

Training for employment- VAB and Dearne Electronic Community Village

Background

Following consultation and intelligence from the research team The Dearne Area Council agreed that the priorities for the Dearne Area would be as follows:

- Improving the economy
- Young People
- Skills and learning for work
- Environment
- Improving Health

Unemployment is one of the biggest issues in the Dearne Area. Therefore Voluntary Action Barnsley (VAB) and Dearne Electronic Community Village have been commissioned to provide training for employment service in the Dearne Area. The contract was awarded from 3rd August 2014 until the 31st March 2016 with a full contract price of £112.000.

This contract meets three of the priorities by way of improving the economy (people gaining employment), skills and training for work and improving health (both mental and physical by way of giving people a focus).

The service operates from the Salvation Army, Dearne electronic community village, Embankment centre and the Dearne community children’s centre.

The figures below are the actual numbers for the period 18th September to 20th November 2015.

Training for employment

report received on 2nd December 2015

	RAG	
Skills and learning for work	Satisfactory monitoring report and contract management meeting. Satisfactory quarterly monitoring report and contract management meeting.	●
	Milestones achieved Milestones achieved	●
Improving the economy	Outcome indicator targets met Outcome indicator targets met	●
	Social value targets met Social value targets met	●
Improving Health	Satisfactory spend and financial information Satisfactory spend and financial information	●
	Overall satisfaction with delivery against contract Overall satisfaction with delivery against contract	●

Activity Intervention Targets

	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Year 1 Totals		Year 2 Q1
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual
Learners Recruited	8	44	8	45	8	37	8	50	32	176	71
Learners achieving qualification	8	5	8	39	8	12	8	18	32	74	26
Learners into employment	2	4	2	14	2	8	2	14	8	40	8
Learners into local employment	1	4	1	14	1	8	1	10	4	36	5
Learners into further Training	2	10	2	10	2	18	2	16	8	54	3

Secured local employment

During this quarter 8 people have secured employment that is 48 in the 14 months the contracts been operational. Examples of the local employment opportunities are below:

- SD – B&Q – Cashier/Sales Assistant – Full-time
- AM - Full time (has not supplied details of position secured)
- JLP – Shop Assistant – Part-time
- LH - Capita – Full-time
- AR – Next at Manvers – Warehouse Operative – Full-time
- AT – (no details provided on employment status)
- EH - NHS – Bank staff
- AS – Temporary Christmas Job

Further training

Some of the further training that participants have been referred to is highlighted below:

- ICT Entry Level 3 (referrals within services) x 3

We are currently working with WEA to run courses in the Salvation Army that are funded to support and engage individuals with mild to moderate mental health illnesses regardless of medical diagnosis. We believe these courses will be vital to a proportion of attendees at this venue.

Referrals to other support services

- CC - Volunteering at Work Club (Salvation Army)

We are in the process of establishing 'conversation clubs' at the Salvation Army to provide a network for individuals that seek company to reduce their isolation and enable them to talk and be listened to in an informal and comfortable setting.

Outcome indicators

Outcomes:	<i>Being healthy & safe</i>										
	<i>Staying connected and reducing isolation</i>										
	<i>Enjoy & Achieve</i>										
	<i>Making a positive contribution/ promoting independence</i>										
	<i>Having choice & control over your life & activities</i>										
	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Year 1 Totals		Year 2 Q1
Outcome indicators	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Targets	Actual	Actual
Unemployed People working towards making a positive contribution.	8	37	8	42	8	37	8	42	32	158	71
Unemployed People taking control over their life & activities	8	37	8	42	8	37	8	42	8	158	71

Social value objectives

	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Year 1 Totals		Year 2 Q1
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Targets	Actual	Actual
Unemployed people having more confidence & self esteem to be able to access work or move on to further training.	8	37	8	42	8	37	8	42	32	158	71

Work Experience

This quarter we have engaged with JCP Goldthorpe in relation to their Work Experience offer to JSA claimants and how we can embed this into our Work Clubs. We have the Job Centre's application for Work Experience within each of our centres where we can discuss, where appropriate, Work Experience opportunities in the Dearne and the industries available to them. Travel expenses, work clothes, DBS and other checks are funded through JCP, no wage is paid and the timescale of the Work Experience varies and is negotiated between the organisation and the individual.

