamline our services, providing a seamless service to employers. Data sharing to inform our future activities and enhance our services is a vital part of this work, and further freedom to share information with Consortium partners will be required (see enabler no 1).

Streamlining employer engagement activities and resources

3.3.5 The next phase of work carried out by our Employer Task Group (which involves key stakeholders who are currently working with employers) includes:

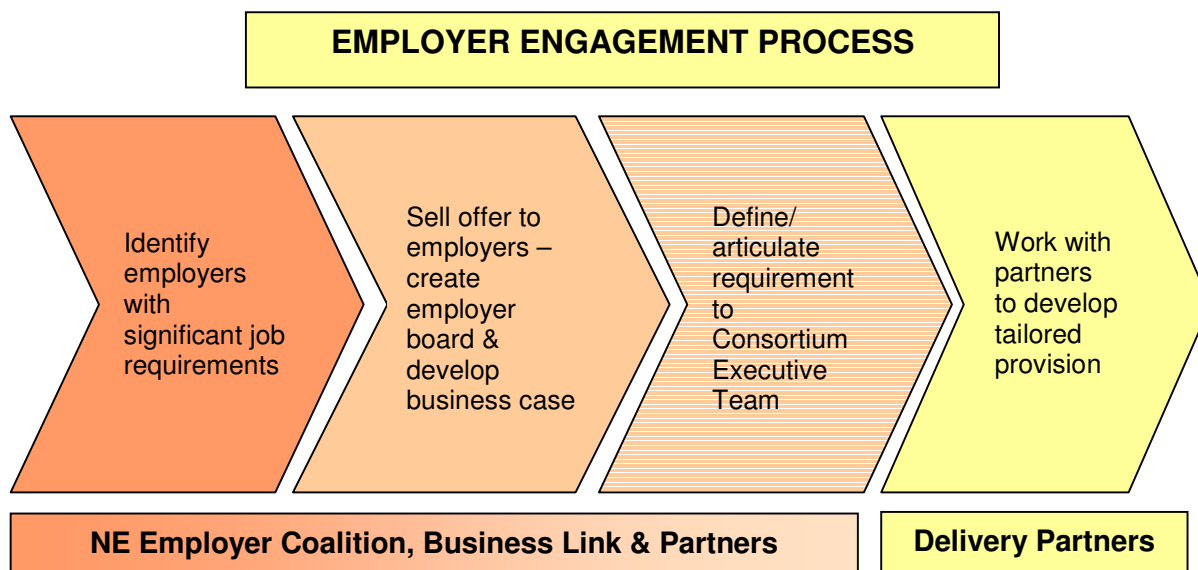
- arranging for wider consultation with employers on our proposals, to be undertaken via a range of events between January and March 07
- making proposals for rationalising and optimising current resources which partners devote to employer engagement
- making proposals for aligning marketing funding, activities and materials
- making proposals for rationalising the use of employer engagement activities, to reduce duplication and fill gaps
- investigating the joint working taking place at very local levels through local authorities, Jobcentre Plus and Business Link
- examining the impact of the LEGL delivery in the City Region

Promoting our services to engage additional employers

3.3.6 Our new business offer described overleaf is designed to engage additional employers by promoting the practical benefits of working with the Consortium, ie:

- **minimising the recruitment risk**, using a ‘try before you buy’ approach – extending and increasing the flexibility of work trials to allow greater flexibility for the employer and the jobseeker (see enabler no 4); and partners working together to provide a joint agency approach to recruitment and workforce development
- **being financially viable to business** – substantially improving retention rates, reducing recruitment and workforce development costs, providing a viable alternative to traditional recruitment methods, and resulting in a reliable, loyal and skilled workforce
- **providing customised solutions for recruitment and training** – offering pre-employment training customised to meet employer needs; in-work employer/employee advocacy; and specialist help and advice (eg Access to Work, Occupational Health, Personal Advisors, Condition Managers, Reasonable Adjustments)

- **accessing an untapped source of recruitment** – building on or developing employers’ corporate social responsibility to:
 - provide life-changing opportunities for sick and excluded people
 - recruit people who reflect the local community
 - enhance existing HR practices
 - improve and develop their workforce
 - gaining a competitive recruitment edge



- 3.3.7 In practice, the Coalition and Business Link, working with partners, will take the lead in identifying large employers with significant numbers of vacancies, or groups of smaller employers with similar recruitment needs, and will form an ‘Employer Board’, contracting with these employers to provide opportunities to Consortium clients. This will include guaranteed interviews and, wherever possible, guaranteed jobs, for clients who complete training/reach agreed minimum standards. Detailed needs will be identified and articulated to the Consortium Executive Team, which will work with partners and the employers concerned to deliver tailored recruitment packaged to meet these needs. Partners will then work together to provide a seamless service to the employers.
- 3.3.8 In the early stages of operation, ‘warm’ employers will be engaged to pilot and develop this model, then successful case studies will be used to help engage others by demonstrating that recruiting from our target groups is beneficial to their business:

Phil Young, Director, Esh Group



“We obtained our first trainees through a client, Norcare, which helps ex-offenders and other disadvantaged people and put them through the induction programme. We went from an initial 45 people down to 16 that we felt were fairly committed. We tend to be hard on them early on so that they realise it is a commitment both from them and us. It is still early days, we have employed seven and there have been some problems with our existing work force due to the negatives surrounding ex-offenders.

We have knocked down those barriers now, and the people have been with us since September and are doing very well. They come out of the project with an NVQ Level 2. Now we are running a similar programme with the Cyrenians. We got a lot of support from Jobcentre Plus and Newcastle College, who themselves had to train to offer an NVQ Level 1 qualification – we placed a lot of pressure on them. It has been hard work but worthwhile.”

- 3.3.9 In addition, we will be working with our public sector partners’ HR departments to consider their own recruitment practices and secure their commitment to recruiting from our priority groups, to encourage them to act as exemplars and, wherever possible in the future, to ring-fence opportunities for our clients.

EXAMPLE

Promoting best practice with Local Authorities

The NE Employer Coalition, Jobcentre Plus and two of the largest employers in the region - City of Sunderland and Gateshead Councils - have been working to overcome barriers to employment. Recruitment issues were identified and ways sought to address the barriers preventing local people from obtaining employment.

Jobcentre Plus seconded a member of staff, funded by the Coalition, to City of Sunderland Council’s HR team, to streamline recruitment practices by redesigning application forms to make them more user-friendly. A competency-based process was introduced, based on individuals’ abilities rather than their qualifications. This resulted in a more streamlined recruitment process and an annual reduction in recruitment costs of up to £50,000.

The Coalition also funded a member of Gateshead Council’s Economic Development Team to run the Gateway to Gateshead programme a collaborative project with Jobcentre Plus. The six-week pre-employment programme is designed to help local people who would not usually apply for council positions to access entry-level jobs. It includes a one-week work placement in a Council department with a guaranteed job interview.

Gateway to Gateshead has already been a huge success, with 16 of the first group of 20 candidates already in employment with the Council and one in the NHS.

3.4 Voluntary and Community Sector Engagement

- 3.4.1 The voluntary and community sector has a key role to play in the Employment Consortium. It has strong representation on all Local Strategic Partnerships, and has helped identify local area issues and priorities within the development of the Local Area Agreements. The sector has given its commitment to driving the Employment Consortium forward and will be involved on a number of levels.
- 3.4.3 The voluntary sector will have a place on the Executive Board, responsible for providing strategic direction and decision making and will also sit on the Advisory and Implementation Group, which will develop the delivery plan and be responsible for its effective implementation.
- 3.4.4 The sector will be represented as an employer on the Employer Board to ensure that the wealth of local vacancies and volunteering opportunities are accessible to the targeted client groups and also to ensure that recruitment needs are met.
- 3.4.5 The voluntary and community sector has been engaged in the development of the consortium from the outset, contributing to the submission of the Expression of Interest and has a place on the steering group, which is acting as an interim Executive Board, currently developing the business plan for the City Region.
- 3.4.6 Despite current levels of involvement, we recognise that further consultation is needed to give all voluntary and community sector organisations, however small, an opportunity to feed in their views and lend their expertise to the design and delivery of the Consortium's recommended interventions. A series of consultation events, including workshops and focus groups, is planned from January 2007, where voluntary and community groups will be able to make a valuable contribution in shaping our delivery plan. By working with umbrella network organisations in each cluster area of the City Region, we will identify the most effective consultation methods for the sector.
- 3.4.8 It is acknowledged that the voluntary and community sector supports clients in ways which are often more informal than statutory organisations, and which as a result can be a very effective first step on the road to employment. The sector has an important role to play in engaging clients who are furthest away from the labour market, and also as a provider of specialised services within the community. There are many examples throughout the City Region where the sector is working in partnership in a variety of ways. The Consortium will examine these in detail, and develop a strategy which specifically includes this sector where it is most effective and successful.
- 3.4.9 We are committed to ensuring that voluntary and community sector organisations which can play a role in moving people closer to the labour market have the capacity to deliver quality services within the City Region. During the consultation phase, we will aim to benchmark the current levels of delivery capacity within the sector and draw up proposals for achieving improvement.

3.5 Targets

3.5.1 The Consortium's long-term aspirations, which we set out in our Expression of Interest in July 06, are:

- to reduce the gap between the City Region employment rate and that for England by 3%; and:
- to reduce the number of people in the City Region claiming working age benefits, particularly those in the most disadvantaged groups, by 14,478.

These are in line with the Regional Economic Strategy, which we would aim to achieve by 2016.

3.5.2 However, we are currently developing realistic, more specific targets and performance indicators for the shorter term. Our Target and Performance Task Group is in the process of mapping current targets relating to employability, with the aim of rationalising them, identifying the extra stretch which the Consortium can provide, and identifying realistic performance measures to demonstrate the Consortium's impact. This will take a phased approach as our ability to align or pool funding increases when existing contractual commitments are reviewed.

