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Local authority schemes supporting people towards work

An independent report for the Local Government Association

January 2015

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Tables

Foreword

Unemployment is falling, but beneath the headlines some of our most vulnerable residents are struggling. As we have set out in *Investing in our nation's future: the first 100 days of the next government*, councils want the best for every resident and are working across public services to create solutions that ensure no one is left behind and to equip them with the skills local employers need to drive growth.

This report demonstrates local government at its best, showing how we exercise leadership, how we bring together public services and employers, how we deliver innovation and efficiency, and how we focus on those hardest to help.

The challenge is great, and is growing. Over half of all unemployed people do not claim Jobseekers Allowance, meaning that there are more than a million people looking for work who get no official help, many with significant and complex barriers. And vulnerable groups that do access national help are too often let down by a system more focused on those closer to the jobs market.

Local government has sought to plug these gaps, supporting those forgotten by national services. We work collaboratively with partners to identify residents that need help and bring together services to meet their needs, including health, housing, and skills, we value soft outcomes fundamental for employment, and we build long-term relationships with employers and other services based on trust and shared objectives to fill skills gaps and train residents for jobs that exist.

And we are succeeding. Despite its emphasis on harder to help groups, Get Bradford Working has achieved a sustainable job outcome rate of 62 per cent, and in an area with below average economic performance, Gateshead Council's Work Programme has achieved stronger outcomes than the national programme, for example it has helped 42 per cent of young people into jobs compared with 28 per cent nationally.

This report holds important lessons for an incoming Government who will be challenged to significantly improve the employment outcomes for the more vulnerable. Public service reform is increasingly unavoidable; Westminster cannot afford to spend over £13 billion each year on a fragmented and remote range of 28 national employment and skill schemes designed around national bureaucracies rather than individual need, and councils cannot afford to continue resolving the failings of these national schemes in their communities without the appropriate funding.

We want to open a serious debate on the future of employment support for vulnerable young people and adults; a future that has to focus on bringing together funding locally so that partners can efficiently plan investment across places, on building new relationships with local employers to fill skills gaps, and on integrating services around those with more complex barriers to work.

Local government must be at the heart of reforms. Around the country councils are working together and enabling new partnerships best placed to design, to commission and to oversee employment and skills support that builds on our unique and proven capacity to integrate services around the vulnerable and deliver outcomes responding to the needs of local employers.

We look forward to working with our partners to help build on this success.

Cllr Sir Richard Leese
Chairman, LGA City Regions Board

Cllr David Hodge
Chairman, LGA People and Places Board

Cllr David Simmonds
Chairman, LGA Children and Young People Board

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Background to the report

This report presents evidence of how local authorities are supporting people towards work through employment and skills programmes. We use evidence from programmes in nine local authorities selected to represent a range of provision in terms of target groups and interventions. The LGA commissioned NIESR to do the research in 2014 with interviews with local authorities taking place during July and August.

The programmes

The programmes were developed to support local people into work through a range of interventions. These included advice and guidance, training, coaching and mentoring, work placements, apprenticeships and volunteering. Programmes aimed to identify and fill gaps in provision and to work alongside existing services rather than duplicate their work.

Programmes varied in duration and intensity although were often aimed at people with the greatest barriers to work, including those who do not claim out of work benefits and not receiving help. They included young people, lone parents and ex-offenders and others who have particular barriers to work and needs for support.

Programmes went beyond immediate preparation for training and employment by taking account of the wider needs of individuals. This was in recognition of the ways in which health, housing and other issues can restrict progress into work. Some of the programmes were focused on particular wards or localities with high levels of worklessness and deprivation, often having a physical presence and through building up relationships with communities.

How local authorities are supporting people towards work

Three main features of local authorities account for their successful development and delivery of local back to work programmes: economic and political leadership; localised knowledge; and expertise in skills and employment.

Local authorities' leadership position within their towns, cities and regions, combined with their localised knowledge, enabled them to forge partnerships, map provision, identify local needs and gaps and to build referral networks. Rather than set up services in competition, they brought them together, providing a one-stop-shop and referral point for coordinated services. Individuals' multiple needs could then be identified and addressed through referral to the widest possible range of appropriate services. These included services within local authorities as well as in their localities.

Local authorities were able to involve a range of partners playing a key national and local role. Links forged with Jobcentre Plus enabled joined up services for individuals outside of the Work Programme and, importantly, not claiming out of work benefits. Employers were

brought on board through their involvement in local authorities wider economic development and skills work.

The long-standing involvement of local authorities in employment and skills programmes gave them expertise in design and delivery of support. Programme staff aimed to ensure that individuals had their barriers to work identified and support put in place, including through specialist support services. Identifying barriers and facilitating access to the widest possible range of services was important, given the programmes' inclusion of the long term unemployed and individuals with complex needs which affect their employment prospects.

The caseworker model, used in the programmes, ensured that individuals were given personalised and continuous help where needed, with caseloads allowing for intensive support. Given that participation in the programmes was voluntary[1], this is likely to have been effective in encouraging participation, alongside referral to specialist help.

Programmes also recognised that, for many of the longer-term unemployed, movement into work is not a realistic short-term goal and aimed to build the foundations for future employment. Therefore, programmes saw intermediate outcomes, such as training, work placements and volunteering as valuable steps towards work which should be both facilitated and recognised as progress in their own right.

Outcomes

Despite the challenges inherent in helping the long-term unemployed and economically inactive, programmes achieved good results in engagements, job outcomes, intermediate steps towards work and in value for money. Programmes did not always carry out extensive reviews of their impact, preferring to spend resources on delivery. However, a number of the schemes show good employment outcomes, particularly taking into account the characteristics of their client groups.

We had intended to compare the performance of the selected schemes with national programmes. However, although they produce outcome figures, it became apparent that the programmes were different in ways which made such comparison difficult: they were offering something different to national provision; they were often helping different people; and they had different expectations, which included intermediate outcomes. Importantly, the local programmes were voluntary, requiring active recruitment and retention of clients.

Most importantly, the case studies provide qualitative evidence on the factors which local authorities believe lead to good outcomes for local people. These are consistent across projects and are explored in some depth in the report.

Lessons for future back to work schemes

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[1] The exception to this is the Gateshead scheme, which is part of Government's Work Programme.

The report identifies some lessons for the design of future back to work schemes, including the need to link with existing provision, rather than to duplicate or to deliver specialist services with generalist staff. Skills and employment provision should take full account of the needs of local employers and councils' plans for strategic growth.

Councils' services are most capable of meeting the needs of the growing number of individuals who are not claiming out of work benefits and who are likely to be without support. To engage such people, services need to be accessible, attractive, useful and flexible and provide one to one support. Services should also aim to address wider barriers to work, including health and housing, given the obstacles that these present to employment.

Introduction

Local authorities have always played a role in meeting the needs of local people for employment and skills. The Local Government Association (LGA) believes that national schemes to tackle unemployment, particularly among young people, are struggling to meet individual needs and that the current system, consisting of many different national programmes, is too complicated (LGA, 2014). The LGA believes that provision designed and delivered in partnership locally can be more effective in getting individuals into work, or a step closer where they have significant barriers.

The research for this report consists of a number of local authority case studies showing how localised employment and skills programmes are meeting the needs of local people. The programmes included a range of interventions, including advice and guidance, training, coaching and mentoring, work placements and volunteering. They varied in duration and intensity as well as their target groups, although services were often aimed at the hardest to help and to reach. They aimed to meet the wider needs of individuals, for example for healthcare and housing, making optimal use of referral to services within and outside of the council to meet these needs. The programmes involved different models of delivery, but all involved partnerships, networks and sharing of information, services and expertise.

We set out to compare these schemes' performance with that of national programmes. However, as the research progressed, it became clear that the programmes were offering something quite different to national provision: they were not duplicating or set up in competition; they had different, and often more disadvantaged, client groups; and different aims and expectations for outcomes. Most of the programmes included in the research were aiming to assist individuals into work, but this was often not their sole aim and intermediate outcomes were important to them. For individuals with limited experience of work, such outcomes could include movement into training or work placements and volunteering. Provision could include addressing barriers such as insecure housing or health problems. Another important difference from national programmes is that participation was voluntary, requiring active recruitment and retention of clients. All of these features of the programmes presented councils with challenges for both resourcing provision and for achieving outcomes for clients.

Despite the challenges faced by programmes, they achieved good outcomes. While some provision was relatively costly, because of the needs of the client group, some of the programmes suggest very good value for money in terms of outcomes achieved. More conclusively though, the case studies provide qualitative evidence on the factors which local authorities believe are important in achieving outcomes for their communities and these are consistent across the projects, providing clear messages about effective design and delivery. As well as identifying areas of success as we describe the schemes and their features, the report raises some of the current challenges to local delivery and lessons for future programmes.

Research methods

The LGA identified a number of local authorities that were known to be delivering employment and skills programmes. They were then contacted with an outline of the proposed research and invited to express an interest in taking part. Nine authorities were then selected to represent a range of different types of provision in terms of target group and type of intervention, although all were principally aimed at increasing employment rather than outcomes such as qualifications.

Local authorities were then contacted by NIESR for a short initial discussion about the programme before arranging a longer interview. Full interviews then took place, largely through visits to local authorities, during July and August 2014. Participating local authorities were also asked to provide NIESR with statistical data on performance.