JCP also offer 'Work Trials' where claimants are interviewed and given a trial period within an organisation whereby, at the end of the trial either the employer or claimant can decline the offer of a paid position. No wage is paid but the aim of a Work Trial is to result in paid employment.

JCP have been working with Homecare, the largest care provider in the area, to recruit those without a car or driving licence and JCP will fund the purchase of a pushbike to enable those who are successful in gaining employment to undertake the position.

JCP provide a 'Response to Redundancy' service for those at risk of redundancy to prevent them moving to benefit claims and retaining employment elsewhere with no gaps in employment.

Social return on investment

Based on the theory that each person going into employment was previously claiming job seekers allowance £73.10, the wider social return on each participant gaining employment would be an economic saving of £292 per month. In the 14 months since this contract started 48 people have secured employment.

£292 (JSA per month) x 48 (participants) = **£14,016** If all of the individuals stayed in employment for 12 months the social return on investment for those individuals would be **£168,192.00**

Therefore for every month those 48 employees are in employment a wider social return on investment is made. This figure does not take into consideration that some of them may have been claiming DLA, receiving housing benefit or contributing by way of paying taxes. The other positive value would be because of being in employment (having more money to spend) they may be contributing more to local businesses.

This very basic figure also does not take into consideration that because they may be more fit and active, mentally and physically, they are less likely to access front line services, again lessening the financial burden on wider service provision.

Case studies

Barry is 62 years old and after a lifetime working in the mining industry has found himself made redundant, claiming job seekers allowance. He has never been out of work before and has never touched a computer, apart from his mobile phone (which he can't use). Originally I found Barry very stand offish. He clearly didn't want to be at the session (DWP mandated him to attend) and sat for the first 30 minutes with his arms folded not looking too happy. Although I'm used to this in some older learners I knew with a bit of time he may change his mind. We talked about his mining past and how he feels. He was worried no one would employ him at his age. Luckily, a learner in the same session had news of a full time employment offer and she was older than him!

He's currently been attending the sessions 5 weeks and has made real progress. Now I can't shut him up! He's found so much more than how to job search. Skype, Amazon, Ebay, Local History and lots of information about his hobby, pigeon racing! He could print off info and take this home. He has happily started the ICT course and is so keen to learn more. I've recently helped him buy his first laptop and get his Internet installed at home, how wi-fi works and the importance of security. Barry is a classic example of the many older learners I work with, who are nearing retirement age but still tied to jump through the many hoops of the DWP. I feel it's important to show the fun and interesting side of computers with these learners as it helps them find some motivation to then do the jobsearch part and the form filling/applications and the course. He's currently working through the ICT award and applies for around 3 job posts per session.

I love this computer lark now. Although I struggled a lot at first and my own family couldn't really help me as they don't have the patience, I think this put me off at first. When Desree mentioned I should visit Rory I wasn't happy about it. At the same time I realised I need the help and its something I should learn. I'd like to find a little p/t job which can eventually supplement my pension. Rory was great and has helped me with my housing forms and helped me with pension credit information. I'm enjoying the lessons, thank you.

Louise

Full time position gained at B&Q – Cashier & Retail assistant. Links made with DVC regarding English.

Beneficiary Feedback

I cant tell you how pleased I am to gain employment. I found the job centre such a scary experience that to walk into Rory's class was like a breath of fresh air. Everyone was so friendly and really listened to my worries and fears, especially about job search and applying for jobs on the computer. Many people at the centre were a similar age to me and I felt they could relate to my experiences and frustration at my situation. I really enjoyed the course and I liked how we would do job search for an hour at the end of the session. This eased my fear of signing on, where the staff will look at what I've done in the week to find work.