3.5.3 The Task Group has identified and is taking forward the following issues:

- baselining existing targets and performance in the City Region
- mapping current spend, to identify the outputs being bought with existing resources, to determine what stretch can be achieved by aligning funding or using any new funds, eg DAF
- developing a 'dashboard' of consistent and readily-available performance indicators
- developing an IT-based performance and customer management system which can be used by all partners

3.5.4 In developing proposed targets, we recognise the importance of seeing the family as a unit. It is difficult to get the data we require at the City Region level to set baseline targets, and the Task Group is currently looking at how we could define the impact on family/child poverty of our actions. There may be a need to develop local indicators to measure our progress, and we would welcome discussions with DWP and other Consortia about this.

3.6 Enablers

3.6.1 In order to achieve these stretching targets, we are requesting the following flexibilities in policy and programmes, which we believe will enable us to achieve more, and better quality, outcomes for our customers. We are seeking these enablers to apply to the whole of the Tyne & Wear City Region.

3.6.2 We are looking in detail at each of these proposals, and are working with the DWP City Strategy Team and other consortia to define requirements and produce the necessary full business cases, so the boxes below provide a summary only of our requirements at this stage. In addition, our Task Groups are considering requirements in more detail, and will run workshops as part of the consultation process to ensure that all required flexibilities have been identified and defined to deliver the appropriate outcomes, and we may need to request further enablers as our delivery plans are refined.

1 – Remove barriers to data sharing

Organisational protocols, and sometimes data protection legislation, inhibit partner organisations' sharing of client data, impeding advisors' ability to resolve benefit-related problems, which often the client is apprehensive about discussing in a more formal and 'perceived' threatening environment.

Proposal - to develop systems and sharing protocols to emphasise client ownership of information, and facilitate inter-agency use where authorised by the client.

2 – Extended work placements

Many employers are reluctant to take the perceived risk of recruiting from harder-to-help groups, including IB claimants, young people, lone parents, older people, and those with disabilities. In addition to pre-employment support for disadvantaged clients to put them on a par with other applicants, employers seek to remove the risk by taking people on a trial basis at minimum cost.

However, non-JSA clients are not eligible for the relevant assistance which Jobcentre Plus provides as part of New Deal (work placements of up to 13 weeks) to enable employers and jobseekers to assess suitability for the job role.

The alternative, Work Trials, are only available for a maximum of three weeks. Employers recruiting from the harder-to-help client groups may need longer than this to establish the employee's suitability.

Proposal: - to remove the perceived recruitment risk, we would ask for benefit recipients of any age to have access to work placements of up to 13 weeks, whilst continuing to receive their benefits. These would be for a flexible period, agreed between the adviser and the employer, to suit individual needs. This could be achieved by:

- removing the mandatory elements of New Deal, to encourage IB recipients to move to New Deal, as detailed in enabler 1 above; or:
- introducing a flexible period for Work Trials of up to 13 weeks, providing a sufficient period to try out work whilst continuing to receive benefits

3 – Train to Gain

Disadvantaged clients often have the opportunity to take up only entry-level jobs, and are unlikely to be able to compete for highly-paid jobs offering training and progression. Lack of coherent training leading to recognised qualifications, a visible career path or progression within a company can be a barrier to their taking up entry-level jobs.

The new Train to Gain programme offers a coherent training package, but its wage subsidy is limited to businesses with less than 50 employees. This restricts the opportunities for our clients to take an entry-level job which has a structured training and progression route, and smaller businesses are often less likely to risk employing someone without the required entry-level qualifications and experience.

Proposal – to extend eligibility for the Train to Gain wage subsidy to employers with more than 50 employees who recruit from disadvantaged client groups.

4 – CSA ‘run-on’ period

Benefit recipients who are required by the Child Support Agency (CSA) to make parental contributions are deterred from taking up work because they perceive that initially it is not financially viable, as CSA seeks payment from the first day of employment.

Proposal - to allow former benefit recipients a period of one month at work before CSA starts action to collect payments, enabling them to build up a small amount of money before payments begin. (Similar in principle to Housing Benefit ‘run-on’ period.)

It is appreciated that this might require a change in legislation, so this is proposed for consideration as a longer-term solution.

5 – Access for young people to Train to Gain and JCP adult services

Many young people, especially males, in deprived areas of the City Region are not in employment, education or training (NEET), but perceive work with or without training as a significant and essential sign of achieving adulthood. However, the extension of Educational Maintenance Allowance and the demise of a standard Training Allowance has all but eradicated that perceived progression route. It results in making young people more dependant on family and gives them the feeling of ‘working for nothing’ . The incentive of greater independence with an income has been significantly diminished.

Proposal

- extend Train to Gain eligibility to people aged 17
- enable early access to young people with additional needs to other JCP specialist ‘adult’ support services eg Access to Work

6 – Access Trials

Other than for Jobcentre Plus provision, IB recipients cannot train for more than 16 hours per week without losing their entitlement to benefits, including ‘passported’ benefits. This acts as a significant barrier, and restricts the type of training available to them. Additionally, if the individual continued on a “full time” course, benefits would cease removing the opportunity for “fee remission”. The access trials have demonstrated a demand for this flexibility. IB customers are engaging as benefits are protected. The impacts expected are significant and offer the customer an opportunity to develop a long-term interest and progression of training.

Proposal - Allow benefit recipients, at their Jobcentre Plus advisor’s discretion, when it is considered essential to their employment prospects, to receive JCP training allowances whilst taking up any appropriate provision (full- or part-time).

7 – For IB recipients, remove mandatory element of New Deal

People receiving Incapacity Benefits are unable to access Jobcentre Plus-funded training and other contracted provision to help prepare them for work, because current eligibility rules prevent this. They can elect to join the appropriate New Deal initiative, where the full range of provision is available to them, including training, advice and work placements or trials. However, elements of New Deal are mandatory, with the possibility of benefit sanctions for people refusing to comply, so they are reluctant to take up this option.

Proposal - for IB clients transferring voluntarily to New Deal, remove the mandatory requirement, avoiding the threat of benefit sanctions.

8 – Extend ADF eligibility

The cost of starting work is widely acknowledged - people without work for long periods often do not have funds to cover the initial outlay involved, eg buying work clothes, transport costs, or essential tools. Current entitlement conditions do not allow IB recipients or under-18s to receive help through the Adviser Discretionary Fund (ADF).

Proposal - Extend ADF eligibility criteria to include IB recipients and under-18s who have been without a job for over 6 months.

9 - Opportunity availability

It is feared that, owing to the timescales needed to implement changes to post 16 learning, some 18 and 19 year olds may miss out on its potential benefits. There are gaps in Work Based Learning Opportunities and progression pathways for young people aged 17 to 19. Inevitably, for a variety of reasons young people do not complete, or need ongoing support. The inflexibility of the current learning framework

prevents the continuation of 'elements' and so acts as a barrier to future progression.

Proposal

- Create a special 'transition fund' to support individually tailored learning and work support that enables access to youth and adult opportunities.
- Extend the duration of work based learning and support for those who aspire to NVQ Level 1 from 22 to 52 weeks dependant on individual needs/academic year
- Enable stepped support for young people e.g. starting with one x day per week and building up to that which the young person can sustain.

10 – Financial disincentives to work

The most common and chronic problems preventing our target group returning to the labour market are the co-dependencies of social and financial exclusion. Collectively they conspire to make it extremely difficult for our client group to perceive the multiple benefits of employment. The concept of 'Making Work Pay' is often under-mined by policy and the benefit payment system itself. We seek to negotiate 'enablers' that would radically challenge the current application of the benefit regulations. We propose to achieve this by considering the family as an economic unit, and therefore the impacts of taking work by one family member and how it affects others in the household will be central to our work.

Proposal

- Establish a small working team with the expertise and experience to propose tangible solutions and processes to track and manage their implementation for a cohort of our target client group
- Present the findings & proposed solutions in stage 2 of the Employment Consortium

11 – Contracting

Contracting strategies in Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council are lengthy and bureaucratic, leaving little flexibility to respond very quickly to employment market changes. In addition, the same strategies, whilst enabling some alignment of funds, restrict partners' ability to let a single contract for joint provision through a joint commissioning or pooling provision. The short-term nature of funding allocations makes medium-term planning for an integrated approach to employment and skills difficult.

Proposal – to allocate funding normally directly managed by Jobcentre Plus and the LSC to the Consortium for allocation to project delivery. In effect, this funding could be sub-contracted by the Consortium via North Tyneside Council's standing order procedures, thus removing the lengthy and cumbersome contracting strategies held by Jobcentre Plus and the LSC. All decisions to allocate this funding will be made by the partners including Jobcentre Plus and the LSC. A contracting framework of this nature is in place through Tyne and Wear Together, this would build on current best practice.

12– Deprived Area Fund

The Consortium’s funding comprises a number of partners’ funding streams which, in the early stages of operation, are constrained by existing contracting arrangements and timetables. Whilst our contracting strategy involves working increasingly closely to align funding, in the short-term we need to be able to respond quickly to local needs. In practice, we may not be able to respond as quickly as we would wish because of, for example, the speed of Jobcentre Plus procurement processes.

Proposal – to allocate DAF directly to the Consortium rather than to Jobcentre Plus District Managers, to be used in line with Consortium strategy and priorities. In addition to providing extra flexibility and the ability to speed up the contracting process, having funding under the Consortium’s direct control will help to drive partners’ behaviour and facilitate our new way of working together.

3.7 Programme Budget

3.7.1 Consortium members will work closely together to align existing funding, to optimise value for money and obtain improved results for our customers. We are holding an initial workshop in January 07 to identify for mainstream, discretionary and flexible funding:

- the resources which are currently available to Consortium partners
- elements of flexibility within existing resources
- timescales for changes in existing contracts and funding streams

3.7.2 The pattern of funding is still to be developed, and will be dependent on, inter alia:

- DWP’s decision on the amount of the Deprived Area Fund which will be allocated to the area covered by the Consortium
- our local analysis of our target communities (as described in Section 2), highlighting gaps which we need to address
- discussions with local partners, eg LSPs, about funding which is already available to them and how flexibly this can be used to address relevant elements of the Consortium’s strategy
- decisions on our targets

3.7.3 Initial funding plans for using the Deprived Area Fund in 07-08 will be developed by March 07, and a strategy for aligning other partners’ funds will be in place by the end of April 07.

