

Evaluation of the BEDP WNF
Worklessness and Enterprise
Programme:

Outcome 4 Final Report

May 2011



and



Focus Consultants 2010 LLP

Carlisle

Suite 7 (Second Floor)
Carlyle's Court
1 St Mary's Gate
Carlisle CA3 8RY
t: 01228 402320
m: 07501 725 114
e: stephen@dcresearch.co.uk

Leicester

1 Hewett Close
Great Glen
Leicester
LE8 9DW
t: 0116 259 2390
m: 07501 725115
e: jon@dcresearch.co.uk

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR INTERVENTION	4
	Worklessness in Birmingham	4
	Working Neighbourhoods Fund and Area Based Grants	4
	Post WNF and Welfare to Work Changing Policy Context	5
3.	PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT	7
	Governance and management processes	7
	Integrated Employment and Skills Model	9
	Development of the Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment & Skills Plans	11
	Reductions in funding	13
	Delivery Timeframes	14
	WNF reporting requirements	15
	Summary of key findings	16
4.	DELIVERY APPROACHES	18
	Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans.....	19
	Strategic /Thematic ESG Projects.....	23
	Summary of key findings	25
5.	REVIEW OF OUTCOME 4 FINANCIAL AND OUTPUT PERFORMANCE	26
	Financial and Output Performance.....	26
	Analysis of Conversion Rates	28
	The Client Tracking System.....	31
	Summary of findings	34
6.	PROJECT IMPACTS AND CLIENT/BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCES	35
	Impacts and client/beneficiary experiences from Strategic/Thematic Projects	35
	Impacts and client/beneficiary experiences from NESP/CESP contracts	44
	Summary of key findings	50
7.	REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF LAA OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS	54
	LAA Target Analysis	54
	Attribution of changes in NI outcomes to the BEDP WNF Programme.....	58
8.	LESSONS LEARNED AND OUTCOME 4 LEVEL CONCLUSIONS	59
	Key findings and conclusions	59
	Lessons learned, good practice and innovation	61
	Succession and forward strategy.....	64
	Recommendations.....	65
	Key Conclusions.....	66
	ANNEX 1: CONSULTEES.....	68
	ANNEX 2: OUTCOME 4 CONTRACT AND PROJECT SUMMARY TABLES	69
	ANNEX 3: SAMPLED CONTRACT AND PROJECT REVIEW SUMMARIES	74
	ANNEX 4: APPROACH FOR OUTCOME ANALYSIS	88
	ANNEX 5: INNOVATIONS FUND GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE.....	100

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Birmingham City Council (BCC) appointed DC Research and Focus Consultants in January 2011 to evaluate the Birmingham Economic Development Partnership (BEDP) element of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF).

1.2 The evaluation provides an independent assessment of the strategic development, delivery and impact of the WNF Programme delivered through BEDP, as well as providing recommendations about delivery of such activity going forward. It covers those interventions managed through the Employment Strategy Group Sub Group (ESG), and the Business, Enterprise Innovation and Inward Investment Sub Group (BEII) under BEDP, with the overall aim of the evaluation being to:

- Establish the effectiveness of the WNF BEDP programme, by looking at its impact, achievements and the value it has added.
- Identify what worked well, what was innovative, and what didn't work well in relation to employment and enterprise support to inform the design and delivery of future interventions.
- Compare actual achievements against targets and provide comparative information for WNF delivery in other Core Cities and/or other programmes.