Structure of the report

The report begins by explaining the policy background to and aims of the devolved and locally delivered employment and skills programmes included in the research. Chapter 1 also explains decisions made around choice of target groups and types of provision. Chapter 2 examines the programmes' partnerships and funding, while Chapter 3 focuses on delivery and individual support. Chapter 4 looks at how authorities measure the success of these programmes, the data they collect and report. It also looks at what their data can tell us about the success of their interventions. Chapter 5 pulls together the report's findings to draw some conclusions. We discuss features of the schemes and their delivery that appear to be effective in supporting people towards work and identify some lessons for the design of future programmes.

Chapter 1: Programme aims and design

In this chapter we describe the programmes of the nine councils which took part in the research. We explain their policy background and aims and target groups. We show how the programmes were designed to meet local individual and economic needs, and how they did this responsively and flexibly.

The programmes: their policy background and aims

The programmes all shared the aim of addressing unemployment or low participation rates in their local communities, usually targeting groups experiencing the most significant barriers. These groups varied between the authorities and programmes, which also had specific objectives. A number were also driven by the lack of success achieved by national programmes in achieving outcomes for some groups. They were also born out of frustration for the temporary nature of many nationally led skills and employment interventions and lack of sustained intervention to address long-term unemployment. The inability of national provision to address the wider, and often complex, needs of unemployed people was a further motivation behind the local programmes. Many also shared the aim of supporting an increase in the supply of skills through training and improved preparation of young people for apprenticeships.

Table 1 presents the programmes, their duration, objective and scale. The programmes in Bradford, Gateshead, Haringey, Surrey, North Tyneside and Bury are on-going, while those in Southampton and Liverpool have ended. The scheme in Cornwall is a referral network, or hub in which the local authority is a partner, rather than a programme in itself, and is aimed at moving people into financial independence through training and employment. The Gateshead scheme is the Work Programme, delivered under contract from one of the prime providers of programme in the North East Contract Package Area.

Target groups

The programmes targeted specific groups which were among the hardest to help move into work and who have not achieved successful outcomes on national programmes[2]. They also included the economically inactive.

Those specifically targeted by the local authorities included the long-term unemployed, those with health problems, disabilities and other serious barriers to work, with programmes tailored to meet the needs of particular groups. These were not always those considered in most need but who, nonetheless, face barriers to employment. For example, in Bradford they also included graduates from the City experiencing both unemployment and under-employment in low skilled work. The programme also targeted people with ESOL needs and the over 50s as well as those with health and addiction problems.

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[2] The exception to this is the Gateshead scheme, which is part of Government's Work Programme.

Table 1 The Programmes

Programme/s and duration	Objective, scale and cohorts
Bradford: Routes into Work (Get Bradford Working) Original contracts 2012-2014,2nd phase 2014-2016	Eight contract packages largely aimed at giving bespoke support to hardest to reach groups into employment: people with disabilities, learning difficulties, mental ill-health or drug and alcohol misuse; ethnic minorities; long term unemployed and graduates.
North Tyneside: Working Homes Outreach Team (WHOT) – 3 year project between 2011 and 2014	Pilot project in partnership with JCP to tackle worklessness in the most deprived wards in North Tyneside by providing specialist advisors in community outreach to tackle multiple barriers to employment.
Surrey: Leader's Ready for Work Scheme 2013 – 2016	Re-engagement of young people in years 12-14 to reduce NEET Source work experience placements and paid job opportunities for NEET young people, including 'EmployAbility' for young people with special needs and disabilities. Programme of work aimed at increasing take up and availability of apprenticeship opportunities.
Gateshead Work Programme	Mandatory Support for unemployed residents. Scheme aims to bring in income that could then be re-invested to enhance services.
Haringey Jobs For Haringey	Unemployed and economically inactive residents (from day one of unemployment or economic inactivity) supported to find work and training through information, advice and guidance, work placements and training, among other support.
Southampton: Offender Skills and Employment	Support offenders from custody and probation with advice and guidance, skills, placements and employment to reduce re-offending
Bury: Backing Young Bury/Connecting Provision Sept 2012 Sept 2014	Planned journey to employment for long term unemployed 18 – 24 who are among the furthest removed from employment, with multiple barriers hindering their job and life chances.
Liverpool: Streets Ahead Plus. Finding employment for lone parents Six months: October 2010 to March 2011	Engage 100 lone parents and secure employment for 20.
Cornwall: Cornwall Works Hub	Part of Inclusion Cornwall, established to co-ordinate the wide range of activity taking place in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to reduce worklessness and raise employment rates.

Individuals with health issues, and with basic skills needs, accounted for a significant proportion of those on the North Tyneside Working Homes Outreach project. The programme in Haringey similarly targeted residents at particular disadvantage in the labour market, including lone parents and disabled people.

Health problems, both physical and mental, were also reported to be common among the client groups targeted by the programmes. These barriers reflected both ill-health and intergenerational unemployment resulting from long-term industrial decline which had a culture of worklessness and low aspirations. The Bradford programme aimed to assist people with illness and disabilities who account for more than a third of the city's workless. In Gateshead, where provision was delivered via the Work Programme, the proportion of customers claiming Employment and Support Allowance, was 17 per cent over the period

June 2011 to June 2014, but between April 2014 and July 2014 it increased to 34 per cent. The Liverpool programme, Streets Ahead Plus, initially targeted lone parents and those on ESA or invalidity payments, but then included those without health-related benefits. The programme set up by Southampton City Council, now discontinued, focused on offenders and ex-offenders, including those still in custody. It encompassed the full range of economic and social needs of this group, including physical and mental health, employment, education, housing and personal relationships, with the overall aim of reducing re-offending.

A number of programmes focused interventions on particular localities. For example, Haringey concentrated its activities in wards with the highest levels of unemployment. The Streets Ahead Plus programme in Liverpool aimed to test the use of outreach activity to support lone parents to find suitable employment, and having found it effective, continued to put this approach into practice. This programme focused on particular wards. Similarly, the programme in North Tyneside started out as a project around housing needs. When it encompassed employment and skills, it initially had a locality focus on the most deprived wards in the borough, featuring high-density social housing estates and communities with high concentrations of worklessness and intergenerational unemployment. It later extended coverage to the whole borough, although with some targeting.

Two of the programmes focused specifically on the needs of young people and on improving their readiness for work. The aim of the Surrey Leader's Ready for Work scheme was to engage young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs), including by increasing the number of apprenticeship places on offer in the county and by providing other opportunities for unpaid and paid work placements. The aims of the Backing Young Bury project were similar in aiming to assist young people into sustainable employment, including apprenticeships. Both projects provided on-going support aimed at addressing complex needs of young people who are NEET.

Complementarity at local level and provision for non-claimants

In some cases programmes delivered support to Work Programme customers. For example, the Bury programme includes young people who are on the Work Programme, but only those with low qualifications and with the greatest barriers to employment who are seen as in need of additional help and in-depth support. Other programmes did not engage with individuals signed up to the Work Programme. These included programmes which included people who are not claiming benefits and the economically inactive as well unemployed people who are not eligible for the Work Programme, for example Haringey's programme. However, it does assist individuals who have completed two years on the Work Programme and who are referred to the Haringey scheme by JCP. The complementarity of JCP, Work Programme and local authority provision at local level is important because it should result in best use of resources.

Most significantly, local authorities were often plugging a gap in provision for non-claimants. Analysis of recent benefits data by the Centre for Social Inclusion (CESI) shows that more than half of people classified as ILO unemployed[3] are not claiming Jobseekers Allowance and are therefore not receiving help from JCP. Non-claiming rates are even higher for young people, an issue which was behind the development of the Surrey Leader's Ready for Work Programme. The data also shows an increase in numbers signing off benefits, without moving into work. Local councils were aware that such people may be experiencing increased hardship and reduced help (CESI, 2014).

The provision

The design and content of the programmes varied but they shared a number of features. One of these was their emphasis on referral to existing services rather than setting up new provision or having either their own staff, or more usually providers, deliver services in areas where they lacked expertise. In some cases, for example Haringey, this included commissioning provision which was able to meet individual needs, while allowing for flexibility and referral. Therefore, the programme includes providers with expertise in specific areas, including training, work placements and health and wellbeing management, with providers able to refer between themselves. In other cases, for example the model for the Cornwall Works Strategy and Hub neither delivers support directly nor funds support services. Rather, it consists of a hub and referral network of organisations which deliver support and can access funding. As well as promoting multi-agency working, it creates networks of organisations providing similar types of support to share practice.

Increasing the supply of skills

A number of programmes aimed to increase the supply of skills within the local area, aligning with local authority strategic growth plans. Employers were involved in councils' skills and employment programmes in a number of ways, including through providing work experience placements, apprenticeships and training. They were also consulted on skills needs to inform the programme development and design. This helped councils to ensure that provision meets the needs of local business.