3.8 Cross-cutting Themes Appraisal

3.8.1 We recognise that a wide range of interacting factors affects both the demand for, and supply of, labour. This dynamic process in the labour market creates cross-

cutting issues which have influenced our strategy. Our approach to some of the key issues is outlined below.

Diversity

- 3.8.2 Our plans are designed to make a significant difference to the most deprived and marginalised social groups. Whilst the City Region boundaries are flexible, we will focus our activities to help individuals in the ‘natural communities’ described in Section 2. It is here that unemployment and worklessness are concentrated; there are lower levels of income, qualifications and skills; higher levels of ill health, crime and fear of crime; the poorest quality and choice of housing; poor connectivity and local choice in shopping and leisure. Unsurprisingly, it is in these areas that our identified target groups, including IB claimants, IS and lone parent claimants, BME population and low income households with children are concentrated.
- 3.8.3 By adopting a geographical focus, and using our additional community-based analysis, we will be able to concentrate efforts and tailor support to local needs. This supply-side information will be used alongside an analysis of current and future employment opportunities to identify any actual or potential diversity issues on the demand side. This will involve analysis of the type and location of available job opportunities, as well as any specific skills, qualities, experience and attitudes required to succeed in sustained employment
- 3.8.4 By putting employers at the heart of our approach, we will ensure our target groups have equal access to vacancies and employers have a diverse workforce which reflects the makeup of communities in the City Region. We will ensure, by working with the voluntary and community sectors, that the hardest-to-reach are effectively engaged and can access the full range of provision offered by the Consortium.
- 3.8.5 We will ensure that our performance management system allows us to identify and track the key target groups, enabling us to monitor both progress and focus of activity during the development phase.

Health

- 3.8.6 The wider social benefits deriving from the interaction between good health and sustained employment and income are well-established, and health problems are a significant barrier for many people in our target communities. A snapshot taken in December 2006 showed that more than 122,000 people, or 10.3% of the working age population, were claiming incapacity-related benefits in the City Region. It is well known that a significant proportion of IB claimants would like to return to suitable work but are locked into benefit dependency, compounded by lack of confidence and outdated work skills.
- 3.8.7 Working closely with a wide range of partners including the health, voluntary and community sectors, we will identify the major health issues preventing people from returning to work and tailor our activities appropriately. We will help those people with the capacity to work to regain confidence and to acquire new or update existing work skills, making sure that we complement Jobcentre Plus’ Pathways programme,

which will be fully rolled out across the City Region in 2007, to provide a smooth transition from benefits into employment.

Economic Growth

3.8.8 As seen throughout this Business Plan, employers are at the heart of our strategy because successful, expanding businesses will provide economic growth and future sustainable employment opportunities. Our demand-led approach will ensure that supply-side support services directly reflect the needs of employers and help them to recruit the skilled people they need to grow and succeed in a rapidly-changing modern economy. Higher value-added jobs will result from raising skills and qualification levels in the workforce and this will contribute to improving regional productivity. Significant improvements in employment rates in our target groups and communities will also have wider economic benefits by retaining more cash in local economies, increasing local consumption, improving local consumer choice and sustaining local businesses.

Regeneration

3.8.9 Our employment support activity will be linked closely to current and future regeneration programmes in the City Region. Within the overall Tyne & Wear City Region Business Case, we identified the opportunities for maximising the business and employment growth potential arising from the closer alignment of transport, property and economic regeneration activities. In addition, as demonstrated in Section 1, our strategy is aligned with those of our national, regional and sub-regional partners.

3.8.10 Significant physical and cultural regeneration activity will continue to be delivered by the private and public sectors in the City Region and beyond, and this will present major opportunities for business and employment growth in our target communities. By using best practice in relation to procurement and the use of appropriate agreements/protocols, we will maximise the local labour potential arising from the physical and cultural regeneration of our communities. Many examples of good practice have been developed across the City Region, and the Consortium will learn from and build upon them, to enable local people to benefit from local improvements. (See 3.1.7. *Demand-led opportunities – the Construction Employment Integrator.*)

Social Inclusion

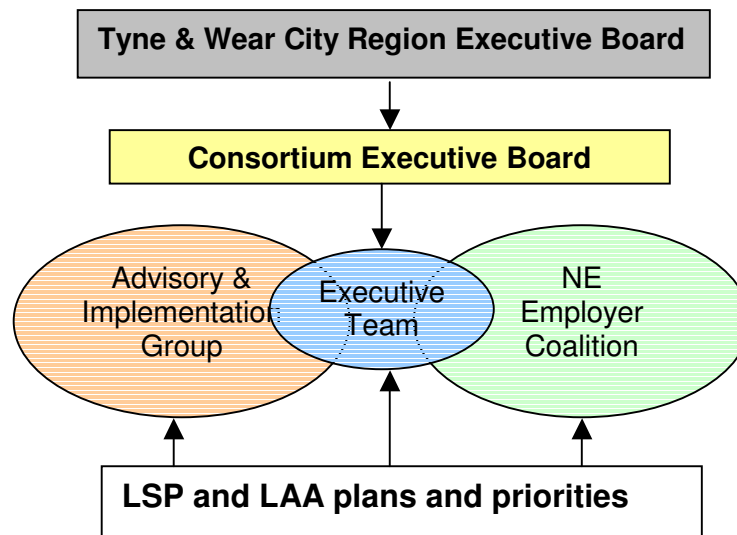
3.8.11 There is an important interaction between social inclusion and sustained employment and income, and those without work are highly likely to live in poverty and experience social exclusion. Often where income is limited and communities are under economic pressure, cultural tensions and anti-social behaviour can arise. Common experiences are not shared with mainstream society, and choices and horizons are limited. By making sustained employment a realistic and accessible option for our target client groups, our strategy will help combat some of the root causes of social exclusion.

- 3.8.12 We aim to tackle the issue of child poverty by focusing on low-income households with children. Recognising that people living in those households can be socially isolated and experience multiple barriers to re-entering the labour market, we will tailor plans to help these families out of poverty, providing working role models for their children, and increasing income and general well-being.
- 3.8.13 Our success in tackling social exclusion will depend on our success in engaging the hardest-to-reach groups. Our ability to do so, and to deliver specific targeted activities, will be enhanced by the partnership between statutory, private and voluntary and community sectors. This comprehensive spread will enable appropriate and flexible selection of delivery, depending on the particular geography, identity and special requirements of identified individuals and social groups.

Section 4 – GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 Governance

- 4.1.1 The Consortium will form an integral part of the Tyne & Wear City Region, delivering its employment and worklessness/employability agenda. We will work closely with the City Region’s transport and regeneration initiatives, but the Consortium is designed to be able to stand alone until other aspects of the City Region are fully operational.
- 4.1.2 Our organisational structure is designed to provide clear accountabilities and lines of responsibility to enable effective decision-making and governance:



- 4.1.3 Our governance framework, which sets out the roles, accountabilities, and responsibilities of each of these groups, is attached as Annexe 3.
- 4.1.5 Details of the members of the Consortium Shadow Executive Board and organisations represented on the substantive Board are provided in Annexe 4.
- 4.1.6 In summary, however, the Executive Board will be chaired by a member of the Tyne & Wear City Region Executive Board, ensuring that our strategies are coordinated, and opportunities for our clients are maximised. The Consortium Executive Board will agree strategy, which will be carried out by partner organisations through members of the Advisory and Implementation Group, Executive Team, and the North East Employer Coalition. North Tyneside Council will manage the Consortium’s financial arrangements, ensuring separation of relevant financial accounting and purchasing responsibilities to maintain probity.

4.2 Programme Management

- 4.2.1 The Consortium's management structure, key responsibilities and accountabilities are described in para 4a above our Governance Framework, attached as Annexe 3.
- 4.2.2 North Tyneside Council will act as the budget holder for the Consortium, which will therefore be subject to the Council's own governance and internal and external audit arrangements.

4.3 Performance and Financial Management

Performance Management Structure

- 4.3.1 The Consortium Executive Team will be responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress, both on the activities in our Delivery Plan, and on achieving our targets. A designated performance manager will be appointed to the Executive Team, to develop and implement effective systems and procedures for reviewing progress against targets. Progress will be reported on a monthly basis to the Programme Delivery Manager and to the Advisory and Implementation Group, with recommendations, where appropriate, for sharing good practice or performance improvement action. **Job descriptions for the Executive Team are included in Annexe 3.**
- 4.3.2 The Advisory and Implementation Group is responsible for reviewing progress, in conjunction with the Executive Team, identifying and sharing good practice, and identifying areas for improvement and agreeing and implementing remedial activities in their own organisations and those which they represent. It will also be responsible for identifying, evaluating, sharing and implementing good practice, and for making recommendations, where appropriate, to the Executive Board.
- 4.3.3 Our structure and activities will be subject to formal regular reviews to ensure that they are fit for purpose, in terms of design and delivery.
- 4.3.4 We are also developing a Memorandum of Understanding, setting out Consortium partners' accountabilities and commitments, including delivery of activities and aligning and directing funding to support our agreed strategy.

Key Management Information

- 4.3.5 Our Target and Performance Task Group is currently considering the targets which already exist with a view to developing appropriate targets and outputs which the Consortium will use to measure its success. These measures will depend on the findings and recommendations of the Employer and Client Task Groups. Measurements will include key performance targets, eg the employment rate, along with more specific numerical indicators, to ensure that the Consortium's impact can be measured, irrespective of external economic or demographic factors.

