

City Deal – Working Together Pilot - Research & Evaluation

Qualitative Research – In-depth Interviews: Instruments

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL:

- **What to say to interviewees when setting up and beginning the interview**
 - Introduction to interviewer (name, background, contact details)
 - Purpose of the overall evaluation (what works & what doesn't work in getting unemployed 'social housing' tenants back to).
 - Role of the qualitative interview (in-depth; opportunity to explore issues in more detail)
 - Topics for discussion
 - Expected length of interview
 - Confidentiality/anonymity
 - How it will be conducted (semi-structured questions relating to topic; note taking & recording (if appropriate))
 - Informed Consent Letter/Form (if first interview)

- **What to say to interviewees in concluding the interview**
 - Any additional comments the interviewee would like to add
 - Next steps – analysing information & following completion of 'wave' of interviews – capturing in report which will form part of larger interim and final evaluation reports.
 - Thank participant for their time

- **What to do during the interview**
 - Use relevant interview guide which lists questions and issues to be explored
 - Keep question open-ended rather than closed
 - Ask factual question before opinion questions
 - Use probes as needed
 - Key characteristics of a good interviewer – be open-minded; flexible and responsive; patient; observant and demonstrate good listening skills.

- **What to do following the interview**
 - Transcribe and/or review data
 - Analyse data
 - Write report
 - Solicit feedback from stakeholders/interviewees
 - Revisions
 - Dissemination as appropriate

INTERVIEW GUIDES:

- Questions or issues to be explored during the interview
- Limit to 15 main questions and probes per topic
- Separate interview guides for each group of stakeholders – Delivery Partners/Providers (Supply Chain); Lead/Managing Partner (Accord); Strategic Stakeholders/Steering Group; Working Together pilot participants

Field Research Guide: PARTICIPANT

Individual Profile – Labour market background & personal characteristics

Length of Time Out of Work	
Nature of current/previous benefits	
Gender	
Age	
Ethnicity	
Specific barriers e.g. health	
Qualification Level	
Date joined City Deal Working Together Programme and/or date found work	
Receiving help/support to find work from other sources	

TOPIC: Programme/Service Delivery Evaluation

Engagement/Programme Entry

How did you get involved/find out about the project? Why did you join the pilot?

Did you receive an information session prior to joining? Establish useful (Very, Fairly, Not Very, Not At All, Not Sure/Can't remember)

Pre-employment Support

Tell me about the support you are receiving? Establish – different types (see prompt list at **Annex A**); frequency of intervention & meetings with advisers? Face to face or telephone/other. Same person or different people? Prompt: Was there an initial assessment & action plan.

How is the support making a difference to you? Establish how useful support in helping them find work or move closer to paid work. (Very, Fairly, Not Very, Not At All, Don't Know)

What aspects of support do you find **most useful**?

What aspects of support do you find **least useful**?

What **additional support** (if any) would you find useful?

Are there any comments you would like to make?

In-Work Support/Progression (For those in employment)

Describe the **nature of the support** you received from the project once you found employment? Prompt: establish frequency of in-work contact; nature of contact (face to face/telephone/other)

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How useful have you/did you find the contact? Prompt: Amount - (Too much, About right, Not enough, Don't know); Impact – (Positive, negative, made no difference, don't know). Probe nature of positive impacts – motivation, advocate, identification of further opportunities)

Is there any **additional in-work support** you need? (See Annex A)

Annex A – Nature of Support

Drawing up an action plan

An assessment of skills

Help with writing a CV, job application or interview skills

Financial support (travel expenses/childcare)

Motivation or confidence sessions

Careers advice

Financial/debt advice

Training / Training Course

Work experience / voluntary work

Literacy, numeracy & language skills

Self-employment advice or support

Help with housing issues / homelessness

Help re criminal record

Help re caring responsibilities (child/adult)

Help with addiction (drug/alcohol)

Other: Specify

Participant didn't know

None of these

Field Research Guide: DELIVERY PARTNERS (LEAD) with supply chain

Organisational Profile

Sector – public, private or VCSE	
Size – number of employees (excluding volunteers)	
Specialist or generalist – if specialist, which group(s) or theme area	
Pan Black Country or specific location	
% of organisations funding from City Deal	
% of organisations funding from employment related contracts & grants	
List of other employment related contracts:	
Other employment contracts outside the Black Country – Yes/No	
Date joined City Deal Working Together Delivery Partner/Provider Supply Chain	

- What is your specific role in the City Deal delivery?

TOPIC: Overall ‘Management & Delivery Approaches’ Evaluation (Managers Only)

Management & Delivery Models & Approaches

- Describe in your own words the specific service you are delivering as part of the City Deal Working Together pilot.
- Have there been any changes in your service delivery model from Year 1 (if applicable) and your initial proposal? If yes, what has changed & why? Are there any forthcoming changes?
- Have there been any changes to the lead/managing partner (Accord) City Deal management & delivery model, procedures & systems. What & impact?
- How do you get participants to ‘join’ your service/provision? Prompt: For example, engagement activity, referrals from Community Connectors and other agencies e.g. JcP. Have there been any changes in this from the beginning of your service delivery until now?
- What has been the most challenging aspects of delivering the activity and/or the contract? Why? (Prompt to prioritise the top 3 if multiple answers)
- What changes would you make to either your own and/or the overall City Deal management & delivery structure? Why?
- What has worked particularly well? Why? (Again prompt for prioritisation – if multiple answers)

Supply Chain (including changes/performance management/finance)

- What is the role of Housing Providers in your delivery model/supply chain?
- Have there been any changes to the Working Together pilot supply chains in the past year? If yes, what? Why were changes made? (Leaving sub-contractors, who decision it was to leave, processes for this and the reasons, probe specifically for poor performers) Are there forthcoming changes? What and why?
- How did you put the partnership together & agree the package of support? Advantages and disadvantages of this approach. If no, what? Prompt around contracting arrangements?
- [What processes are in place to monitor & manage the performance of the delivery partners? Monitor quality? Monitor progress of participants? How? Is good practice shared? How?] – pick up in performance management
- How well are your delivery partners performing against their targets? *Note – to add narrative to the provider reconciliation reports.* Are there any specific challenges/plans to address?
- How would you describe your working relationship with the delivery partner supply chain?
- Have there been any changes to MIS systems for capturing/managing participant information?
- How do you pass payment to your supply chain? Through grant payment with monitoring and reconciliation processes in place to ensure outcomes and spend? Again, if yes prompt for the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. If no, what? Do you plan to make changes to the current approach in future years? If so, what?

Performance Management

- What processes are in place to monitor and manage your performance? Probe – which processes are theirs and which are Lead/Managing Partner (Accord); effectiveness; quality of delivery/participant progress.
- How well are you performing against targets in your contract? *Note – this is to give further narrative to the performance/reconciliation reports.* What specific challenges exist in relation to (under) performance & what plans do you have to address this?
- Describe your relationship with the Lead/Managing Partner (Accord) and the wider partnership steering group.
- Has the Lead/Managing Partner (Accord) undertaken any activities with your staff aimed to develop capacity/capabilities and improve delivery (or investment to assist in delivery)? If yes probe for details and effectiveness? Prompts – training, support, impact tools e.g. Outcome Stars.
- Is good practice or experiences of what doesn't work shared? If so, how? Do you share experiences of what doesn't work?

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- What is your relationship with other delivery partners who are part of the City Deal Working Together pilot. Is there competition with other delivery partners? E.g. for referrals. How does it affect your delivery?

Finance/Contracting Arrangements

- Year 2 & 3 contracts are based on a performance related payment element, has this influenced the way you work with participants. Also prompt/explore any new investment to deliver activity; whether level of funding requested compares to actual costs of supporting participants back to work.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

TOPIC: Programme/Service Delivery Evaluation (Operational/frontline staff)

Nature of the support: Can you describe in your own words the nature of the support and the interventions you deliver to help people back to work?

How is support for each customer decided?

What techniques and tools are used to identify barriers to employment? Probe for: role of customer choice, degree of adviser discretion, limits or controls on costs of provision.

Since you started delivery, have there been any changes to the way support needs are identified/determined? Prompts: New screening tools; changes to assessment? If yes, what are these? Why? What are the impacts on customers? Do you consider this change to be an improvement?

Specifics about the nature of the support:

Training (Skills/Quals) - Does the support you provide include training? Is this funded via City Deal or using other / external sources? If so, what? Probe: how ensure skill and training needs identified & met – any changes in approach since commencement.

In work-support - Do you provide support for City Deal participants once they are in work? Probe: How delivered; methods of support; frequency/timing; when it ends. Do you think your model of in-work support is successful?

Employer engagement – Do you undertake any employer engagement activities? What? How well does this work? Are there any problems? Do you co-ordinate employer engagement with other providers/JcP? Why/why not?

In terms of delivery of services/provision to City Deal participants, what aspects are working well?

What aspects are working not so well?

Are there other changes you think could be made to improve the programme?

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Field Research Guide: OPERATIONAL DELIVERY PARTNERS

Organisational Profile

Sector – public, private or VCSE	
Size – number of employees (excluding volunteers)	
Specialist or generalist – if specialist, which group(s) or theme area	
Pan Black Country or specific location	
% of organisations funding from City Deal	
% of organisations funding from employment related contracts & grants	
List of other employment related contracts:	
Other employment contracts outside the Black Country – Yes/No	
Date joined City Deal Working Together Delivery Partner/Provider Supply Chain	

- What is your specific role in the City Deal delivery?

TOPIC: Overall ‘Management & Delivery Approaches’ Evaluation (Managers Only)

Management & Delivery Models & Approaches

- Describe in your own words the specific service you are delivering as part of the City Deal Working Together pilot.
- Have there been any changes in your service delivery model from year 1 (if applicable) or your initial proposal? If yes, what has changed & why? Are there any forthcoming changes?
- Have there been any changes to the lead/managing partner (Accord) City Deal management & delivery model, procedures & systems. What & impact?
- How do you get participants to ‘join’ your service/provision? Prompt: For example, engagement activity, referrals from Community Connectors and other agencies e.g. JcP. Have there been any changes in this from the beginning of your service delivery until now?
- What has been the most challenging aspects of delivering the activity and/or the contract? Why? (Prompt to prioritise the top 3 if multiple answers)
- What changes would you make to either your own and/or the overall City Deal management & delivery structure? Why?
- What has worked particularly well? Why? (Again prompt for prioritisation – if multiple answers)

Performance Management

- What processes are in place to monitor and manage your performance? Probe – which processes are theirs and which are Lead/Managing Partner (Accord); effectiveness; quality of delivery/participant progress.
- How well are you performing against targets in your contract? *Note – this is to give further narrative to the performance/reconciliation reports.* What specific challenges exist in relation to (under) performance & what plans do you have to address this?
- Describe your relationship with the Lead/Managing Partner (Accord) and the wider partnership steering group.
- Has the Lead/Managing Partner (Accord) undertaken any activities with your staff aimed to develop capacity/capabilities and improve delivery (or investment to assist in delivery)? If yes probe for details and effectiveness? Prompts – training, support, impact tools e.g. Outcome Stars.
- Is good practice or experiences of what doesn't work shared? If so, how? Do you share experiences of what doesn't work?
- What is your relationship with other delivery partners who are part of the City Deal Working Together pilot. Is there competition with other delivery partners? E.g. for referrals. How does it affect your delivery?