Work with employers included increasing the number of apprenticeships and ensuring that vacancies are filled. It also included offering support to employers in recruiting young people, for example guidance on rights and responsibilities and the additional support needs of some young people. A number of authorities, among them Bradford, Bury and Surrey, had identified a number of problems in effective recruitment to apprenticeships. These included unfilled apprenticeship vacancies resulting from low levels of qualifications, poor functional skills or other barriers to work, among young people who were interested in this route. Measures to address these barriers included intensive skills training and

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[3] The ILO defines the unemployed as: out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the previous four weeks and are available to start work within the next fortnight; or out of work and have accepted a job that they are waiting to start in the next fortnight.

mentoring covering personal life-style choices as well as transitions. Such work could sometimes be intensive and therefore costly, but seen as essential to enable some young people to progress. It was combined with training, education and work placements in a package of all-round support to bring young people closer to permanent employment. On-going support was also seen as necessary to prevent drop-out when young people experience trauma in their lives.

The programmes also identified structural barriers to apprenticeships: they had found a tendency among welfare to work providers to refer young people to apprenticeships directly offered within their own supply chain. Therefore, if employers connected to their chain have no suitable vacancies, the individual will remain unplaced. Meanwhile, a suitable vacancy may remain unfilled outside of the supply chain. To overcome barriers such as these, authorities were building up networks of employers offering apprenticeships. They also working to raise awareness of apprenticeship opportunities in local schools and with local employers to broker suitable matches, drawing on the council's existing networks and groups.

Responding to local needs

Another feature of the programmes' design is their responsiveness to local needs. Several of the programmes had consulted with local organisations and communities in order to design and develop provision. For example, the Bradford programme aimed to ensure that it met the needs of local unemployed people by carrying out a consultation exercise with potential contractors about the delivery model and the kind of support needed to achieve job outcomes. The Cornwall Works hub, through the management information they collect and through strategic linkages, are able to identify gaps in funded provision and then work with providers to close those gaps. These were identified in literacy support for individuals below entry level, and in support for costs of travel to training and other employment and skills support. The hub itself has also trialed types of support, testing their effectiveness before rolling it out and securing longer term funding. A third example is Liverpool Council's insight work with local communities to identify their employment and skills needs.

Programme leaders also had to make decisions about when to change provision on the grounds of effectiveness. For example Bradford had initially included ESOL provision in its offer. However, providers found that the level of English among those referred to the programme, at entry level two and three, was too low to enable them to improve to a work-ready state within the timescale. The contract was therefore amended and distance travelled was monitored, rather than outcomes. Bradford's review processes also led to new provision, with a new pilot established to assist lone parents into work, responding to new requirements on this group to be available for work in order to receive benefits once their youngest child is 2 years old.

Key points

- The programmes shared the aim of addressing unemployment and low participation in their local communities, often targeting groups with the most significant barriers, including the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities and health problems.
- Programmes saw it as important to address the wider needs of individuals in areas such as health and housing because of the barriers they present to employment and to participation in education and training.
- Programmes saw work readiness as an important interim goal, particularly for young people. This was a strong focus of programmes for young people, which also aimed to increase apprenticeship opportunities and take-up.
- A number of programmes focused interventions on particular localities, for example local authority wards with high unemployment levels.
- Most programmes did not work directly with Work Programme Customers but helped those who had not reached eligibility points or who were not signing on.
- The programmes aimed to largely make use of existing provision rather than set up new services.
- Programmes also aimed to increase the supply of skills within the local area, particularly through apprenticeships, aligning with councils' strategic growth plans. Employers were key partners in achieving this aim.
- In designing provision, the programmes responded to local needs. This process included insight work with communities as well as mapping services and gaps.

Chapter 2 Partnerships and funding

In this chapter we look at who councils partnered with to deliver their employment and skills programmes. We also look at how they funded provision, at delivery models and payment systems.

Involvement of partners

The programmes were largely located within local authorities, with most involving a number of services in addition to employment and skills teams. These included, for example, social services and housing as well as employment and skills provision. All of the programmes also connected with local partners to deliver provision or to assess and refer on to appropriate services. Table 2 shows the partners involved in each of the programmes. As the table shows, many of the programmes included partners working in diverse areas of provision, reflecting their emphasis on addressing the multiple needs and barriers to progression among clients. The range of partners also reflects the aim of programmes to access funding from the widest range of available sources.

 The range of partners also reflects the range of employment and skills provision which programmes aimed to include, for example employers, colleges and training providers. In Chapter 1 we explained employers' role in informing the skills content of programmes, which helped councils to ensure that provision meets the needs of local business. In terms of implementation, the engagement of employers was particularly important for programmes offering work experience. Employers were also engaged by programmes which aimed to expand the apprenticeship offer to improve opportunities for young people who are NEET. Many of the relationships drawn on by local authorities within their programmes had been built up over years of working in partnership on successive projects. This was reported to facilitate communication over referral and provision. In contrast, private welfare to work providers have described their relationships with employers as often weak (Newton et al, 2012).

Working with Jobcentre Plus

As the main agency providing services to the unemployed, it would be expected that Jobcentre Plus would be seen as one of the main partner organisations by local authorities delivering local programmes. This was certainly true, with JCP involved in all of the programmes to some extent at least. The Gateshead scheme delivered the Work Programme and therefore had a contractual relationship with DWP but also reported good JCP operational relationships, including sharing of information which does not necessarily occur between JCP and Work Programme providers (Newton et al, 2012).

In Bradford, JCP provided some funding and is a project partner, referring its customers to the programme. But, just as important, the Routes into Work project was designed to

complement and wrap-around the JCP offer, as well as that of the Skills Funding Agency and other national and local provision. Cornwall Works Hub is co-located in Jobcentre Plus. The Liverpool project for lone parents has advisers from JCP working within communities, advising lone parents on a wider set of needs than would be usual within JCP offices. The programme in North Tyneside had also originally been delivered with JCP but had to discontinue this arrangement when JCP no longer had the staffing capacity to second advisers. However, links remained strong and JCP regularly referred individuals not yet eligible for the Work Programme. This programme, among others, saw their provision as assisting JCPs in achieving the aim of improving their employment outcome rates and reducing flows on to the Work Programme. Other programmes did not work closely with JCP but received referrals, which in some cases included Work Programme customers, although most did not (see Chapter 1).

Table 2 Programme Partners

Programme	Partners included in the programme
Bradford: Routes into Work (Get Bradford Working)	Other local authorities, JCP, employers, training providers, housing associations, voluntary and community organisations
North Tyneside: Working Homes Outreach Team (WHOT)	JCP/DWP, voluntary and community organisations , employers, training and education providers
Surrey: Leader's Ready for Work Scheme	Colleges, training providers, youth service, employers and employer organisations, including Federation of Small Businesses and Chambers of Commerce
Gateshead: Work Programme	Avanta UK, one of the prime providers in North East England, Skills Funding Agency providers, employers, voluntary and community organisations, including Citizens Advice
Haringey: Jobs For Haringey	Employment and skills providers, JCP, colleges, adult learning service, council services, employers
Southampton: Offender Skills and Employment	Prisons, probation, police, training and education providers, employers, Skills Funding Agency, JCP/DWP
Bury: Backing Young Bury/Connecting Provision	Work Programme providers, JCP, Sport England, colleges, Troubled Families, careers service, health service, voluntary and community organisations
Liverpool: Streets Ahead Plus	JCP, housing associations, police, training providers, employers, voluntary and community organisations
Cornwall: Cornwall Works Hub	Cornwall Council ,JCP/DWP, ESF, training providers, colleges, employers, health service, careers service, business start up services and any other support service that can assist people, directly or indirectly, to move into work or progress in work.

Funding

Many of the projects had accessed a number of sources of funding in addition to receiving core funding and support in kind from their own council. This ability of councils to secure funding from different sources was highlighted in a recent report to the LGA which identified annual expenditure of almost £13 billion on skills and employment support, with funding from 28 different programmes and budgets (Shared Intelligence, 2014).

Table 3 shows the range of sources of funding accessed by the programmes, including central Government funds, European Social Funds and grants from charitable foundations.

Table 3 Funding

Programme	Funding
Bradford: Routes into Work (Get Bradford Working)	Original commissioned contracts - £1.4m from Bradford Council, £175,000 from JCP flexible support grant funding. 2nd Phase - £1.4m council funding
North Tyneside: Working Homes Outreach Team (WHOT)	A mix of JCP funding and local authority funding covering staffing costs – utilises community venues, co-location in Jobcentres and flexibility of staff between programmes.
Surrey: Leader's Ready for Work Scheme	Local Authority funds £750,000 annually from 2013/14
Gateshead: Work Programme	Payment by Results under contract from prime Work Programme provider Avanta covering all costs. No additional funding from the council.
Haringey: Jobs For Haringey	Local Authority funds, European Social Fund, DWP and charitable foundations, including City Bridge Trust.
Southampton: Offender Skills and Employment	£654,000 per year from a range of sources, including European Social Fund and the Offender Learning and Skills Council Service
Bury: Backing Young Bury/Connecting Provision	Local Authority funds, externally sourced, of £70,000 Draw down of GM Commitment Jobs with Training grant (£1,500) and DWP Youth Contract (£2,275) to recycle for future cohorts Access to Sportivate (Sport England) funding; Help yourself to Health funding, Traineeship funding and support work in kind from other agencies.
Liverpool: Streets Ahead Plus	£65,000 from the Department for Communities and Local Government customer led transformation programme, with additional funding of £33,000 from partners
Cornwall: Cornwall Works Hub	Local Authority Funds, European Social Fund Technical Assistance

Receiving funding from a range of sources gave schemes a much larger overall budget to deliver services to their target group. Some had accessed funding from a range of sources. For example, the suite of projects for offenders and ex-offenders in Southampton were funded from sources including the European Social Fund and the Offender Learning and Skills Council Service for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Similarly, the Jobs for Haringey programme had accessed funding from charitable foundations as well as the ESF, DWP and council sources. Some of their ESF funding had come via the Greater London Authority to boroughs that were the worst affected by the 2011 riots across London. The Liverpool Streets Ahead project received initial funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government to carry out customer insight into local delivery of services, while JCP and the council provided support in kind. Some of the councils had formed partnerships to access funding: in Bradford, Jobcentre Plus at district level had contributed £175,000 Flexible Support Grant funding. This was seen as valuable in helping individuals with the additional costs of transition into work.