- 4.3.6 The Group will also develop and agree appropriate performance tracking systems, a system for validating outcomes, and a quality assurance system.
- 4.3.7 In order to ensure that we can measure client progress, as well as job outcomes, we are investigating the development of a shared IT-based performance management system, which can be used by all partners. This would be designed to capture the wide range of assistance from which our customers can benefit.
- 4.3.8 We are also working, in the medium term, to develop shared progress standards and a tracking system, whereby all partners will be able to measure and record individuals' progress. This will ensure that clients receive comprehensive and progressive support in their journey towards sustainable employment.

Financial Management

- 4.3.9 North Tyneside Council, as the lead financial organisation for the Consortium, will be responsible for managing development funding, and the Executive Team will use this information to provide appropriate reports to DWP.
- 4.3.10 Consortium partners will retain responsibility for financial management of the budgets which are identified for potential alignment.
- 4.3.11 Any pooled funding which may become available to the Consortium, such as the Deprived Area Fund, will be subject to our joint contacting strategy, as described in Section 3, which will be based on the successful sub-regional model operated by Tyne and Wear Together, and subject to North Tyneside Council's financial and audit procedures (*see paragraph 3.1.23*).

4.4 Administrative Budget

- 4.4.1 Our administrative costs for the current year and first full year of operation are summarised below. (Full details and projections for 08-09 are given in Annexe 6.)

	2006-07	2007-08
Total costs funded by DWP and ONE NE:		
Staffing Costs	£101,294	£174,128
Non-staff costs	£ 60,260	£184,030
Total	£161,554	£358,158

Additional administrative costs for which funding will be sought from other sources:

Staffing costs	£10,750	£10,750
Non-staff costs	£75,000	
Total	£85,750	

- 4.4.2 It is anticipated that annual administrative costs will reduce after March 2008, as, for example, our infrastructure will be in place, and our initial publicity and staff training

activities will have been completed by that stage. Funding of a further £100,000 has been identified by the Regional Development Agency, ONE North East, to cover development costs until March 2009.

- 4.4.3 After this initial development phase, partners anticipate that there will be significant savings in their existing administrative costs as strategies and activities are aligned and streamlined. We therefore expect that future costs will be met by partners' contributions as savings are realised. However, because of the uncertainty about a number of funding streams after March 08, this will be subject to review by all partners.
- 4.4.4 We are also awaiting information and guidance from DWP on the potential reward funding, and what this may be used for, ie whether it can be used for infrastructure and/or provision.

4.5 Risk Management

- 4.5.1 Risks will be recorded and managed by the Programme Delivery Manager and Executive Team, as described in more detail in our Governance Framework (Annexe 3), which also incorporates our Risk Register (provided separately here as Annexe 5).

4.6 Implementation Timeline

The indicative timeline for implementing the Consortium’s plans is shown below. This is a working document, which continues to be refined as our Task Groups progress and refine their proposals. Details of future activities are shown on a monthly basis for the remainder of the development phase, up to April 07, then quarterly thereafter.

Activity	Jan 07	Feb 07	Mar 07	Apr 07	Jun 07	Sept 07	Dec 07	Mar 08
External Communications Strategy/Plan Agreed	◆							
Executive Board Terms of Reference Agreed	◆							
Advisory & Implementation Group Constituted		◆						
Programme Delivery Manager in post		◆						
Executive Team staff in post			◆					
Community-based analysis			◆					
Initial detailed consultation on service offers	→	→	◆					
Client offer defined & processes established					◆			
Initial employer offer defined & processes established			◆					
Staff Awareness			→	→	→	→	→	→
Joint Contracting Strategy/Framework Agreed			◆					
Delivery Plan for 07-08			◆					
Publicity materials for service offer						◆		
Consortium official launch						◆		
Initial commissioning Framework in operation				◆				
Priorities for use of DAF agreed			◆					
Alignment of partners’ operational plans								◆ →
Formal evaluation of Consortium								◆
Memorandum of Understanding agreed between all partners			◆					

Section 5 – CONSULTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND LEARNING

5.1 Consultation

- 5.1.1 Consultation with partners, individuals and employers is integral to the Consortium's operations, in both developing and delivering our strategy and services. Resources have been built in to our successful bid for developing the Consortium, and extensive consultation will take place beginning in January 07 to ensure that our initial service offer and implementation plans reflect individual, community and employer needs.
- 5.1.3 Our model for engaging and delivering services to employers has been developed in consultation with board members of the NE Employer Coalition Board; with Consortium partners; and with members of the Regional Employability Framework focus group.
- 5.1.4 The NE Employer Coalition team, working with Business Link and partners, will undertake further detailed consultation with a wider range of large and small employers from January March 07, to ensure that the model is robust and that the necessary processes are in place to deliver it effectively before it is launched officially. Ongoing consultation will then take place as employers are engaged and as the service is delivered, to ensure that it meets employers' needs, and to refine and develop the model further.
- 5.1.5 We are also consulting delivery partners and LSPs on local needs and what works on the ground. Our clients' views will be reflected through our partners' existing consultation mechanisms, both to inform our initial service model and on an ongoing basis to tailor future development of provision.
- 5.1.6 Our proposed consultation activities, beginning in January 07, include:
- our task groups will identify the key themes and constituencies for consultation
 - consultation events scheduled
 - workshops involving all partners to consider and consult on enablers
 - workshop involving all partners to consider existing funding
 - Board and AIG consulted on proposed models and targets
 - dialogue initiated with 'twin' Birmingham consortium
 - national DWP meetings
 - findings from consultation events evaluated to inform work of task groups

5.2 Communications

- 5.2.1 **Internal communications** amongst partners are being coordinated by means of a shared internal communication strategy and action plan (**Annexe 7**). This includes:
- **'Update'** - newsletter for all partners' staff, detailing progress on establishing the Consortium and seeking feedback

- **joint awareness sessions** for front-line staff from all partner organisations, to prepare them for the launch, then six-monthly thereafter
- **formal briefings** on progress for regular meetings of partners' Leaders and Chief Executives
- **presentations** to meetings of partners by Programme Delivery Manager and members of the Executive Team

5.2.2 An **external communication** strategy/plan is currently being developed, which will set out detailed arrangements for:

- consultation with the public and stakeholders – both on our initial delivery plans (beginning in January 07), and an ongoing basis
- publicising the Consortium and its activities, including an official launch in September 07
- marketing activities to engage employers and individual clients

This includes the role of all partners, to ensure that information is communicated consistently and that all appropriate people are consulted and involved. Planned activities include:

- developing a shared identity/branding for the Consortium
- securing media coverage at appropriate stages (eg securing DAF funding, official launch, publicising success stories)
- developing a website as part of a range of activities for ongoing communication and customer feedback

5.2.3 An initial budget for marketing activities has been secured as part of DWP seed corn funding.

5.2.4 External communication activities will begin in January 07.

5.3 Learning

5.3.1 Learning from our successes

Our activities will be varied, being tailored to meet the needs of our targeted communities and of specific employers or employment sectors, and identifying, sharing and implementing best practice is therefore feature of our delivery plans. We will identify what works well and aim to implement this more widely, both within our targeted communities and in the City Region as a whole. We have planned a range of activities to achieve this:

- the **Advisory and Implementation Group** (which replaces and builds upon the work of the successful Tyne & Wear Together partnership) is responsible for developing and commissioning activity, and has a key role in identifying local needs and working with LSPs, providers and employers to ensure that support is delivered; this will enable members to identify what works; share it with other members of the group; and arrange for deployment of initiatives in other areas;

- the **Executive Team** will work with the AIG and NE Employer Coalition to monitor progress/performance, and will manage internal and external communications, ensuring that successes and good practice are identified and publicised;
- following initial awareness sessions starting in March 07, **six-monthly staff events** will be held, to include staff from all partner organisations, providing the opportunity to share experience and identify good practice;
- **customer feedback** will also play an important part in identifying what does (or does not) work well, as described in paragraph 5.3.3 below.

5.3.2 Sharing with others

To share our experiences with other Pathfinders, and to learn from theirs, and also to share with non-Pathfinder areas, we will:

- participate in **Regional Conferences** – such as the Regional Employability Framework event involving the Minister of State for Employment & Welfare Reform, held on 4 December 06
- share experience at **national events**, eg Welfare to Work conferences
- **share experience with DWP**, through the progress reporting structure and through events for Pathfinders which DWP organises
- **publicise successes on our website**, when this is developed
- **twinning** with Birmingham City Region consortium – we have agreed with colleagues in Birmingham to set up twinning arrangements for working together, sharing good practice etc

5.3.3 Obtaining and Using Customer Feedback

We will seek regular feedback from our customers – both employers and individuals – to help us to refine and improve our services. This will take a number of forms. Initially, we will use information obtained from:

- partner organisations' existing customer feedback systems, such as customer surveys, questionnaires, and statistics eg Jobcentre Plus' customer service target results, Business Link employer surveys, Local authority consultation strategies
- ad-hoc feedback to partner organisations on the service which they have received
- feedback from local consultation events held with employers and individuals

We then propose to develop a shared system, to be used by all Consortium partners, including a Consortium customer service leaflet, inviting feedback in a standard format, which can then be collated and analysed in a consistent way.

Results from all of these methods will be fed in to the Consortium Executive Team for analysis, and will form part of the Team's monthly and quarterly performance reports, which the Advisory & Implementation Group will use to inform performance improvement activities.

5.4 Review and Evaluation

- 5.4.1 Funding of £10,000 has been identified, as part of our seed-corn funding proposals to DWP, to commission an independent evaluation of the Consortium's progress at the end of the first full operational year. This evaluation will be in addition to DWP's own evaluation of the City Strategy, details of which have yet to be confirmed.
- 5.4.2 Detailed terms of reference will be drawn up for this evaluation in the second half of 07-08, and they will be designed to complement the DWP' evaluation, but it is anticipated that the review will include the Consortium's structures and processes as well as its progress towards achieving its strategic objectives.



