

Director: Sue Cooke, Executive Head of Economic Services

Author: Emma Longbottom, Dixie Potter



Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 1 September 2017

Subject: Employability, Accessing Jobs and Realising Potential

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consult the Panel on the work to progress the priorities and actions in the “Employability, Accessing Jobs and Realising Potential” priority of the Employment and Skills Plan.

2 Advisory Group Report

- 2.1 The group met on 30 October. Verbal updates were provided on the following activity:
- Social prescribing pilot
 - Apprenticeships support to businesses
 - Development of higher level skills provision
 - JCP Personal Support Package
- 2.2 The group welcomed the proposed support being developed for individuals with complex health needs.

3 Social Prescribing Pilot

- 3.1 As detailed previously, the final phase of the Headstart project will focus on piloting a social prescribing model working with GP surgeries.
- 3.2 A pilot programme is being developed with City of York Council and some York based GP’s. The programme will concentrate on encouraging clinical staff to ‘socially prescribe’ to non-clinical services, for example employment support or skills. The pilot will target a small numbers of individuals, working in a very targeted way to develop research data. As detailed in September, the primary target group for this support will be over 50’s, however it will also be offered to all age groups.
- 3.3 We expect the project will launch in the New Year, an update will be provided on progress at the ESP in March 2018.

4 Work and Health

- 4.1 The Work and Health Programme is a welfare-to-work programme which will provide specialised support for those unemployed for over two years and, on a voluntary basis, to those with health conditions or disabilities. The Programme will be run by service providers awarded contracts by the government. The Programme will target people who with specialist support are likely to be able to find work within 12 months. It takes the place of two existing welfare-to-work schemes, the Work Programme and Work Choice, although many jobseekers who would previously have been supported by the Work Programme will now receive support directly through Jobcentre Plus rather than the Work and Health Programme
- 4.2 The Programme forms part of a wider package of employment support for people with disabilities, as outlined in the Government's Work, Health and Disability Green Paper: Improving Lives, published in October 2016. The Green Paper also includes proposals to increase the level of employment support provided to disabled people through the Jobcentre Plus network.
- 4.3 Following a comprehensive commissioning process undertaken by Department of Work and Pensions, contracts have now been awarded. Support for individuals within Leeds City Region will be provided by Reed in Partnership, the contract will commence in January 2018.
- 4.4 Following a meeting with the DWP District Manager for West Yorkshire, it has been suggested to bring a report and discussion on Jobcentre Plus support programmes, including Universal Credit, to the next Panel meeting in March.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Panel is asked to note the update from the advisory group and comment on any of the work underway.