

## **Service Level Agreement between Jobcentreplus, Local Authority and the Work Programme Prime Providers in the London Borough of Harrow.**

### **Background**

This Service Level Agreement<sup>1</sup> outlines the approach that Jobcentreplus, London Borough of Harrow Local Authority and the Work Programme Providers, Ingeus, Maximus, and Reed in Partnership will take to reduce worklessness in the Borough of Harrow in 2013 / 2014

This Service Level Agreement will be underpinned by a Joint Action Plan that will be used as the vehicle to monitor performance against agreed action.

The Agreement will be reviewed by partners on a quarterly basis. Actions will however be progressed on an as needs basis throughout the year.

The Service Level agreement recognises that Jobcentreplus, the Local Authority and the Work Programme Providers should work collaboratively to achieve these targets. It acknowledges that other important partners include the Further Education Colleges, Harrow College and Stanmore College and a range of community employment projects which deliver specialist services to Harrow's most vulnerable residents.

### **The aspirations for unemployment levels in Harrow in 2013/14:**

- **Reduce the JSA register by 4% to fewer than 3688 by September 2013, with a further reduction of 4% by March 2014**
- **Reduce the 18-24 claimant count from by 20% from 735 to 588 by March 2014**
- **Reduce the register size for those claiming JSA for over one year by 8 % to 3534 by March 2014.**
- **Increase the percentage difference between Harrow and rest of London in respect of JSA claimants. (current baseline difference is 1.6%)**
- **Increase the percentage difference between Harrow and rest of London in respect of JSA claimants aged 18-24**

### **Working in Partnership:**

Under this Service Level Agreement, the Enterprising Harrow Steering Group and Providers Group will provide the formal structures for partners to develop and implement the strategies required to achieve these targets. The Group includes Harrow college, Stanmore College, Harrow in Business, West London Business and North West Chamber of Commerce.

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<sup>1</sup> This is not a binding contract, this is an aspirational objective to meet the needs of the community

Under this Service Level Agreement, Harrow Council will provide the Chair for the Enterprising Harrow Steering Group.

The Local Authority will provide the secretariat for the board.

A representative from local providers will Chair the Provider Group.

Jobcentreplus will appoint a Senior Manager for Harrow Jobcentre to lead on the Provider Group issues on behalf of Harrow Council.

The Work Programme Providers will provide appropriate representatives to the Provider Group.

To support this agreement all partners will explore the potential for working collaboratively through co-location. This will include Jobcentre services being delivered from Work Programme Provider and Local Authority premises and also Work Programme Provider and Local Authority services being delivered at Jobcentreplus premises.

#### **The Employer Offer:**

These reductions cannot be achieved unless all parties work collaboratively to ensure that there is a transparent and effective offer for Harrow Employers and that Harrow residents have access to a wider Labour Market across Borough boundaries.

Harrow Council's planning process enables the creation of training and employment opportunities. These opportunities are formalised in legal agreements with the developer and require an agreed Employment and Training Plan to be agreed between the developer and Council. Employment and training opportunities through the construction phase will be managed by the council's construction training initiative and opportunities will be advertised with Jobcentreplus.

Harrow Council's Sustainable Procurement policy promotes the creation of local supply chains and create employment and training opportunities for our residents.

It is the council's objective to ensure that the following will be supported to secure these opportunities

- workless residents threatened by homelessness
- workless members of families identified as having multiple needs.

Jobcentreplus and the Work Programme providers will identify suitable clients that are Harrow residents for vacancies and training opportunities generated through the above.

Harrow Council will provide referrals to the DWP/ESF funded Families Programme delivered by Reed in Partnership. The provider will ensure that all referrals are provided with an initial assessment. The provider will notify Harrow Council of those referrals that have been accepted onto the Families Programme and those referrals not accepted onto the programme. The provider will notify Harrow Council of the outputs delivered by Harrow residents in accordance with the contracted outputs they are funded to deliver.

## Jobcentreplus Offer

Jobcentreplus will ensure Welfare to Work providers deliver in accordance with contract. Jobcentreplus will provide named representatives to support Harrow Council in resolving issues relating to the underperformance of Welfare to Work providers. Jobcentreplus will raise Harrow Council concerns with the Work Programme providers.