Service Provider	Target Client groups																					
	Drug or Alcohol Problems	lacking basic skills	leaving care homes	completing new deal 25+	12 month + Jobless	Jobless	Women Returners	Recently redundant	Health problems	Employed Looking for a Career change	Employed people seeking IAG	Below NVQ 2	Lone Parents	Age 50+	Ethnic Minorities	People with a Disability	Ex-offenders	People on Incapacity benefit	Ex HM forces	Homeless	Refugees	English not first language
Connexions Tyne and Wear	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
City of Newcastle	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
City of Sunderland	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gateshead MBC	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
North Tyneside	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
South Tyneside	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
New Pathways	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Jobcentre Plus	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Key:

- Service provided free of charge 1
- Service provided at subsidised rates 2
- Service charged at commercial rates 3
- Limited Service provided 4

JOBCENTRE PLUS NORTH EAST REGION 06/07 PROGRAMME ALLOCATIONS

TYPE OF PROVISION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING ALLOCATION		GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE	
		NORTHUMBRIA	SOUTH TYNE & WEAR VALLEY	NORTHUMBRIA	SOUTH TYNE & WEAR VALLEY
Adviser Discretionary Fund	Financial incentive designed to help Jobcentre Plus customers make the transition from claiming benefits into employment.	£417,981	£332,894	All areas	All areas
Travel To Interview Scheme	Financial support available to customers attending interviews outside of daily travelling distance (eligibility criteria applies).	£70,097	£57,321	All areas	All areas
Work Trial	Short period with an employers to test suitability for a current vacancy.	£4,680	£3,506	All areas	All areas
Private Sector Led New Deal	New Deal Gateway Advisory Service delivered by external provider.	£2,206,040	N/A	North Tyneside only	N/A
Progress To Work	Provision which supports previous drug users who are disadvantaged within the labour market.	£496,844	£577,165	All areas	All areas
New Deal 18-24 & 25+ Gateway Services	Personal Adviser support and guidance to move New Deal customers into work.	£1,861,621	£2,202,589	All areas	All areas
New Deal 18-24 & 25+ Options	Training/work experience provision.	£2,853,974	£4,375,871	All areas	All areas

TYPE OF PROVISION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING ALLOCATION		GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE	
New Deal Self Employment	Self employed provision to support New Deal 18-45 and 25+ customer groups	£207,025	£119,382	All areas	All areas
New Deal for Lone Parents	Voluntary programme specifically designed to help lone parents into work offering a package of support to help move customers towards a more secure future.	£247,921	£322,298	All areas	All areas
New Deal for Partners	Support to partners of people claiming any of the following benefits: Jobseekers Allowance Income Support Incapacity Benefit Carer's Allowance Severe Disablement Benefit Pension Credit	£13,533	£11,893	All areas	All areas
New Deal 50+	Programme designed to help 50+ customers into work offering a package of support to help customers closer to the labour market.	£1,895	£1,945	All areas	All areas
New Deal for Disabled People	Contracted support which offer a range of support services to disabled people having difficulty in getting a job because of their disability. Support also provided to employed people who are concerned about losing their job because of a disability.	£1,633,815	£1,633,815	All areas	All areas

TYPE OF PROVISION	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING ALLOCATION		GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE	
Pathways To Work	JCP delivers Pathways to Work to Incapacity Benefit recipients offering them access to programmes, work grants and support to enable them to manage health barriers & to develop the skills to find/sustain employment.	£250,000 (part year allocation as programme did not start till December and customers will not reach NHS provision till February 07)	£4,050,000	All areas	All areas
European Social Fund	JCP is a co financing organisation & has developed provision to support unemployed residents with occupational and personal development training as well as a variety of support provision such as mentoring	£29.1m*		All areas	All areas

NB These figures do not include funding for staff working in the Jobcentre Plus organisation. They include all funding for both Northumbria and South Tyne and Wear Valley Districts as, at this time, no calculation is available to disaggregate for the City Strategy area. Northumbria District includes Northumberland County, North Tyneside, Newcastle and Gateshead LAs.

South Tyne and Wear Valley District incorporates Durham County, Sunderland and South Tyneside LAs

* Regional allocation for programme running 2004 to 2008

EXECUTIVE BOARD – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The Consortium's primary objective is improve the overall employment rate of the City Region, and, in particular, the rate of people in specific groups receiving benefits, including those with disabilities or health problems, lone parents, older workers, and minority ethnic groups.

The Consortium's Executive Board will comprise senior-level representatives of the organisations shown overleaf, each with the authority to decide on strategy and funding allocation on behalf of his or her organisation.

Membership

It is proposed that the Executive Board will be chaired by a private-sector employer, with a Vice Chair drawn from one of the Local Authority representatives. The Chair will also represent the Consortium on the Tyne and Wear City Region Executive Board.

Decision Making Authority

The Executive Board will decide upon such matters as are within members' authority, delegated by their own organisations. It will also have authority to decide on all matters relating to the Consortium's policy, strategy and delivery plans.

Reporting Arrangements

The Consortium Executive Board will report to the Tyne and Wear City Region Executive Board.

Frequency of Meetings

The Board will meet at intervals to be decided by the Chair, sufficient to ensure effective reviews of progress, consultation and delivery of appropriate activities. However, the Board will meet, as a minimum, on a quarterly basis.

Responsibilities

Working through the Programme Delivery Manager, the North East Employer Coalition, and the Consortium Advisory and Implementation Group, the Executive Board will be responsible for:

- agreeing and overseeing implementation of an Employability Strategy and associated Delivery Plan for the City Region, incorporating employers' requirements and supply-side initiatives



- agreeing a funding and resourcing strategy and appropriate delegated authorities, to ensure that decisions are made at the appropriate level and time
- aligning strategy, funding and other resources to focus help on the most disadvantaged areas
- agreeing funding/resourcing of specific initiatives, in line with agreed strategy
- considering synergy or duplication with other existing regional and sub-regional partnerships, to make optimum use of resources
- making representations to policy makers and Government to address local, regional and national barriers to people moving into work
- ensuring that employment and skills issues are an integral part of overall City Region strategy, via the City Region Leadership Board
- reviewing progress towards achieving the Strategy

The Programme Delivery Manager will act as the primary link for communications between the Consortium Executive Board, the Advisory and Implementation Group, and the North East Employer Coalition.

Review

The City Region governance arrangements will include formal scrutiny arrangements. In addition, a review of the Consortium Executive Board's progress and terms of reference will be undertaken after the end of the first full year of operation.

Secretariat

The Consortium Executive Team will provide secretariat support for the Executive Board – arranging meetings, taking minutes, and acting as a focal point for correspondence.

Member Organisations

Private Sector Employer (Chair)

Government Office North East (Strategic Adviser)

Jobcentre Plus

Learning & Skills Council

Local Authorities:

- Gateshead and North Tyneside, representing 5 Tyne & Wear Authorities
- A local authority representative from Durham
- A local authority representative from Northumberland Council
- (these local authorities will provide a vice chair)

ONE North East

Strategic Health Authority

The Voluntary Sector

The Employment Consortium Programme Delivery Manager will report to this Board

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

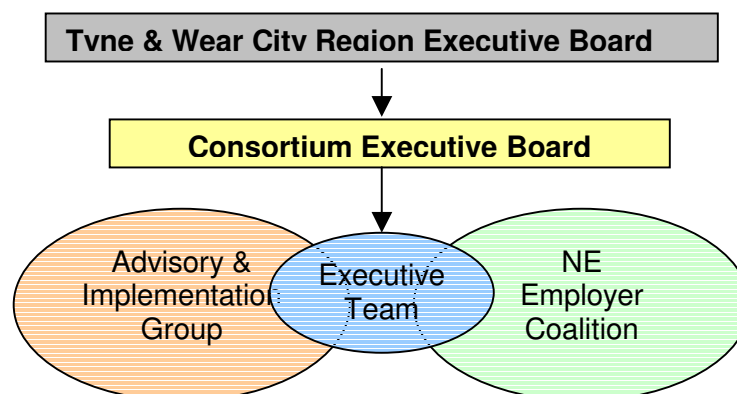
1. Purpose

This document sets out the governance and assurance arrangements for the Consortium and its component structures. It is designed to complement, rather than replace or duplicate, the governance arrangements in place in the Consortium’s partner organisations, and those of the overall Tyne & Wear City Region partnership.

2. Organisational Framework

The Consortium will form an integral part of the Tyne & Wear City Region, and will deliver its employment and worklessness/employability agenda. It will work closely with the City Region’s transport and regeneration initiatives, but is designed to be able to stand alone until other aspects of the City Region are fully operational.

The organisational structure of the Consortium is designed to provide clear accountabilities and lines of responsibility to enable effective decision-making and governance:



2.1 Tyne & Wear City Region Executive Board

This Board will comprise senior representatives of the City Region partners and other key stakeholders. Detailed arrangements for and representation on this Board are the subject of a separate paper and timeline. However, it is envisaged that, in the future, a member of this Board will chair the Consortium Executive Board.

2.2 Employment Consortium Executive Board

The Consortium Executive Board will comprise senior-level representatives of partner organisations, each with the authority to decide on strategy and funding allocation on behalf of his or her organisation. The Board will be chaired by a private-sector employer, who will also represent the Consortium on the City Region

Executive Board. A Deputy Chairman will be drawn from the Local Authority members of the Board.

Detailed terms of reference for the Consortium Executive Board are given in Appendix 1.

2.3 Programme Delivery Manager & Executive Team

The Executive Board will be supported by a small Executive Team, initially comprising a Programme Delivery Manager and three staff. This team will be responsible for ensuring that the Consortium has effective operating systems; monitoring progress and performance; and working with partners to deliver the Consortium's objectives.

2.4 Advisory & Implementation Group

The Advisory & Implementation Group (AIG) will be responsible for making recommendations and providing advice and support to the Consortium Executive Board, and for working with the Programme Delivery Manager and Executive Team to develop and implement the Consortium's strategy.

Detailed terms of reference for this Group are given in Appendix 2.