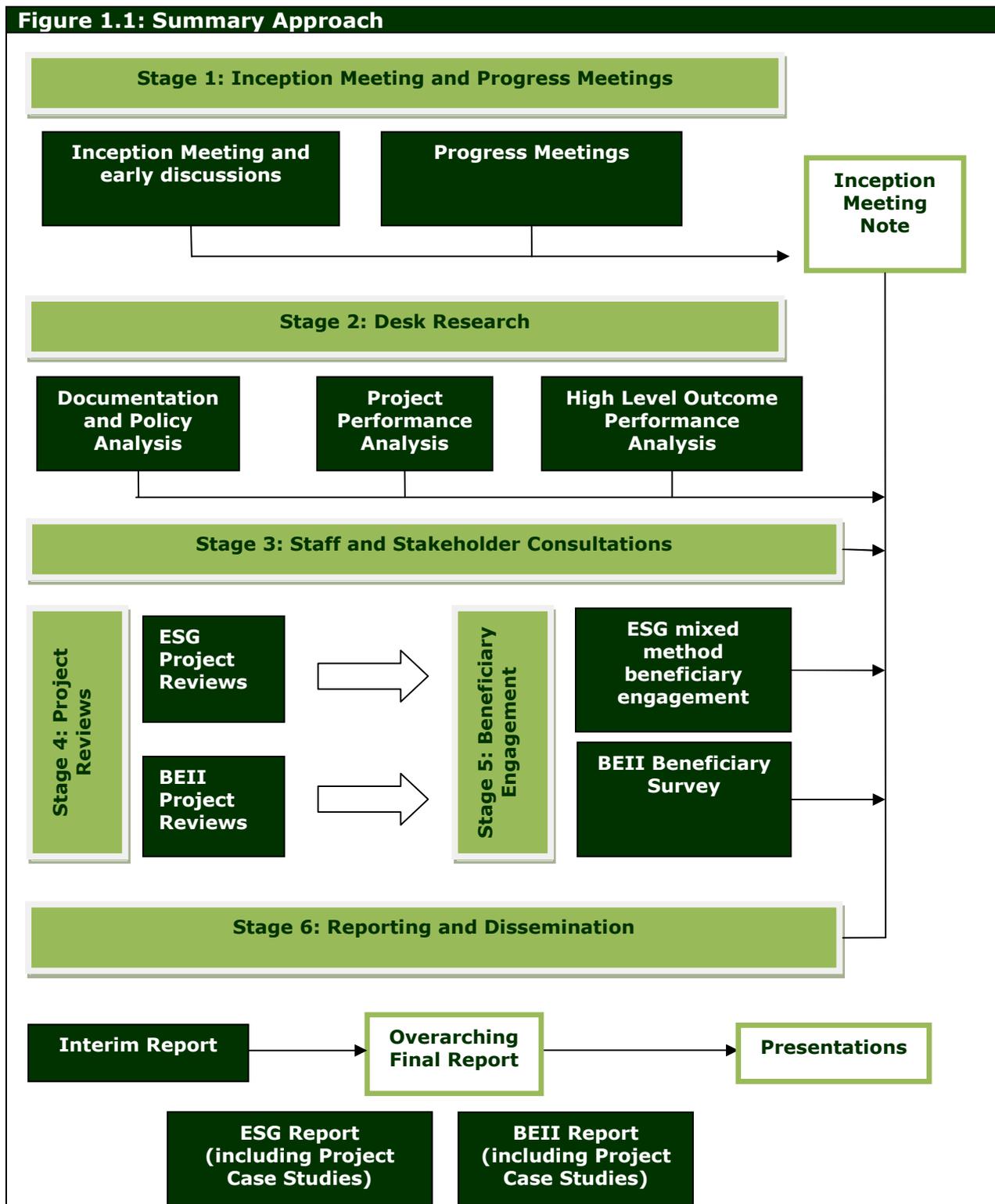
1.3 This report focuses on Outcome 4 of the BEDP Worklessness Programme, as managed by the Employment and Skills Sub Group (ESG). It is accompanied by an Outcome 2 report on the BEII Sub Group, and an overarching report that summarises key programme level findings.

1.4 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 summarises the **context for worklessness in Birmingham**, and sets out the **rationale for WNF intervention**.
- Section 3 introduces **programme development, governance and management arrangements** for the ESG element of the BEDP WNF Programme, and highlights key programme level findings.
- Section 4 concerns the **approaches that were taken to delivery**, and sets out the contracts and projects that make up the ESG element of the programme, and their underpinning processes, and highlights approaches and issues in relation to commissioning and delivery.
- