

Terms of Reference of the DWP Provision Forum

1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009

Purpose

- To provide a forum for sharing information, intelligence and ideas about the delivery of existing policies and programmes and/or future options;
- To generate practical suggestions for improving performance, delivery and quality of contracted provision (though the group will not be a decision making body). This could include changes to contract terms and conditions and management processes;
- To advise on the nature and style of communication to the wider provider community;
- To advise and, where possible, facilitate wider consultation with the provider community or sections of it where required. This could include identifying potential members for project steering committees or working groups;
- To encourage and facilitate productive networking and the spreading of good practice, across government as well as within the provider community - for example the Minority Ethnic Group and other initiatives led by the Home Office;
- To advise how the capacity of the provider network can be increased and respond to changing labour markets.

The Provision Forum will be chaired by the DWP Director of Delivery, Work Welfare and Equality Group (WWEG).

Membership

Forum membership for 2008/09 consists of:

DWP
Director of Delivery, WWEG (Chair)
Deputy Director of Delivery, WWEG
Head of Commercial Employment Provision
Head of Strategic Sourcing, Commercial Directorate
Director of Partnerships Division, Jobcentre Plus
Deputy Director, Design and Change, WWEG
Head of Welfare to Work Directorate, WWEG

Provider Representative Organisations

Association of Learning Providers
Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations
British Association for Supported Employment
Employment Related Services Association

Provider Organisations

A4E
In Training Group
Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind (MTIB)
Pertemps
Royal British Legion Industries
Triage Central
Working Links
Work Directions

Other Organisations

Ofsted Representative (DWP Lead Inspector)
LSC Representative (Skills Group)

Organisations are expected to nominate their representative who, for continuity, should attend meetings personally whenever possible – deputies should only be sent in exceptional circumstances.

Membership of individual provider organisations will be limited to 2 years to allow turnover of membership. A membership review will take place each year with 50% of individual provider members being refreshed in April.

From time to time, non-members may be invited to attend meetings to contribute to specific agenda items within their area of expertise. Attendance in this capacity does not constitute forum membership.

Sub Groups

The Provision Forum may occasionally recommend the formation of a forum sub-group to take a more in-depth look at a specific issue. In line with the main Provision Forum, the sub-groups will not have decision-making powers.

Invitations to join these sub-groups will be issued to Provision Forum members but, because of their specialised nature, membership is not restricted to full Provision Forum members

The sub-groups will report to the Provision Forum on its work through correspondence or, if requested, in-person.

Forum Meetings

The forum will meet four times each year. A minimum of two of those meetings will be hosted by DWP in Sheffield. Providers will be invited to host the remaining meetings

The Forum Secretariat will be provided by the Provision Delivery and Performance Division who will:

- Maintain membership details;
- Maintain a forward look of potential future agenda items;
- Agree the meeting agenda with the forum chair;
- Make domestic arrangements;
- Send meeting details, agenda and associated papers to members 5 days in advance of the meeting;
- Send minutes of the meeting to members within 14 days.

Members are asked to notify the secretariat if they are unable to attend a meeting or wish to send a deputy. The secretariat should be notified of the attendance of any additional delegates to contribute to specific agenda items.

Agenda Items

Individual agenda items should last no longer than one hour.

Presentations should be limited to 15 minutes to allow adequate time for full discussion.

Associated presentation slides and papers should be sent to the Forum Secretariat no less than six days in advance of the meeting.

The secretariat will send copies of slides and papers to members with the agenda.