2.5 North East Employer Coalition

The Coalition, working with other partners, will take the lead in engaging employers, identifying their requirements, and representing the employer perspective to the Executive Board and Advisory and Implementation Group. The Chief Executive will represent the Coalition on the Consortium Executive Board and on the AIG.

3. Accountabilities and Decision-Making

3.1 Consortium Executive Board

The Consortium Executive Board will have overall accountability for:

- agreeing and overseeing implementation of an Employability Strategy and associated Delivery Plan for the City Region, incorporating employers' requirements and supply-side initiatives
- agreeing a funding and resourcing strategy and appropriate delegated authorities, to ensure that decisions are made at the appropriate level and time
- aligning strategy, funding and other resources to focus help on the most disadvantaged areas
- agreeing funding/resourcing of specific initiatives, in line with agreed strategy
- considering synergy or duplication with other existing regional and sub-regional partnerships, to make optimum use of resources
- making representations to policy makers and Government to address local, regional and national barriers to people moving into work

- ensuring that employment and skills issues are an integral part of overall City Region strategy, via the City Region Executive Board

3.2 Consortium Executive Team

Working for the Programme Delivery Manager, this team is responsible for:

- designing and implementing processes to ensure that the Consortium operates effectively
- compiling, reviewing and reporting on progress of the Delivery Plan, in conjunction with partners
- monitoring and reporting on performance
- identifying and working with partners to develop initiatives and projects to address issues in the areas covered by the Consortium
- evaluating and making recommendations to the Delivery Manager and Consortium Executive Board on projects and proposals for funding
- ensuring effective communications between Consortium partners, stakeholders and customers

Initially, this Team will comprise three people, responsible for strategy & communications; performance; and administrative support.

3.3 Advisory & Implementation Group

The AIG is responsible for making recommendations and providing advice and support to the Consortium Executive Board, and for working with the Programme Delivery Manager and Executive Team to:

- develop the Employability Strategy and Delivery Plan for the City Region
- represent Local Authority and LSPs, and ensure that their priorities and strategies, and those of LAAs, are reflected in the Consortium's strategy
- ensure that the supply-side (ie residents of targeted communities) is fully represented in the Consortium's strategy and delivery plans
- provide advice and recommendations to the Consortium Executive Board on all aspects of employment, skills and worklessness
- implement relevant aspects of the Delivery Plan
- monitor progress monthly, and identify and implement improvement or remedial activities as necessary
- commission activity as required, and deliver activity commissioned by the Consortium Executive Board

3.4 North East Employer Coalition

The Coalition is responsible for engaging employers, identifying those with significant numbers of vacancies, and working with them and other Consortium members to identify and articulate their needs and help partners to develop recruitment solutions. In particular, it will be responsible for:

- engaging major employers (public and private sector) and gaining their commitment to provide vacancies
- working with partners to articulate requirements to inform the design of customised recruitment and training packages to meet employers' needs
- ensuring that recruitment systems are integrated and responsive to their own and their potential recruits' current and future needs
- identifying current and future employment and skills needs, to inform future provision
- promoting the benefits of recruiting from alternative labour pools (ie residents of targeted areas/priority groups)
- effecting a 'culture change' in employers to make more opportunities available and accessible to the Consortium's key customers

3.6 Terms of Reference

Each of these groups has formal terms of reference which will be reviewed, as a minimum, on an annual basis. Group members will remain responsible to their own organisations for carrying out their own accountabilities.

3.7 Controls

In the initial stages of operation, Consortium Executive Board, Advisory and Implementation Group and Executive Team members will adhere to the policies and governance arrangements applying to their own organisations, including for example financial and electronic media policies. In the longer term, the Consortium will develop its own detailed policies and control arrangements, with a view to aligning and/or streamlining partners' arrangements.

4. Risk Management

4.1 Process

The Programme Delivery Manager will be responsible for establishing, maintaining and managing the Consortium's risk register. Identified risks will be recorded, and assessed and monitored by the Advisory and Implementation Group at its monthly meetings. The AIG will be responsible for reviewing progress, developing and implementing mitigation activities for issues within members' delegated authority, and escalating issues to the Board when appropriate, via the Programme Delivery Manager.

4.2 Risk Register

The Consortium's Risk Register (see Annexe 5) is designed to record risks, responsibility for managing them, and mitigation activities. This is designed specifically to manage risks appropriate to the Consortium's objectives, and is not intended to duplicate or replace partner organisations' own risk registers.

5. Assurance

Financial Assurance - Internal

North Tyneside Council, as the accountable body for handling the Consortium's financial arrangements, will provide monthly financial reports, which will be reviewed by the Advisory and Implementation Group. Quarterly and annual financial reports will be provided to the Consortium Executive Board.

The Advisory and Implementation Group will initiate and implement any remedial action necessary to ensure that the Consortium remains within its agreed budget.

Independent Financial Assurance

The Consortium's finances will be subject to the same external audit arrangements as other aspects of North Tyneside Council's financial activities, in accordance with the code of audit practice approved in March 2005. Auditors have responsibilities not only to audit the financial statements but also the audited body's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Appendix 1

EXECUTIVE BOARD - TERMS OF REFERENCE

(See Business Plan Annexe 2)

ADVISORY & IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Advisory & Implementation Group (AIG) will take the lead, on behalf of the Tyne and Wear City Region Consortium Executive Board, in managing the development and implementation of its strategy and delivery plans, ensuring that client and employer needs are identified and met, and that the Consortium's targets are achieved.

Membership

The Group will include members of each of the organisations represented on the Consortium Executive Board, plus other relevant partner organisations. The individual representing each organisation will be chosen by that organisation, but members must be in a position to:

- make decisions on allocation of funding and resources on behalf of their own organisations
- ensure that actions agreed by the Executive Board and the Advisory and Implementation Group are carried out by their own organisations
- have a sufficient understanding of worklessness, skills and employment issues to make practicable recommendations to the Executive Board

Sub-groups may be established from time to time, to consider matters not appropriate to the full AIG membership. Should sub-groups be deemed necessary, they will be time-limited, and terms of reference will be agreed with and reviewed regularly by the full AIG, to ensure that groups are kept to a minimum and have clearly defined timescales.

Decision Making Authority

The Group will decide upon such matters as are within members' authority, delegated by their own organisations. It will also have authority to decide on matters, in line with the Consortium's strategy, specifically delegated to it by the Consortium Executive Board.

Reporting Arrangements

The Group will report to the Consortium Executive Board, and will give advice, make recommendations, and give progress reports to the Board both at its regular meetings and on an ad-hoc basis as appropriate.

Frequency of Meetings

The Group will meet at intervals to be decided by the Chair, sufficient to ensure effective reviews of progress, consultation and delivery of appropriate activities. However, the Group will meet, as a minimum, on a quarterly basis.

Responsibilities

Working with the Programme Delivery Manager and NE Employer Coalition, the Group will be responsible for:

- developing, proposing to the Executive Board, and then overseeing implementation of a Delivery Plan to achieve the Consortium's objectives
- commissioning activity as required, and delivering activity commissioned by the Consortium Executive Board
- ensuring that the organisations which Group members represent deliver activities agreed by the Consortium Executive Board
- representing partner organisations, including LSPs, and ensuring that their priorities and strategies are reflected in the Consortium's ongoing plans and activities
- ensuring that the priorities in LAAs are reflected in the Consortium's plans and activities
- ensuring that the supply-side (ie residents of targeted communities) is fully represented in the Consortium's delivery plans
- providing advice and recommendations to the Consortium Executive Board on all aspects of employment, skills and worklessness
- monitoring progress monthly, in association with the Executive Team
- identifying areas for improvement and agreeing and implementing remedial activities as necessary
- identifying, evaluating, sharing and implementing good practice
- implementing and reviewing the effectiveness of the Consortium's internal communications strategy, making recommendations for improvement if appropriate

The Programme Delivery Manager will act as conduit for communications between this Group and the Consortium Executive Board.

Timescale

The AIG will operate, as a minimum, until the end of March 2009, when the need for its continuation will be formally reviewed by the Consortium Executive Board.

Review

In addition, the Advisory & Implementation Group will review its own operations and terms of reference regularly, to establish:

- if the Group continues to be required
- if its purpose is being achieved
- if membership continues to be appropriate
- if its terms of reference continue to be appropriate

Recommendations may then be made to the Executive Board for any changes deemed necessary. Reviews will be carried out six-monthly during the first full year of operation (07-08) then annually thereafter.

Secretariat

The Consortium Executive Team will provide secretariat support - arranging meetings, collating agenda items and producing minutes of meetings.

Member Organisations

Blyth Valley Council
Business Link
Castle Morpeth Council
Connexions
Durham County Council
Easington District Council
Employment Consortium Programme Delivery Manager
Gateshead Council
Government Office North East
Jobcentre Plus Northumbria District
Jobcentre Plus South Tyneside and Wear Valley District
Learning and Skills Council
Newcastle City Council
NE Employer Coalition
North Tyneside Council
Northumberland County Council
One North East
South Tyneside Council
Strategic Health Authority
Sunderland City Council
Voluntary Sector
Wansbeck District Council

EXECUTIVE TEAM – JOB DESCRIPTIONS

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MANAGER

Job Purpose

The purpose of the role is to establish and develop an Employment Consortium to cover the Tyne and Wear City Region, bringing partners together, developing the Consortium's strategy, establishing targets, and ensuring the delivery of projects and programmes to achieve them.

Main Responsibilities

1. Working with partners to set up and establish the Employment Consortium.
2. Developing and agreeing with partners an overall strategy to deliver the Consortium's objectives, including delivery targets and key performance indicators.
3. Developing and agreeing a funding strategy, to ensure that the funding partners' resources are aligned and targeted appropriately, and to provide clear criteria for organisations seeking help.
4. Developing and agreeing with the Consortium a Delivery Plan to achieve the Consortium's objectives and targets.
5. Managing and monitoring implementation of the Delivery Plan, and reporting on progress to the Consortium, making recommendations for change as appropriate.
6. Developing and managing effective relationships with key partners and stakeholders, including employers, local and national government agencies, business organisations, voluntary groups and community organisations.
7. Working with partners to identify barriers preventing local jobseekers' access to jobs and skills opportunities, and to develop and monitor implementation of initiatives to address them.
8. Identifying and exploiting further opportunities for joint working to support the Consortium's objectives.
9. Working with the Coordinators of Tyne & Wear City Region's Economic Regeneration and Transport groups to coordinate activities, and ensure that employment and skills issues are at the forefront of City Region strategy, providing the maximum opportunities for jobless residents.