Authorities were able to use resources such as funding and staff time more effectively by instituting flexibility across initiatives funded from different sources. This was possible because of the size of local authorities, the range of projects and funding to address skills, employment and disadvantage. Coordination between local authority departments allowed for a joined up approach to addressing individuals' needs in a cost-effective way. For example, the Surrey Leader's Ready for Work scheme is delivered within the Youth Support Service who provide case management for young people who are NEET. The same staff deliver the Ready for Work re-engagement programme.

Accessing funded provision

The authorities were able to make extensive use of local free provision to keep the cost of their programmes down and maximise resources to assist individuals. Councils benefited both from access to adjacent council services and facilities, as we have described, but also the range of contacts and networks which local authorities have built up over many years. In one local authority, tension was reported from partners in the voluntary sector who requested funds for services provided to programme participants. With a limited budget, this was not possible from the local authority's point of view without a significant reduction in the service to programme participants.

When it came to training needs, the emphasis within the programmes was largely on accessing local funded provision, for example Skills Funding Agency courses to meet training needs. Programmes were generally able to meet clients' education and training needs in this way. However, some programmes found it necessary to provide funding where this was not available for their client group, for example the Surrey Leader's Ready for Work programme funds employer related provision including certificates and licenses in construction skills, food hygiene and forklift truck driving.

Delivery models

Programmes wanted to develop relationships with suppliers which enabled them to address the needs of individuals, many of whom required intensive help. These were intended to incentivise outcomes but not result in 'creaming' of the work ready, and 'parking' of those who have poor employment prospects.

Where services were delivered on a contracted basis, projects used funding systems for providers which included payment for outputs, in order to incentivise delivery partners. Providers were often paid for starts as well as for outcomes. Payments were made for **work outcomes** and also for **work experience** and some were paid smaller 'milestone' payments for qualification outcomes. For example, the programmes in Bradford and in Haringey consisted of a registration or starter payment followed by payments for outputs including work experience, job starts, apprenticeship starts and sustained outcomes. The funding structure in Bradford was similar, with a small starter payment of £150, triggered by an individual action plan and job outcome payments of £1,250. Intermediate payments to providers for work experience and qualifications were typically small, since many

programmes expected these to be achieved through accessing existing free provision. They were seen as nonetheless important, in recognition that employment outcomes are often achieved through intermediate outcomes.

Local Authorities also encouraged providers to link up with under-used provision and to access under-spent funds. The authority helped providers make such connections, encouraging joint working and discouraging providers to keep clients to themselves. In some programmes, outcome payment structures were not fixed for the length of the programme, but were sometimes renegotiated with providers. This might be done, for example, to reflect changes in the local labour market. In Bradford, for example, some contracts were changed to include more job outcomes in place of enrolments.

Some of the programmes rewarded their delivery partners for **sustained job outcomes**, for example Bradford paid these at four and 13 weeks as well as from day one, while Haringey gave one sustained payment at 26 weeks. However, while seen as an important success criteria, a number of other programmes did not collect this data or pay for it as an outcome. The reason for this was the cost of collecting this information through tracking individuals, which programme leaders believed was better spent on provision in the programme.

For some local providers, outcome related payments represented a new funding model. Some local authorities worked with delivery partners to support them in the move away from grant funding, sometimes preparing them for the new model of delivery. In Bradford, before going out to tender, the council consulted with potential delivery organisations in the area, including on funding arrangements. While this model was reported to be unwelcomed by some organisations, they recognised that delivery on national programmes is on this basis and they needed to become experienced in working within it, rather than through grant funding. Experience of this model was therefore seen as equipping them with skills for bidding and working for national programmes. In Haringey, some providers were reported to be concerned about losing a job outcome payment through referring on an individual to other provision, but close monitoring of the service and outcomes, combined with reinforcement of the partnership principle, helped to address these concerns. Authorities were also able to exercise some flexibility in performance measures. In Bradford, for example, changes in outcome measures have been agreed with contractors, where they have experienced more success with one type of outcome, for example work experience, or jobs, than others. This flexibility was not initially built into the programme.

In some programmes, sustained payments to employers for individuals remaining in work. However, other schemes were reluctant to use these because of the time required to collect this information from employers, which they would prefer to spend on delivery.

Grant funding was still used by programmes to fund provision such as education and training, where this was not already funded and available to individuals on the programme. For example the Surrey Leader's Programme used some of its funding to provide grants to

training providers for work-related courses which were not funded by the Skills Funding Agency. Authorities also sometimes used funding to pay incentives, for example to employers taking young people on work placement or apprenticeship and for young people taking part in such activity. The Backing Young Bury programme fully funded trainee wages, throughout the six month work placement, utilising the £2275 DWP Wage Incentive Fund to recycle monies in anticipation of the next cohort intake. Incentive payments were also given for eight weeks of paid work and training.

Key points

- The programmes were largely located within local authorities, involving a number of services in addition to employment and skills teams, for example housing and social services.
- All of the programmes connected with local partners to deliver provision or to assess and refer to appropriate forms of help.
- Engagement with employers helped councils ensure that provision meets the needs of local business as well as providing placements and jobs for participants.
- All of the programmes worked with Jobcentre Plus, including through referral, funding and co-location but most did not offer help to Work Programme customers.
- Many of the projects had accessed a number of sources of funding in addition to receiving core funding and support from their own council. Authorities were able to use resources effectively by instituting flexibility across projects.
- Where services were delivered on a contracted basis, projects used funding systems for providers which included payment for outputs. They also often made interim outcome payments in recognition that, for many, job outcomes are dependent on intermediate steps.

Chapter 3: Programme delivery and individual support

In this chapter we look at how the programmes met individuals' needs for employment and skills services. We look first at referral systems and particularly at how they engaged the hard to reach. We then look at the services available to individuals and at how these were designed to meet needs which are often numerous and complex.

Referral

Many of the programmes shared the aim of improving the flow of individuals to services which could meet their needs rather than either duplicating provision or providing lower quality services in place of local specialist services. Therefore, programmes put considerable effort into developing their referral networks. Cornwall Works Hub is essentially a referral network, set up to maximise the use and effectiveness of local provision. It does however have a core function which takes enquiries and works with local organisations and the local media to raise awareness. Core programme staff also contact individuals who apply to the council for a discretionary award, who are likely to be in need of employment and skills services among other support.

Engaging the 'hard to reach'

Given the emphasis on disadvantaged groups and those who have been found 'hard to help', engaging potential clients clearly presented a challenge. Engagement was voluntary in all of the programmes, except for the Gateshead Work Programme. Rates of voluntary participation in welfare to work schemes are often low, for example numbers of such clients in the Work Programme are lower than anticipated (Newton et al, 2012). Some projects had to put considerable resources and energy into engaging target groups. This also meant provision had to be accessible, attractive and seen as useful. Engagement was also regarded as an important outcome by a number of the projects, in recognition of the challenge it often represents.

A number of projects, for example in Bradford and Haringey, were targeted at individuals who are not claiming benefits and could not be easily reached by Jobcentre Plus. These individuals were engaged through community centres among other venues such as job clubs and local advertising. The programmes benefited from their location within the authority where other services could refer their clients to employment and skills provision. In Haringey, for example, referrals came from, among others, teams in housing, adult learning, youth service and drug and alcohol support. Referral was also two-way, with programmes referring individuals to other support within and outside of the local authority where appropriate. Projects which were focused on youth unemployment, including the NEET group in Bury and Surrey, had referrals from the Youth Support Service, a key partner and co-delivery organisation within the programmes.

External Specialist agencies were also engaged to generate referrals. In Southampton, probation service and prisons were key referral points. Referral to the council's offender

and ex-offender provision was a complex process requiring provision of risk assessment information and, as such involved considerable time and effort to both build relationships and operate.

For many of the programmes, JCP was often a key partner with advisers keen to refer individuals before they become eligible for the Work Programme or having returned to JCP after two years on the scheme. Bury was unusual in including young people currently engaged in the Work Programme, receiving referrals from both JCP and Work Programme providers. This relationship was essential since the funding required the project to engage young people unemployed for a period of at least six months. Some programmes had engaged in discussion with JCP managers when referral rates were lower than anticipated.

Within projects which were based in the community, referral was integral to engagement and was built up slowly and purposefully over time as relationships between advisers and local people developed. In Liverpool, JCP played a major role in referrals, both through advisers on the ground and in local Job centres. Other key partners in referral included housing associations, community organizations and clubs.