Finance/Contracting Arrangements

- Year 2 & 3 contracts have a performance related payment element, has this influenced the way you work with participants. Also prompt/explore any new investment to deliver activity; whether level of funding requested compares to actual costs of supporting participants back to work.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

TOPIC: Programme/Service Delivery Evaluation (Operational/frontline staff)

Nature of the support: Can you describe in your own words the nature of the support and the interventions you deliver to help people back to work?

How is support for each customer decided?

What techniques and tools are used to identify barriers to employment? Probe for: role of customer choice, degree of adviser discretion, limits or controls on costs of provision.

Since you started delivery, have there been any changes to the way support needs are identified/determined? Prompts: New screening tools; changes to assessment? If yes, what are these? Why? What are the impacts on customers? Do you consider this change to be an improvement?

Specifics about the nature of the support:

Training (Skills/Quals) - Does the support you provide include training? Is this funded via City Deal or using other / external sources? If so, what? Probe: how ensure skill and training needs identified & met – any changes in approach since commencement.

In work-support - Do you provide support for City Deal participants once they are in work? Probe: How delivered; methods of support; frequency/timing; when it ends. Do you think your model of in-work support is successful?

Employer engagement – Do you undertake any employer engagement activities? What? How well does this work? Are there any problems? Do you co-ordinate employer engagement with other providers/JcP? Why/why not?

In terms of delivery of services/provision to City Deal participants, what aspects are working well?

What aspects are working not so well?

Are there other changes you think could be made to improve the programme?

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Field Research Guide: LEAD/MANAGING PARTNER (ACCORD)

- What is your specific role in City Deal?

TOPIC: Overall 'Management & Delivery Approaches' Evaluation

- Describe in your own words the role of the lead/managing partner in the City Deal Working Together pilot project i.e. the overall structure and approach which has been taken to the delivery of the project objectives.
- Have there been any changes to your management/delivery model or services offered? Prompt: Check role of Community Connectors; additional capacity building within the team (new roles); Outcome Stars. Why? Are there forthcoming changes?
- What has the most challenging aspect of managing/delivering activity and/or the project? Why?
- What changes would you make to the management & delivery model and approaches? Why?
- What has worked particularly well? Why?

Supply Chain (including changes/performance management/finance)

- Have there been any changes to the Working Together pilot supply chains in the past year? If yes, what? Why were changes made? (Leaving sub-contractors, who decision it was to leave, processes for this and the reasons, probe specifically for poor performers) Are there forthcoming changes? What and why?
- Can you confirm the second phase contracts with subcontractors is for 2 years? If yes, what have been the advantages and disadvantages of having contracts for this length (to you or your delivery partners) from your year 1 approaches. If no, what?
- Can you confirm partners were able to specify what/how they delivered support? Again, if yes prompt for the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. If no, what?
- What processes are in place to monitor & manage the performance of the delivery partners? Monitor quality? Monitor progress of participants? How? Is good practice shared? How?
- How well are your delivery partners performing against their targets? *Note – to add narrative to the provider reconciliation reports.* Are there any specific challenges/plans to address?
- How would you describe your working relationship with the delivery partner supply chain?
- Have there been any changes to MIS systems for capturing/managing participant information?
- Can you confirm you have paid the supply chain through a mixture of grant payment with outcomes payments in year 2? Again, if yes prompt for the

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advantages and disadvantages of this approach. If no, what? Do you plan to make changes to the current approach in future years? If so, what?

Funder / Accountable Body (Finance/Performance Monitoring) & other stakeholders

- What is your relationship like with the primary funder (Cabinet Office) and accountable body (Walsall MBC/LEP).
- What is the process for drawing down City Deal Working Together pilot funding? Probe the impact of relationship with/draw down of funding from the accountable body (Walsall MBC/LEP) and/or the Cabinet Office.
- What processes are in place to monitor & manage your performance? Which are your own? Which are the accountable body (Walsall MBC/LEP) and/or Cabinet Offices.
- How well is the project performing against the original forecast outcomes?
- What is the role of the steering group in the management of the project? Prompt – make up of steering group; levels of input & engagement.