10. Identifying other resources and additional sources of funding and working with partners to secure them, in order to implement projects in line with the Consortium's strategy.
11. Ensuring the effective management and governance of the Consortium's financial resources.
12. Leading a small executive team to support the Consortium and its partners in developing and monitoring projects and initiatives to achieve targets.

Accountabilities

- producing, agreeing with partners, and overseeing implementation of a Delivery Plan to achieve the Consortium's objectives and targets (the latter are currently being developed)
- effective management of the Consortium's financial resources
- identifying and securing financial and other resources to support initiatives in line with the Consortium's strategy

PROGRAMME OFFICER (STRATEGY)

Purpose

The purpose of the role is to assist with the establishment and development of an Employment Consortium to cover the Tyne and Wear City Region, supporting and, when necessary, representing the Programme Delivery Manager; developing plans & strategies for the Consortium; overseeing development and monitoring of the Consortium's Delivery Plan and managing internal & external communications.

Main Responsibilities

1. Supporting and, when necessary, representing the Employment Consortium Programme Delivery Manager
2. Supporting the Consortium Executive Board, Advisory and Implementation Group and North East Employer Coalition, as required.
3. Working with partners to develop Consortium strategies, policies and plans.
4. Overseeing development and monitoring of the Delivery Plan
5. Managing internal & external communications
6. Liaising with other Consortia to identify, share, and evaluate good practice
7. Develop, implement and manage processes and systems to enable the Team to operate effectively.

8. Working with those making bids for funding to develop projects for consideration by appropriate groups
9. Identifying, sharing and evaluating good practice, to assess viability for implementation elsewhere
10. Working with partners to identify employers' and individuals' needs, and ensuring that they are reflected in plans and strategies
11. In discussion with partners, identifying availability of resources and opportunities to align funding, and formulating and drafting proposals and recommendations for consideration by the Programme Delivery Manager and Executive Board.

Accountabilities

- Development and implementation of effective internal and external communications systems and procedures
- Developing appropriate strategies, plans and supporting the development of programmes and projects
- Advising the Consortium on strategy, related policy development and good practice and the potential for alignment funding
- Developing, maintaining and reporting on the Consortium's Delivery Plan
- Internal team operation

PROGRAMME OFFICER (PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT)

Job Purpose

The purpose of the role is to help establish and develop an Employment Consortium to cover the Tyne and Wear City Region, bringing partners together, developing the Consortium's strategy, and establishing, monitoring and reporting on targets, to ensure that the strategy is achieved. It includes undertaking evaluation and identifying and disseminating good practice, and advising the consortium on the development of appropriate activity.

Main Responsibilities

1. Supporting and, when necessary, representing the Employment Consortium Programme Delivery Manager
2. Supporting the Consortium Executive Board, Advisory and Implementation Group and Employer Coalition
3. Liaising with other Consortia to identify, share, and evaluate good practice, and, where appropriate, making recommendations for implementation within the Consortium's area.

4. Developing, implementing and managing processes and systems to enable the Executive Team to operate effectively.
5. Identify and agreeing performance targets.
6. Developing an effective reporting mechanism and performance information for the Consortium.
7. Analysing performance and statistical information, identifying issues, and producing reports and recommendations for the Programme Delivery Manager, Advisory & Implementation Group (AIG) and Consortium Executive Board, to inform strategy and decision-making.
8. Working with the AIG and North East Employer Coalition to identify performance issues, and to develop solutions or make recommendations to address them
9. Negotiating performance improvement targets, as appropriate
10. Identifying, sharing and evaluating good practice, to assess viability for implementation elsewhere
11. Working with under-performing areas and partners to identify solutions and make recommendations to the AIG, Programme Delivery Manager, and Consortium Executive Board, as appropriate
12. Liaising with other Consortia to identify, share, and evaluate good practice
13. Managing one Project Support Officer

Accountabilities

- Developing and implementing an effective and efficient performance management and reporting system
- Assisting partner organisations to deliver on agreed targets
- Keeping the Consortium up to date on progress, and identifying, making recommendations for and agreeing action to address any under- or over- performance by partners and related matters

Project Support Officer

The purpose of the role is to develop systems and provide administrative and performance management support to the Consortium Executive Team, including day-to-day management of the office and collating and reporting on performance information from Consortium partners.

Main Responsibilities

1. Providing support to the Consortium Executive Board and Programme Delivery Manager and Team.
2. Day -to-day running of the Executive Team's office, arranging meetings, dealing with correspondence and liaising with key contacts and partner organisations.
3. Designing and establishing administrative systems and processes to ensure that the Executive Team and Consortium Executive Board can operate effectively
4. Collecting and collating appropriate performance and statistical information from partners, and producing regular and ad hoc written reports for the Executive Team/Programme Officers.
5. Maintaining accurate records of team expenditure and keeping the Project Delivery Manger up to date on the Team's financial position and any budget issues.
6. Arranging and attending meetings with members of the Executive Team, Advisory and Implementation Group, Executive Board and working groups. Taking minutes, carrying out and following up action points etc as required, and providing oral and written updates for meetings.
7. Drafting internal communications and collating and drafting briefings and updates for the Steering Group and members of the Executive Team.
8. Acting as the first point of contact for the Executive Team for telephone and written enquiries from partners and members of the public.
9. Helping to arrange conferences and seminars arising from the result of the work of the Consortium, and arranging travel and accommodation for members of the team
10. Any other duties required by the Programme Delivery Manager and members of the Executive Team which are commensurate with the grade of this post.

Accountabilities

- Effective administration of the Executive Team's office
- Accurate and timely collation of performance information and reports
- Providing an efficient and customer-friendly enquiry service

SHADOW EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Organisation	Name	Title		Ethnic Origin
North Tyneside Council	Martin Swales (Chairman)	Mr	Director of Strategy	White British
Durham County Council	Graham Young	Mr	Deputy Team Leader, Economic Development	White British
Easington District Council	Richard Prisk	Mr	Director of Regeneration & Development	White British
Gateshead Council	Anne Britton	Mrs	Head of Economic Development	White British
GONE	Tom Smyth	Mr	Team Leader for Neighbourhood Renewal	White British
Jobcentre Plus	Fred Foster	Mr	District Manager Northumbria	White British
Jobcentre Plus	Brenda Grey	Mrs	Regional External Relations Manager	White British
Jobcentre Plus	Dave Peebles	Mr	District Manager S Tyne & Wear Valley	White British
Learning & Skills Council	John Wayman	Mr	Director of Operations, North	White British
ONE North East	Robin Beveridge	Mr	Director of Strategy	White British
NE Employer Coalition	Howard Forrest	Dr	Executive Director	White British
North Tyneside Council	Ian McKinnon	Mr	Head of Economic Prosperity	White British
Northumberland County Council	Alan Wann	Mr	Head of Regeneration	White British
South Tyneside Council	David Slater	Mr	Executive Director, Regeneration and Resources	White British

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

It has been agreed that the following organisations will be represented on the Consortium Executive Board – we are currently waiting for full details of nominees from each organisation.

Organisation	Name	Title		Ethnic Origin
North East Employer Coalition	Chris Thompson	Mr	Chairman of NEEC	White British
Jobcentre Plus	Fred Foster	Mr	District Manager, Northumbria	White British
	Dave Peebles	Mr	District Manager, South Tyne & Wear Valley	White British
Durham County				
Gateshead Council				
Learning & Skills Council				
North Tyneside Council				
Northumberland County				
ONE North East				
Strategic Health Authority				
Voluntary Sector				
Govt Office North East (Strategic Advisor)				

RISK REGISTER

No	Description	Rating	Owner	Date	Mitigation Action	Review/Result
1	Provision inappropriate to needs because of inability to develop new or continue existing provision, caused by uncertain position of external funding, eg NRF, Single Programme, DAF	M	Shona Duncan	20.9.06	Review of existing funding timelines	Report and actions required agreed with Board – March 07
2	Longer-term initiatives not funded because of different funding allocation timescales for partner organisations	M	Shona Duncan	20.9.06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing contracting arrangements Production of joint contracting strategy 	Report and actions required agreed with Board – March 07
3	Inability to align, or delay in aligning, partner organisations' strategies, caused by different planning cycles	M	All partners	20.9.06	Joint strategy and action plan developed/agreed by all partners	Consultation and agreed action plan with Exec Board – July 07
4	Target % increase in employment rate not achieved, owing to external demographic factors	M	Exec Board	20.9.06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical analysis carried out and impact determined Numerical targets developed in addition to % 	Statistical analysis – Jan 07
5	Delivery Plan not in place by launch date	L	Shona Duncan	20.9.06	Manager carrying out initial work plan agreed with steering group	Delivery Plan update at each monthly steering group
6	Targets not achieved because required enablers not agreed	H	Exec Board	20.9.06	Enabler workshops planned	Determined by DWP timetable