How services go about meeting participants' needs

We have referred to the shared aim of many of the programmes of meeting the often complex needs of local people for employment and skills. In addition to employment and skills these might include housing, health, relationships, finance and debt and even digital exclusion. The programmes were to some degree client-led in the ways in which they provided help, either directly or through referral. The focus of the programmes on the most disadvantaged also influenced many aspects of provision. The programmes also aimed to deliver through voluntary participation rather than through mandation. The Gateshead Work Programme, while having conditionality in its design, aimed to fully agree actions with customers who would then take responsibility for participation.

Services usually included an assessment of basic skills, their employment, education and skills background and their aspirations. Having established this, they were then able to offer a package of support and select from a range of provision available locally.

Casework and mentoring

A number of programmes had a strong emphasis on one to one mentoring through a caseworker approach. This was seen as enabling an individual to build up self-esteem, motivation and confidence in finding work. Group sessions were not seen as feasible for some of the groups covered by the programmes, at least initially. The clients might include, for example, people who had experienced social isolation through long-term unemployment or who had mental health conditions. Some programmes aimed to keep the same mentor or caseworker throughout, for example the North Tyneside project sees caseworker mentoring and relationship building as key elements to working successfully, especially with individuals whose plans and progression can falter through trauma in their lives. Sudden homelessness

was a problem reported by a number of the programmes, which could bring a halt to progression and result in loss of jobs and work placements. Support from caseworkers included meeting before job interviews to offer support and reassurance, as well as to ensure they attended. More generally, caseworkers were seen to enable a relationship to be developed with an individual who is positive about change, countering a negative, anti-work, culture and lack of family support. This level of support was seen as possible through smaller caseloads than would be possible through the Work Programme for example where higher than expected caseloads have resulted in prioritisation of more job-ready individuals (Newton et al, 2012).

The various Southampton programmes for offenders and ex-offenders identified key worker support as the most important success factor and one which participants said made the most difference to them. Similarly, in Bradford a programme manager explained:

> 'When we speak to individuals, that is something that they say has made the difference. Someone that's listened to them, has cared about them and has supported them, but challenged them as well, when that's been appropriate'

This kind of support was equally seen as an essential feature of the Surrey Leader's Ready for Work programme and provided by the Youth Support Officer. Without this level of personalised support, a young person is more likely to become disengaged from provision when they experienced difficult life events. Where the involvement of another agency is necessary, this is alongside the core support, and involves personal introductions and, sometimes, joint meetings. Similarly, the Gateshead Work Programme aims for continuity through the same mentor during the individual's time with them. While mentoring includes counselling, programmes were aware that some participants required more help and referred to more structured help. The Gateshead Work Programme therefore funded a pilot programme for ESA claimants with a voluntary and community sector counselling organisation. This was not with the expectation that such help would enable an early movement into work within the contract time of two years weeks, but would allow them to do so in a few years time.

Programmes were not usually prescriptive in the frequency or intensity of mentoring or other face to face support. Some operated minimum service levels of fortnightly contact, but most left this to be decided between the provider and client. Some of the programmes put considerable resources into this aspect of the programme, allowing for a level of personal support considerably greater than in the Work Programme, for example. Support also varied in whether it was face to face or by telephone. However delivered, mentoring through a caseworker was seen as necessary to build up confidence and to overcome anxiety and trust issues which are not unusual among the long-term unemployed. A number of programmes moved gradually from mentoring to other provision. For example, the Bradford programme, generally begins work with clients through mentoring before moving to a package of provision.

Broad-based provision

A second key feature of the services provided by the local programmes is the lack of prescription in the support offered. This was based on the principle that individuals face different barriers to work and that programmes should both identify needs and provide appropriate help. Therefore, while the Bradford programme required its delivery partners to include some key components, for example information, advice and guidance. It might also include mentoring and engagement with employers with the precise mix determined by individual needs. Other provision accessed by Bradford, among other programmes, included sector based academies delivering employability skills training with a guaranteed interview. Employability skills, alongside or independently of occupational skills, formed part of provision across the programmes. These were seen as particularly important for young people and others without recent experience of work.

A number of programmes regarded careers information and guidance as a key area of provision, often not providing it directly but referring to expert help in the national careers service which is free of charge. This support, and assistance with job search, was delivered within many of the programmes. For example, the Surrey Leader's Ready for Work programme provides assistance with CV writing, job search, applications and interview skills to young people aged 16-18 not wanting to stay in full-time education. The need for this support was evident from the low rate of success among applicants in Surrey for apprenticeship places. Some other programmes also saw this kind of provision, through job clubs, as effective group provision. Through such help, participants were equipped with job search skills and brought into contact with other service providers and jobseekers.

Assisting transitions into work

Advice and guidance was an element of a number of the programmes, often delivered by existing providers, in particular the National Careers Service. The Streets Ahead programme in Liverpool, targeted at lone parents, has a strong information advice and guidance element, related to employment, but including advice on benefits, finances and debt. While the programme offered similar support to Jobcentre Plus, its key difference was in delivery within local areas, by JCP staff. This helped to build up trust and encouraged use of the project's services.

Work experience placements, often of short duration, were part of provision offered by many of the programmes. These were seen as valuable in assisting transitions into employment, enabling individuals to acquire employability skills and adjust to regular work routines. This was seen as especially important for individuals with very little workplace experience. As discussed in Chapter 1, programmes varied in the extent to which they offered in-work support, but a number felt this was important and that support to the employer was as important as to the employee. The Backing Young Bury project aims to recruit young people to work placements and to help them to progress from these into sustainable employment, including apprenticeships. The programme provides support to

young people on placements, which are largely within the local authority or in arms length organisations. The duration of the placement is 7 weeks, consisting of 18 hours a week in work placement and 12 hours in training or workshops.

Addressing multiple and complex needs

An important feature of many of the programmes was the breadth of the support and advice they made available. This included in and out of work benefits, debt, health, childcare and housing among other issues. In recognition of the barriers they present to employment, these areas of support were included by programmes. Such barriers often need to be acknowledged and addressed before work is a possibility. The issue of acknowledgement is especially important in relation to health and disability, and mental health in particular. Advisers and caseworkers also needed skills in identifying the most urgent issues to address, or what one project leader called the 'pinch point'. Addressing the range of non-employment needs often involved referral, particularly within the local authority but also with other agencies including JCP. Sharing of information, with individuals' consent, was seen as particularly important for those with multiple problems and barriers to work. Its effectiveness was seen as dependent on intra-authority relationships and strong relationships with JCP.

Packages seemed to work best where they could address multiple needs and were not too specialised. The Bradford programme had initially contracted to three organisations delivering services for people with mental health conditions, disabilities or drug and alcohol problems. Because of overlap between these three groups it was decided to regroup these so that organizations delivered services to all three, rather than refer to separate organisations for each need. As discussed in Chapter 1, other programmes also maximised their use of other local specialist provision, including delivered under contract elsewhere within the council.

Localised take-up and delivery

Given that participation was optional, programmes had to be more imaginative than much national provision in order to attract participants and achieve regular contact. Most of the programmes aimed to deliver services in venues which are familiar to local people and in which they will be at ease and able to engage in a dialogue about their barriers, aspirations and needs. Therefore, provision for disabled people in Bradford approached potential clients through visiting cafes and community venues. The Liverpool Streets Ahead Plus project engaged local people through a range of approaches, including sports and social events and also tested out the use of social media. Sports activity was also part of the Backing Young Bury project which accessed funding from the charity Sportivate to improve participants' health and wellbeing. This complimented the Bury Council 'Help Yourself to Health' programme which provided advice on healthy lifestyles, including sexual health. At the same time, co-location in job centres was seen as useful.

Key points

- Programmes put considerable effort into developing networks through which potential clients could be referred, within and outside of local authority structures. Effective referral systems were particularly important given the focus of many of the programmes on the hard to reach, including individuals who are not signing on.
- A number of the programmes were located within communities in order to engage more directly with target groups. Other programmes also aimed to deliver services in venues familiar to local people.
- Given that most of the programmes were voluntary, in order to engage individuals, services had to be accessible, attractive and useful. The strong element of advice and guidance in many of the programmes is likely to be an attraction to potential clients, as is the personalised, caseworker approach.
- The caseworker model provided continuous and regular support, with a strong element of mentoring. Caseworker loads were considered to be smaller than on national programmes allowing for more in-depth support.
- Programmes offered a range of support and provision, aimed at meeting the range of needs of local unemployed people. They facilitated access to the widest possible range of provision and support, both to assist employment directly and indirectly, for example with health and housing. Services shared information on referred individuals, with their consent.
- Where available, programmes use local funded provision rather than commissioning additional services.

Chapter 4: Programme outcomes and achievements

In this chapter we look at how projects measure their own success, the data they collect and how they report this. We then look at what their own data says about the success of their interventions.