Susan was referred from the skills team at Goldthorpe DWP and had a problem first off with her confidence, especially regarding her spelling, grammar and she also had no ICT skills and the relevant documents needed (CV, Cover letter, UJM account). She could only attend Wednesday mornings due to other commitments and my Wed

Morning Session is sometimes busy. To put her at ease I introduced her to the other group members and decided to put her with my volunteer, Steven, who also happens to be a basic skills tutor and has much experience with dyslexia, for some 1 to 1 sessions. I created a CV, Cover letter and UJM account with her. We also signed up to various websites. She completed all the tasks and achieved the OCR qualification. Although it took quite a while, she finally achieved. I also did a lot of training with her on UJM and how to search and apply for jobs. In October 2015 we filled in a lengthy application form for B&Q. The next stage was to prepare for the Interview. In November 2015 she was offered full time employment with B&Q! Absolutely brilliant! She turned up full of smiles (and a box of biscuits for me!), an amazing change from the nervous Susan who walked in 6 months earlier. I have put her in touch with Dearne Valley college about doing a P/T English course, which would take place at DECV, if work allows. I did a follow up call and she informs me the job is going great!

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Lorraine came into the work club having just been laid off from her last job in which she worked or over 14 years. She didn't feel she had good computer skills and just needed assistance of where to turn.

How the Work Club has helped – we sat with Lorraine and helped develop her CV for her, so she could start applying for jobs. We helped her for only a short time with her job search and applications as well as being referred to Rory to complete some ITC training. In only a matter of a couple of weeks Lorraine had found herself with a string of interviews and needed help and advice as to pick what was best for her. She had to turn down a couple of interviews as she ended up getting a job at Capita working for DWP, which she was thrilled with.

Current Progression – Lorraine is now working full time at Capita, Monday to Friday.

Emma came to us back in November 2014 with her husband who was out of work. He went on to get a full time position, but Emma carried on attending the job club. Emma's self-confidence was very low; she suffered badly with her anxiety and other health conditions. Emma wasn't in a place to look for work, never mind maintain long term employment. Emma was quite socially isolated as he didn't like being out on her own or going to new places.

How the Work Club has helped – Emma attended with her husband every week, but would often not come in if he was at interview or couldn't attend. Over the weeks, we build up a rapport with Emma, where she would come in and bring her baking or talk about problems she was having with her teenage daughter. I saw how valuable Emma could be early on as she would come in to use the computers to search for jobs for her husband.

My plan was always to get Emma involved in activities to increase her confidence and slowly she began to work as a volunteer to help assist work club clients with small computer problems, without her really knowing she was doing it.

In the last year we have worked with Emma she has gone from strength to strength. We have provided a low level volunteer opportunity for her to build her confidence in a place she feels comfortable. The work club has helped Emma to improve her social skills. She was very shy and wouldn't go out of her way to speak to people; Emma now challenges herself to speak to new clients coming in, and often takes charge of how she can help them. She is being proactive in looking for jobs for them when she is not volunteering and has established herself as a real asset to the Dearne community. Many clients now just go to her for help with their job search as she has built up a great rapport with them.

Current Progression – Emma also now volunteers for other community projects and is active within the community in Goldthorpe. She has attended training courses that we have put on here at the Core and although she has suffered with her anxiety to attend, we helped where we could by transporting her across town. This was a huge achievement for her. She has subsequently travelled independently on the bus to Barnsley centre. Although this isn't a regular thing and she will admit herself she still does find it difficult, it's a huge step forward for her personally and has hopefully started to breakdown some of her barriers she has to gaining employment.

Emma is challenging herself to start writing CV's and although her confidence isn't fully there with completing them, she has been a huge asset to the job club and helping the attendees if I'm busy, allowing us to see more people.

Photos