No	Description	Rating	Owner	Date	Mitigation Action	Review/Result
7	Delivery Plan & procedures not in place to meet deadlines, caused by delay in recruiting Executive Team members	M	Shona Duncan	18.12.06	Recruitment process in place; interim secondments from partners; Delivery Manager appointed	Mid Jan progress reported to steering group Alternative arrangements being considered – partner contribution, consultancy
8	Business offer to employers not developed by launch date	L	Howard Forrest	18.12.06	Employer Engagement Task Group in place NEEC and Business Link involvement secured	Review and action plan developed Jan 07
9	Insufficient employers engaged	M	Exec Board	18.12.06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer engagement strategy to be developed • Employer Board to be established • External marketing strategy/plan to be agreed 	
10	Consortium unable to continue after March 08 because of lack of administrative funding	L	Exec Board	20.12.06	Identify opportunities to make joint bids for funding	
11	Unable to deploy new initiatives from April 07 owing to late decision on DAF allocation by DWP	H	DWP	20.12.06	None – national DWP issue	
12	Targets not achieved because of partners failure to deliver their commitments	M	Executive Board	21.12.06	Agreement of Memorandum of Understanding between all partners	
13	Delivery capacity insufficient to handle higher-than-expected volume of engaged clients	M	Shona Duncan	21.12.06	Flexible client engagement strategy to be developed	

(H = high; M = medium; L = low)

FUNDING PROFILE – 07-08

Staff-related costs	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Salaries:													
Programme Delivery Manager			15,443			15,443			15,443			15,443	
Programme Officers (2)			21,441			21,441			21,441			21,441	
Project Support Officer			5,448			5,448			5,448			5,448	21792
Employer Engagement			10,750			10,750			10,750			10,750	
Travel & subsistence			1200			1200			1200			1200	4800
Non-staff costs													
Marketing & Publicity:													
Employer engagement			6,000			6,000			6,000			6,000	24000
Other (inc customer engagement)			5,000			5,000			5,000			5,000	20000
Consultation/communications			5,000			5,000			5,000			5,000	20000
Training & development						15,000						15,000	30000
IT	15,000	40000				15,000							70000
Evaluation												10,000	10000
Accountable body mgt fee			2507			2507			2507			2,507	10030
Total													210622

Costs in blue funded by One NE, so excluded from calculations

Costs in red unable to be funded by DWP, so funds will be sought from other sources - excluded from calculations

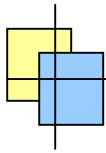
FUNDING PROFILE 08-09

(initial suggestions proposed by Heather/Patricia – for consideration by sub-group)

Staff-related costs	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Salaries:													
Programme Delivery Manager			15,443			15,443			15,443			15,443	
Programme Officers (2)			21,441			21,441			21,441			21,441	
Project Support Officer			5,448			5,448			5,448			5,448	21792
Travel & subsistence			1200			1200			1200			1200	4800
Non-staff costs													
Marketing & Publicity:(inc employer & client engagement)			5,000			5,000			5,000			5,000	20,000
Consultation/communications			5,000						5,000				10,000
Training & development						5,000						5,000	10,000
IT	5,000												5,000
Evaluation												10,000	10,000
Accountable body mgt fee			2649			2649			2649			2,649	10,956
Total													210622

Costs in red unable to be funded by DWP, so funds will be sought from other sources - excluded from calculations

321,085



INTERNAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This document sets out the key principles for internal communications³, to ensure that effective and timely communication is established and maintained throughout the Consortium and its constituent organisations.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The overall aim of this strategy is to ensure that:

- relevant people in our organisations have all the information they need, at the right time, to carry out their roles effectively
- key messages are communicated quickly, clearly and consistently
- roles and responsibility for communications are clearly defined and understood
- communication methods are appropriate to the messages being given
- duplication and gaps are minimised; and that:
- communication is reviewed periodically to ensure that it meets our needs.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This strategy covers regular and ad-hoc communications with and between the groups and partner organisations taking part in the Consortium. It is designed to complement, rather than duplicate or replace, partners' existing internal communications arrangements.

4. COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

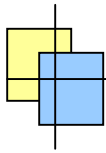
- 4.1 Everyone involved in the Consortium has a responsibility to deliver effective communications by:

- providing clear, consistent, accurate and relevant information
- providing information at the right time and using the appropriate medium to suit the target audience
- communicating to their own organisations, and to any others which they represent
- planning communications to coincide with key events

- 4.2 In deciding on methods of communication, we will take into account:

- cost-effectiveness
- customer requirements

³ External communication arrangements are detailed in a separate strategy



- appropriateness of the medium to the message being conveyed

4.3 The Consortium will use the most appropriate method for each communication, but, wherever practicable, will use electronic means, to improve speed and minimise use of paper.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **Employment Consortium Executive Board Members** are responsible for ensuring that this strategy is implemented, and arranging cascade of information in their own organisations and to any others which they represent.

5.2 The **Programme Delivery Manager and Executive Team** are responsible for producing regular and ad hoc progress updates for partners; for acting as a conduit for information between the Executive Board, the AIG and the North East Employer Coalition; and for reviewing this strategy periodically, in association with the Advisory & Implementation Group (AIG).

5.3 **Advisory and Implementation Group Members** will review the strategy in conjunction with the Executive Team, and will provide feedback from their organisations and contacts on its effectiveness. They will also cascade relevant information not covered by 5.1 above within their own organisations.

5.4 Roles, responsibilities and timescales are summarised in the Internal Communication Plan, which is attached as Appendix 1.

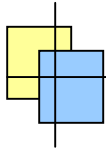
6 COMMUNICATION MEDIA

6.1 **Meetings** will be held only when they are the most cost-effective means of communication. Formal meetings, or those involving representatives from outside the team holding the meeting, will have written agendas, and written records will be cascaded to all participants.

Terms of Reference will be agreed for regular meetings, including task groups, specifying objectives, membership, accountabilities, decision-making authority, expected outcome, anticipated duration of the group, and review arrangements. The Terms of Reference will be agreed with the body commissioning the group.

Regular meetings will be reviewed periodically to establish whether or not they continue to be required; if their purpose is being achieved; and if membership and terms of reference continue to be appropriate

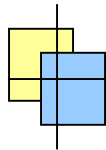
6.2 **E-channels** will be used for routine communications and cascade of information whenever practicable. Partners will publish non-confidential information on their intranet systems to ensure it is available to all of their staff who may need it.



7 REVIEW AND EVALUATION

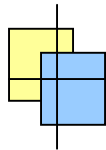
7.1 This strategy will be reviewed quarterly by the Executive Team and AIG during the first year of operation, and six-monthly thereafter. If appropriate, recommendations for improvement will be made to the Executive Board. Criteria for evaluation will include:

- have key messages reached the people who need them?
- were messages clear and easy to understand?
- was the timing of messages appropriate?
- was the method of communication appropriate?

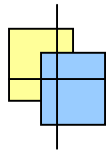


Internal Communication Plan

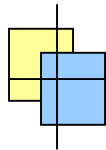
Information	Audience	Method	Responsibility/ Timescale	Product(s)
Ongoing communications				
City Region Leaders' decisions	Steering Group/Executive Board	Oral feedback	Martin Swales (Steering Group Chairman) at scheduled meetings	-
	Executive Team	Oral feedback	Martin Swales immediately following meetings	-
	Advisory & Implementation Group (AIG) members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral update Written updates may be used for routine information when no meeting scheduled soon 	Programme Delivery Manager –Shona Duncan at scheduled meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Updates' (<i>compiled by Executive Team</i>)
	Partner organisations' staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners' internal communications systems Partners' Intranet sites 	AIG Members - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Updates' (<i>compiled by Executive Team</i>)
City Region Chief Executives' decisions	Steering Group/Executive Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral feedback 	Martin Swales at scheduled meetings	-
	Executive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral feedback 	Martin Swales Immediately following meetings	-



Information	Audience	Method	Responsibility/ Timescale	Product(s)
	AIG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral feedback Written updates may be used for routine information when no meeting scheduled soon 	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan At scheduled meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Updates' (<i>compiled by Executive Team</i>)
Consortium Executive Board Decisions (<i>Steering Group in interim</i>)	Executive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral update 	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan Immediately after meetings	-
	AIG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral update Written updates may be used for routine information where no meeting scheduled soon 	Programme Delivery Manager - Shona Duncan at scheduled meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of meetings (<i>compiled by Executive Team</i>)
	Partner organisations' staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners' internal communications systems Partners' intranet sites 	All Executive Board/Steering Group Members Immediately after meetings, to own organisations and those which they represent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Updates' (<i>compiled by Executive Team</i>)
Progress Updates	City Region Leaders & Chief Executives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written briefings Presentations at meetings 	Martin Swales at scheduled meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefings (<i>produced by Executive Team</i>)
	Executive Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written reports Presentations at meetings 	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan At regular meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written reports (<i>provided by Executive Team</i>)



Information	Audience	Method	Responsibility/ Timescale	Product(s)
	AIG Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written reports Presentations at meetings Updated Delivery Plan 	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan At regular and, if appropriate, ad hoc meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical reports (<i>compiled by Executive Team</i>) Delivery Plan (<i>updated quarterly by Executive Team</i>)
	Partners' operational staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written updates Partners' Intranet sites 6-monthly joint briefing/development events for all partners 	AIG Members Immediately after meetings,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Updates' (<i>produced by Executive Team</i>)
	All staff in partner organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written updates Partners' Intranet sites 	AIG Members - to own organisations and those which they represent - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Updates' (<i>produced by Executive Team</i>)
	LSPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral/written updates 	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan Ongoing	TBA
Launch				
Employer Offer	Partners' operational staff	Joint briefing events for all partners on initial offer (details TBA)	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan By April 07	Directory of services & provision
		Joint briefing events for all partners on offer as it develops	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan By 30.9.07 and ongoing as required (6-monthly)	TBA
Client Offer	Partners' operational staff	Joint briefing events for all partners on initial offer (details TBA)	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan By April 07	Directory of services & provision



Information	Audience	Method	Responsibility/ Timescale	Product(s)
		Joint briefing events for all partners on offer as it develops	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan By 30.9.07 and ongoing as required (6-monthly)	TBA
Internal processes	Partners' operational staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint briefing events for all partners Partners' Intranet sites 	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan By April 07 and ongoing	Process guide, to be developed by Executive Team/Task Groups
Recording and monitoring systems	Partners' operational staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training/briefing sessions, depending on systems agreed 	Programme Delivery Manager – Shona Duncan By April 07 and ongoing	TBA