Measuring outcomes

Movement into work was the main success criterion used by many of the programmes. However, as we explained in Chapter 1, other outcomes were also seen as significant in moving participants towards employment. This was in recognition of the considerable barriers to work experienced by some groups covered by the programmes. Therefore, work experience, training and apprenticeships, qualifications and volunteering were among the outcomes included by the programmes. The perspective was also more often in terms of the whole journey into work rather than just the end result of finding a job. For example one programme manager explained:

> *'You think of the point an individual enters into the journey for work.... There could be a whole raft of issues before then. It's about personal development, it's about vocational skills, it's about preparation for work and then it's about in-work support and I think of that whole journey is how we tend to think of it'. (NT)*

Participation was seen as an outcome in itself where the group targeted was hard to reach and engage. In this respect programmes varied quite fundamentally from mandatory welfare to work schemes. Therefore, a number of programmes measured success at least partly in the level of engagement they achieved. These included community-based programmes in Liverpool and North Tyneside and those in Bury and Surrey aimed at NEET young people. The Surrey EmployAbility programme focuses on engaging some of the most vulnerable young people in work experience opportunities, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. These young people may need a lengthy period of support so progression rates in the short-term are low. Its local 'Ready 4 Work' re-engagement programme is targeted at young people who are more ready for employment, or for other engagement and it aims for these to achieve high outcomes into employment, training or education.

The Bradford Routes into Work scheme aimed primarily to move participants into jobs. Another programme within the authority's Get Bradford Working programme moved people not yet ready for employment into the intermediate labour market. Other programmes aimed to move individuals into training and, in the cases of Surrey and Bury, apprenticeships in particular but these outcomes were seen as achievable only after pre-apprenticeship training and preparation. For this reason the Surrey programme saw an increase in the participation rate among young people as an important outcome of their programme. In Bury, this preparation consists of seven weeks of work placement and off the job training

followed by six months in a paid work placement. Although numbers engaged were small, at around twenty a year, almost all progressed to jobs with training.

Across the projects, a range of outcomes were identified by managers and advisers working with clients. Some of these were linked to engagement and included attitudinal factors and motivation. Although these could potentially be measured, this had not been part of the programmes' work. Qualitative data was collected in two ways: through external evaluation and also through collection of case studies of individuals, used to illustrate the effective functioning of the programme.

External evaluations identified a wide range of outcomes which were not measured quantitatively, but were apparent through qualitative data collection, particularly through interviews with advisers and clients. These include positive feedback on:

- the personalised approach of advisers
- the extent of encouragement and support
- community based locations as delivery points
- the relevance and helpfulness of advice given
- services' help with a range of barriers to employment, e.g. housing
- the 'one-stop' nature of some services

Other outcomes which projects believed resulted from their interventions included improved health and wellbeing and reductions in use of health and social services. Crime reduction, including domestic violence, was another outcome mentioned by some. This impact had been measured by Southampton City Council which had provided outcomes data to the police who then gave project managers anonymised data on offending patterns. However, in general, such impacts were not measured quantitatively. Other outcomes included impact on communities, a factor which was important to programmes with a strong local presence in their delivery. Factors used to assess this impact included increased awareness of services and provision as well as opportunities for employment, training, education and volunteering. However, this was not measured quantitatively.

Most programmes did not have targets for outcomes. One programme had very ambitious targets set by the leader of the council. Having found these to be unrealistic, programme leaders advised that these should be used with more caution in future, particularly since success rates can depend on labour markets.

Expenditure was also included as a major criteria in considering the success of programmes and reported to stakeholders inside and outside of the local authority. Most of the programmes provided us with some data on costs, which we have included in Table 5 below. However, expenditure is unlikely to be comparable both between local authority programmes and with national schemes, because of how it is calculated and what it includes. As we have described, local authorities are often able to make cost savings in

delivery of services because staff can work flexibly across projects and accommodation costs and overheads may be absorbed into other budgets.

Data collection

Programmes collected data on new entrants to programmes by personal characteristics, including gender, age, ethnicity, length of unemployment or date of last job and what benefits they receive. Providers also provided records of information collected from clients through initial interview and often recorded on an individual action or learning plan. This information might include, for example perceived barriers to work, interventions, provision attended and progress towards employment. Some projects, for example Liverpool Streets Ahead Plus, collected quite detailed information to map progress into work.

Because of the basis on which providers were paid, data was collected for new starts and for job entries. Other outcomes sometimes included participation in activities such as work experience, training or volunteering, where these were included in project aims. Some programmes also recorded sustained job outcomes, usually where contracts included this in their payments.

Cornwall Works Hub collects data based on the enquiries it receives. It does not collect its own data on provision since it refers and signposts to provision rather than deliver provision directly. The Hub records the number of enquiries it receives both from individuals and support services, and information, advice and guidance given. These records show employment and skills among the top three reasons for contact with the hub, along with health and well-being. The success of its co-location within a JCP building and close partnership working with DWP have also been evidenced through an increase in referrals from JCP. Where applicable the Hub follows up enquiries to track the outcome and effectiveness. They have also recently started to consider Social Return on Investment.

Some of the programmes shared information on services accessed by clients with JCP through data sharing agreements. In North Tyneside, for example, because of the frequent contact made by project staff and participants, the project sent regular updates on engagement of individuals to JCP which could assist JCP advisers in the service they offered.

Reporting results

Projects used outcome data to examine the success of their programmes in achieving a range of outcomes, with these depending on the project. All projects looked at outcomes by basic characteristics such as gender, age and disability. Success rates for particular groups and for different localities were also part of authorities' assessments. Only a small number of the programmes used the Jobcentre plus range of categories because they covered different client groups.

Programmes shared performance data with partners and providers, including through regular meetings to discuss the success of provision and programme design. Some programmes also had to report to the organisations funding the programme and had commissioned internal and external evaluation, including surveys and qualitative research with service users. Project managers also reported regularly to council members, for example leads on employment and skills, committees and boards on employment and skills or welfare reform. This was particularly important in local authorities which had made a big investment in these programmes and where they had a high political profile.

Outcomes

We asked local authorities to provide us with data on enrolments, job outcomes and sustained outcomes by personal characteristics and payment group. We also asked for cost data. A summary of the outcomes data provided by local authorities, as at June 2014 or from the end of the project, if earlier, is presented in Table 4.

As we explained in our introduction, we had originally intended to compare the programmes' success with national schemes, but this was not appropriate or feasible for a number of reasons:

First, while many of the programmes did aim to move individuals into work, this was often not their sole aim. Client groups often needed to take other steps before they were ready for work, including gaining experience of work through placements or through volunteering. While this is also recognised by national provision, data on such interim outcomes is not available for comparisons to be made with the local programmes.

Secondly, engagement in all but one of the schemes was voluntary. We have described how this presented a challenge to local authorities. It also meant that a number of participants were not signing on and therefore likely to be different from those who claim benefits. They may include less disadvantaged individuals who are supported by their families, but also more disadvantaged people who have not worked for many years, or at all.

Another, more mundane difficulty in showing success statistically is the small number of individuals engaged in some of the programmes. These include those working intensively with the hardest to help, for example the Backing Young Bury scheme and Liverpool Streets Ahead which engaged 38 and 57 people respectively.

Table 4 Data provided by Local Authorities

Programme	Data provided	Participant numbers
Bradford: Routes into Work (Get Bradford Working)	Enrolments per month (totals) Job outcomes per month (totals) Funding of project (monthly) August 2012-June 2014 Total starts and outcomes by characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity, disability): for enrolment, job outcomes, incomplete data on sustained outcomes Cost data	1233
North Tyneside: Working Homes Outreach Team (WHOT)	Monthly enrolments by personal characteristics & payment group April 2013 - March 2014 Job outcomes by same, no data on sustained outcomes	556
Haringey: Jobs For Haringey	Total enrolments (of people unemployed for at least 6 months prior to enrolment) by personal characteristics gender, lone parent, disability April 2012 to date Job outcomes by same Sustained outcomes, percentage only	1029
Surrey: Leader's Ready for Work Scheme	Dataset includes 4 programmes. Data on gender, teen parent, LDD and NEET Some data on positive progressions, including employment, apprenticeships, FE but some gaps Some sustainment data (12 weeks) on apprenticeship progressions Some data on progressions Detailed project cost data	829
Southampton: Offender Skills and Employment	3 programmes spanning July 2006 - June 2008 Enrolments by personal characteristics and JSA 18-24 & 25+. Job outcomes by same, no data on sustained outcomes Total cost of projects	Scheme 1 = 221 Scheme 2 = 202 Scheme 3 = 57
Bury: Backing Young Bury/Connecting Provision	Enrolments at 4 points Sept 2012 - Feb 2014 by personal characteristics, all JSA 19-24 Progression to jobs with training at same points by personal characteristics Progression to jobs after 6 months by personal characteristics Finances for 4 points, costs and income sources	38
Liverpool: Streets Ahead Plus	Total enrolments between October 2010 - March 2011 by personal characteristics - gender, lone parent, disability Job outcomes by personal characteristics, no sustained outcomes data	57
Gateshead: Work Programme	Contract held since start of Work Programme in 2011. Outcomes data given for Avanta, the prime provider. Referrals, Attachments, Job Outcomes, ethnicity Gender, payment group	1973

Table 5 summarises local authorities' perspectives on the main impact made by their programmes, in relation to engagement and outcomes.