Jobcentreplus will develop a bespoke employer offer for Harrow Employers that is responsive, effective and ensures that Harrow residents are able to compete for Harrow jobs. It will work in partnership with the Work Programme Providers, and other partners (including Harrow College and Stanmore College) to ensure that Harrow unemployed residents have the skills required to compete for vacancies.

Jobcentreplus will also make full use of the "travel to work" area for Harrow residents, working collaboratively with Jobcentres and Employers in the surrounding Boroughs, to ensure that Harrow residents can compete effectively for all available jobs.

Jobcentreplus will work in partnership with the Enterprising Harrow Steering Group (including Harrow in Business and the North West London Chamber of Commerce) to maximise the support available to residents who wish to follow a self-employment path out of unemployment. In addition Jobcentreplus will promote the use of New Enterprise Allowance Programme to support Harrow residents into self-employment.

### **Addressing barriers:**

The aspirations set out in this document cannot be achieved unless all partners work collaboratively to address the barriers faced by unemployed residents in Harrow. The Local Authority will work with all partners to develop strategies that address the key barriers of residents for whom ESOL, literacy and numeracy and childcare into employment.

Jobcentreplus will use the Flexible Support Fund in the Borough of Harrow to ensure that recognised barriers are addressed through co-ordinated programmes of support.

To facilitate the effective use of the Fund, and to engage at a local level, JCP [Partnership Leads] have contacted Local Authorities (LA) to discuss the possibility of Districts providing support through match funding to finance expansion of LA programmes supporting Jobcentre claimants to overcome any barriers to work they have and move into employment.

The District is tendering with not for profit organisations to provide support through Grant Funding to finance the expansion of their programmes which also support Jobcentre claimants to overcome any barriers to work they have and move into employment.

Jobcentreplus will monitor the effectiveness of programme delivery to ensure that barriers are being addressed.

The Work Programme Providers will continue to offer bespoke support to long term unemployed residents, helping them to move into employment. This will also provide feedback on barriers faced to inform employment support delivery across the partnership.

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## **Data Sharing Protocol**

We will adhere to the data sharing protocols set by the Department for Work and Pensions with Harrow Council.

## **Employment services of the future:**

In an ever increasingly digital age, where Universal Credit will be principally an online service, it is essential that all partners respond collaboratively to meet the needs of employers who are using on line services as the recruitment method of choice and unemployed residents.

Jobcentreplus will work with employers, unemployed residents and partners to ensure that Universal Jobmatch is the preferred method of recruitment and that unemployed residents have the digital skills to navigate online services.

The Local Authority will promote online services, through its own Website and look to increase accessibility of digital services in Council offices and libraries.

The Work Programme Providers will ensure that access to online employment opportunities is a key component for every long term unemployed claimant and will work with them to ensure that they have the skills to compete in the digital era.

## **Addressing embedded deprivation and embracing Social Justice**

The aspirations set out above focus on reducing worklessness over a one year period. However Jobcentreplus, the Local Authority and the Work Programme Providers all recognise the need to develop existing strategies that support those furthest from the Labour Market. All partners to this agreement will therefore continue to work collaboratively, to address the needs of our most deprived residents.

The Local Authority, Jobcentreplus and the Work Programme Providers will work collaboratively to support those impacted by the benefit cap through effective employment solutions and build the taskforce to facilitate the implementation of future welfare reform.

All partners will continue to develop strategies which tackle the key areas of gangs, ex-offenders, drugs and alcohol addiction, deprivation in localities, troubled families, homelessness, debt and support for those with mental health conditions and disabilities.

Although this agreement does not propose specific targets for this agenda, it recognises that co-ordinated activity in these areas together with a focused approach on tackling unemployment will result in an overall reduction in those claiming Out of Work Benefits in the Borough of Harrow by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and all partners will monitor performance trends to ensure that longer term objectives remain on track.


Mark B. Kingston

**Signed:**

**On behalf of the London Borough of Harrow:**

**Date: 22 March 22, 2013**

**On behalf of Jobcentreplus West London District: Rozmin Meghjee**



**Date: 21 March 2013**

**On behalf of Ingeus:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of Maximus:**

**Date:**

**On behalf of Reed in Partnership:**

**Date:**