Table 5 Perceived Impact[4]

Programme	Headline Impact
Bradford: Routes into Work (Get Bradford Working)	Engagement: 1100 participants register onto programmes and undertake employability training, Outcomes: 390 participants are supported into employment, 218 participants sustain work at 13 weeks
North Tyneside: Working Homes Outreach Team (WHOT)	21% job outcomes April 2013 - March 2014 12 % job outcome rate for disabled participants
Surrey: Leader's Ready for Work Scheme	Reduction in NEET young people from 993 in April 2013 to 453 in July 2014: a reduction of 54% 140 young people moving from NEET to engagement in 2013-14. Including 80 into apprenticeships Estimated cost per outcome = £1,380
Gateshead: Work Programme	Support across all JCP benefit groups June 2011 to June 2014 Gateshead Council 1973 starts 28% attachment to job outcome vs 21% nationally 42% PG1 (aged 18-24) attachment to job outcome vs 28% nationally 27% PG2 (25+) attachment to job outcome vs 22% nationally 9% PG6 (ESA) attachment to job outcome vs 10% nationally
Haringey: Jobs For Haringey	27.6% sustained job outcomes Estimated cost per outcome = £5,000
Southampton: Offender Skills and Employment	24% progression to employment Estimated cost per outcome = £5,736 62% reduction in re-offending evidenced by police data. Cost saving to Treasury estimated at least £24m
Bury: Backing Young Bury/Connecting Provision	38 young people engaged between September 2012 and February 2014, 32 progressing to jobs with training and 24 employed beyond 6 months Estimated cost per outcome = £5,146
Liverpool: Streets Ahead Plus	The original target for the project was to engage with 100 residents and secure employment for 20. By the end of the project in March 2011, 80 had been engaged, nine had started full-time employment and one had increased her hours. In subsequent months a further six entered employment Estimated cost per job outcome = £4,630
Cornwall: Cornwall Works Hub	10,000 people supported through the Cornwall Works Hub with information, advice and signposting to appropriate services

Despite these limitations, programme managers provided evidence of the impact of their programmes in job outcomes, engagement and in value for money. A number of the schemes show good rates of progression into employment, particularly in view of the characteristics of participants and their levels of labour market disadvantage. For example,

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[4] Table uses data provided by the nine local authorities.

the Get Bradford Working programme achieved a sustainable job outcome rate of 62 per cent, compared to a national rate of 56 per cent.[5] As Table 5 shows, Gateshead Council's Work Programme achieved higher job outcomes than the national programme, particularly for young people aged 18-24.

Results for some of the other programmes are also good, taking account the barriers faced by their client group: around 20 per cent of participants in the North Tyneside and Liverpool community-based schemes moved into work. These include individuals with lengthy periods of unemployment and significant barriers to work. Similar results were achieved by Southampton's projects for ex-offenders, a group which faces considerable difficulty in the labour market.

As we have noted, engaging individuals in programmes was regarded as an outcome in itself by many programmes, in view of the voluntary nature of participation. Therefore, Surrey council assesses the success of its programme to boost apprenticeships by the engagement of young people, including NEETs. The Surrey Leader's project had succeeded in engaging 829 NEET young people between April 2013 and July 2014 out of a total of around 977. The council therefore reached a very high proportion of its target group. The council also measures its success by the engagement of employers offering apprenticeships. Employers have taken up council grants to take on more than 500 apprentices between April 2013 and July 2014. The council explains the upward trend in apprenticeship participation in the county with reference to directly engaging employers through apprenticeship grants, those recruited by contractors, opportunities provided by the council itself and young people supported in apprenticeships by the Surrey Youth Service. Other projects also regarded engagement as a key outcome, including community-based projects. The project in North Tyneside succeeded in engaging 556 local people within a year, of whom 116 found work.

We have described the difficulties in measuring programme costs and value for money. However, this was an important success criterion for the programmes. Data provided by the projects shows relatively low levels of expenditure for outputs they achieved. In North Tyneside, for example which achieved 21 per cent job outcomes from its programme, and 43 per cent positive destinations such as training, the total cost of each job outcome was estimated at £1052.61, including all running costs, salaries and customer costs. For programme managers, this relatively low figure was a key indicator of its success. The Surrey Leader's Ready for Work scheme had similar costs per outcome of £1,380. Costs per outcome in some of the other projects were higher at around £5,000. These included programmes for the hardest to help and involving intensive input with groups including ex-offenders (Southampton), lone parents (Liverpool) and young NEETS (Bury). Programmes were also aware of wider benefits, for example the Southampton programme reported a 62

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[5] Figures relate to the period June 2011 to June 2014 for the Work Programme and August 2012 to June 2014 for Get Bradford Working. Definition of 'sustainable employment' is slightly different: 13 weeks for Get Bradford Working; 12 or 24 weeks for Work Programme, depending on payment group. Figures were calculated by NIESR using the Work Programme Tabulation Tool and data from ERSA (2014) and Bradford City Council.

per cent reduction in re-offending in the post-participation year, with most of the reduction in crimes against people and property.

Key points

- Job outcomes were the main success criterion used by programmes, but intermediate, outcomes were also seen as important, particularly for those with significant barriers.
- Engagement was seen as an outcome in itself where the group targeted was hard to reach, as many were.
- Programmes collected data on new entrants by characteristics including gender, age, ethnicity, length of unemployment and benefit status.
- Programmes collected data on job entries and sometimes whether these were sustained. Other outcomes for which data was collected included work experience, training and apprenticeships, qualifications and volunteering.
- Programmes shared performance data with partners and providers and reported regularly to council members and funders.
- Programme outcomes cannot be compared to those of national schemes for the unemployed because eligibility and target groups are different, participation is voluntary and they aim to achieve intermediate outcomes, not just employment.
- Despite the challenges, programmes achieved good results. Some programmes were costly, reflecting the intensive help provided, but others record low cost per outcome.
- Other success criteria, which were sometimes measured quantitatively, included costs per outcome and reductions in re-offending.
- Programmes were aware of a number of ways in which their programmes had an impact, for example in motivation and attitudes, health and wellbeing and awareness of services.

Chapter 5 Conclusions: How local authority schemes can support people towards work

In this final chapter of the report we pull together the findings of the research to draw some conclusions, focusing on why local authorities are well-equipped to identify need, commission support, and deliver welfare to work programmes and how they are achieving results with their target groups.

It was apparent that effective approaches and successful outcomes led from three main factors: first, the local *economic and political leadership* exercised by local councils; secondly, and stemming from this, their *localised knowledge and expertise*; and thirdly, their *expertise in skills and employment*. These features gave local authorities convening power, or 'pull' on partners and resources, 'reach' among local communities and 'depth' in addressing barriers to work. Table 6 presents local authorities' summaries of the features of their programmes which lead to success, in terms of outcomes for participants.

Local economic and political leadership

Councils occupy a central place in their localities, they deliver, commission and engage with a wide range of services related to employment and skills. Local authorities have convening power, able to bring together organisations and different stakeholder groups. They are able to bring together public funds and generate further resource by coordinating the work of a range of agencies which might otherwise collaborate. We referred in Chapter 2 to a recent report which identified annual expenditure of almost £13 billion on skills and employment support, with funding from 28 different programmes and budgets.

Coordination of different agencies was key to the success of Southampton City Council's series of projects for offenders and ex-offenders which brought together a number of agencies dealing with training, in work support and criminal justice. Other programmes also reported being able to access varied sources of funding through partnering with organisations with experience of different streams. For the Backing Young Bury scheme, partnerships with organisations with access to traineeship funds had been particularly valuable.

One of the features shared by many of the programmes is the extent to which they both used and developed existing services and provision, rather than duplicate or replace such services. This approach also reduced the set up and settling in time which is required where new providers win contracts and need to put infrastructure, staff and services in place before they can start to deliver.

Table 6 Success factors of local skills and employment programmes

Programme	Success factors
Bradford: Routes into Work (Get Bradford Working)	• Flexibility to commission contracts to most appropriate/effective organisations to address local employment inequalities • One-to-one mentoring as main delivery method • Single point of contact with providers • Relationship with and funding from JCP • Long-standing relationships with local delivery partners
North Tyneside: Working Homes Outreach Team (WHOT)	• A community-based 'one stop shop' to meet multiple needs • Focus on caseworker mentoring with on-going support • Coordinated delivery with JCP using co-location and reciprocal referrals
Surrey: Leader's Ready for Work Scheme	• Young people to receive one-to-one support for re-engagement • Use of existing provision funded by ESF, Youth Contract, EFA and SFA • Partnership with provider network assisted by additional investment • Wider engagement of employer partners • Level of support offered to employers taking on apprentices • Emphasis on building work-readiness
Gateshead: Work Programme	• Provision tailored to individual needs • Caseworker approach • Integrated model e.g. Troubled Families, ESF Support for Families with Multiple Problems • Use networks to access existing, funded, provision
Haringey: Jobs For Haringey	• Strong referral networks bring clients to the programme • Experienced advisors offering one-to-one support • Low turnover among advisors in-house in externally • Caseloads of around 40-50 clients allows in-depth support • Frequent monitoring visits to external providers • Wider engagement of employers
Southampton: Offender Skills and Employment	• Caseworker approach • Support and advice to address multiple needs of this group • Wider engagement of employer partners, including developers and construction companies
Bury: Backing Young Bury/Connecting Provision	• Working in partnership with other funded provision • Support and advice to address multiple needs of young NEETs • One-to-one mentoring as main delivery method • Level of support offered to employers offering placements • Emphasis on building work-readiness
Liverpool: Streets Ahead Plus	• Used customer insight to identify needs of lone parent target group • Support and advice to address multiple needs of lone parents • Community based services increased participation • Sustained delivery building on earlier project set up in 2003 gave continuity, built trust and increased engagement
Cornwall: Cornwall Works Hub	• Strong referral networks direct individuals to appropriate services • Network of providers can address multiple needs • Hub model increases take up of local services

The programmes had built capacity among local organisations and improved their ability to work in partnership. They also built in local authority quality standards to the design and

delivery of programmes. The view expressed by one programme leader that the networks built and partnerships developed would enable the authority to put together strong consortia for future projects is likely to be shared by others. Likewise, programme managers agreed that their local authority has an interest in the capacity and sustainability of locally based organisations which may be lacking within national welfare to work providers.

The practice of incorporating existing provision also gave skills and employment programmes greater stability and permanence. Funding streams, policy priorities, provision within welfare to work programmes, organisations and staff change, often resulting in short-lived organisations and lack of continuity in local provision. The programmes featured in this report show how local councils can develop and sustain local networks of support which can build local capacity in employment and skills provision. This is illustrated particularly well by the Cornwall Works hub which is essentially a referral centre for provision throughout the county. As a manager for the hub explained:

> *'Mainstream welfare to work programmes and skills programmes would come and go. Often we could see duplication and siloed working. The Cornwall Works strategy was put in place to link and coordinate activity to ensure sustainable and effective working practices within the Welfare to work arena'*

The standing of the local authority was also seen to encourage participants to achieve success on the programmes. The visible support of the council's leadership was seen as particularly useful in this respect, with a number of the programmes endorsed by senior figures. This included active engagement as well as statements of public support. For example, in Bury, the leader visits all young people on work placement to see how the scheme works from their perspective and identify any challenges to achieving successful outcomes while conveying leadership support to the young person and to their manager.

The projects did not aim to replace or duplicate the work of JCP but for provision to be complementary to provision at local level, with most of the projects having strong working relationships with Jobcentre Plus. These had been developed over time through sharing of information and referral networks. They were also dependent on individual relationships, also built up over time. An important distinctive and complementary feature of the programmes is their attention to the needs of individuals who are not claiming Jobseekers Allowance, who currently constitute more than half of people classified as ILO unemployed (CESI, 2014). For the programmes, these included young people aged under 18 who are not eligible for benefits and others who are not signing on as unemployed. Some of these will not have worked for some time and therefore have significant barriers to work. Others may have been working in the grey economy, which by nature is insecure. By paying attention to the needs of such individuals the projects were assisting individuals who might otherwise receive no help in finding work. At the same time they were helping to reduce demands on Jobcentre Plus, when individuals become eligible for benefits or decide to sign on.

Localised knowledge and expertise

Councils have a in-depth understanding of the needs of local people, their communities and the employment and learning opportunities available to them. Local authorities' connections with local organisations and services gave them a degree of reach that few providers of employment and skills services could achieve. These enabled them to establish the networks and collaborations described above. Importantly, authorities also made extensive use of their own services to support the needs of individuals engaged in employment and skills programmes. Local authorities were also able to refer to other council services in a more direct way than other providers, sharing personal data with individual consent. This was particularly important in ensuring that barriers to employment, such as housing, could be met alongside those more directly related to employment and skills.

Programme staff also worked closely with colleagues in other departments, such as planning and economic development, to build in training and apprenticeship opportunities into procurement. This is a strategy currently being followed by Southampton City Council, among others, as a representative explained:

> *'The issue is that the private sector is providing all the opportunities and that is our approach: if you want to come and develop in Southampton you are going to create jobs and provide opportunities for our residents, and particularly our most disadvantaged residents from our priority groups.'*

This strategy, while initially having social benefits in reduced unemployment, also leads to economic benefits for localities in improvements in the supply of skilled labour. Authorities also worked in partnership with local organisations, particularly employers and Jobcentre Plus, to assist individuals involved in large-scale redundancy programmes.

The wider role of local authorities in development was seen as instrumental in encouraging business partners to participate in the programmes. In Surrey, for example, the authority found some employers offered new apprenticeships because of strong existing links between the council, local employers and employer stakeholders, as well as the package of support and activity surrounding the programme. This particular programme had a team of Employment Development Officers who brokered links between the council and local businesses, matching candidates for apprenticeships to opportunities in local organisations. Bradford City Council are currently developing a 'retail academy' linking training provision, local businesses and JCP to meet district needs.

Local authorities also capitalised on their reach by locating services in community venues. These arrangements were possible because of existing service links with the council, for example through housing services. These arrangements also allowed for services to be delivered without incurring additional accommodation costs. Locally designed and delivered programmes were also seen to have credibility which national programmes might not.

Therefore, the North Tyneside Working Homes Project had invested time in building relationships locally before starting to deliver the programme. Then with the clients themselves, advisors they took some time to get to know people within the targeted local communities to identify all the barriers they are facing and how these might be overcome.

Liverpool's Steps Ahead Plus programme used customer insight to gain understanding of barriers to work and needs of local people in target areas. It also drew on other local agencies to gain this understanding, using existing relationships and connections. Advisers' knowledge of the area and understanding of the barriers faced by local communities was also an important enabling factor. These factors enabled projects to shape provision according to local need and to achieve success in moving people towards work.

Expertise in skills and employment

The long-standing involvement of the local authorities in employment and skills programmes gave them both expertise in design and delivery. They understood the barriers to employment among the local population, how these can be addressed through joined up services focused on individual circumstances and needs and what help people need to move into work.

Councils made effective use of resources: a number practised flexibility across projects, in terms of use of staff and other resources, allowing for greater cost effectiveness, economies of scale and also continuity of provision. In delivering direct provision many of the programmes used a caseworker approach which included a strong mentoring component. This approach had been found to be most effective with individuals with the most pronounced barriers, who were often targeted by the schemes. Programme managers reported that caseloads were smaller than on national programmes or within Jobcentre Plus, enabling more contact time and tailored one to one support. Other aspects of the programmes which were believed to lead to successful outcomes included attention to the often complex needs of individuals and referral to adjacent provision in such areas as housing and debt advice, described above.

We have referred to the voluntary nature of the programmes and the challenges that this presented in ensuring take up and retention. Local authorities' understanding of their local communities was vital in ensuring that programmes were sufficiently accessible, attractive and beneficial to ensure continuing engagement. The emphasis on advice and guidance and on mentoring is likely to have helped programmes to achieve this aim.

Programmes also had systems in place to help ensure that providers referred individuals to the help they needed and did not deliver all provision in-house out of concern for losing outcome payments. To ensure this did not happen and that referrals were made to specialist help, Haringey made visits to providers to check records of the interventions delivered to individuals and also organised meetings between providers to encourage partnership working.

A number of programme managers explained their success with reference to the skills and experience of their staff. For example, the Gateshead Work Programme believed its staff had different priorities to many who worked for private providers as they were not paid on a commission basis yet they still operate commercially within the payment by results environment. They tended to have experience of outreach and of working on programmes with long term aims for moving individuals into work. Advisers also worked within the local authority ethos of social inclusion and making a difference. These factors made advisers more inclined to continue to help individuals who might otherwise be 'parked' as unlikely to find work in the short to medium term. The Gateshead Council Work Programme also had low staff turnover among its providers, allowing for relationships to be built with customers. In comparison, the national evaluation of the Work Programme has found high rates of staff turnover among providers, leading to delivery difficulties (Newton et al, 2012). The Jobs for Haringey programme also explains its success rates with reference to having much smaller caseloads than Work Programme providers can typically operate to. These smaller caseloads allow for more in-depth help from advisers through longer appointments, as well as more frequent contact.

Programmes were also able to be more flexible than is possible within many schemes in the amount of support provided at various stages. They were able, for example, to put resources into support at key times such as preparation for interview. This was seen as something which larger programmes delivered by JCP or within the Work Programme were less able to provide because of their high through-put, more standardised offer and large adviser caseloads.

Lessons for the design of future back to work programmes

Finally, the programmes offer some important lessons for the design of the next round of back to work schemes both local and nationally-led. These are:

First, that any new services should map and link in with existing provision, through referral networks, rather than set up in competition, or aim to deliver specialist services with generalist staff. Local provision should be used, not duplicated. Services should link training and skills provision with the needs of local employers and align with councils' strategic growth plans.

Second, provision must include the growing number of individuals who are not claiming Jobseekers Allowance and who are therefore not receiving support. These are often more challenging to engage, and require services to be accessible, attractive, useful and flexible with a substantial element of one to one support.

Third, services should seek to address the wider needs of individuals in such areas as health and housing, first identifying these through one to one assessment and mentoring and then referring to appropriate help. There is also value to be gained in focusing interventions at

ward level, in areas of deprivation, low levels of worklessness and disengagement from the labour market.

Key points

- Effective approaches and successful outcomes led from three main features of local authorities: their economic and political leadership; their localised knowledge; and expertise in skills and employment.
- One of the shared aspects by programmes was the extent to which they used and developed existing services and provision, rather than duplicate or replace it. This includes complementing the work of Jobcentre Plus.
- Councils have an in-depth understanding of the needs of local people, their communities and the opportunities available to them.
- The long-standing involvement of local authorities in employment and skills programmes gave them expertise in design in delivery.
- The wider role of local authorities in development was instrumental in encouraging business partners to participate in the programmes.
- A number of programme managers explained their success with reference to the skills and experience of their staff, the emphasis on casework and mentoring and flexibility in the help provided.

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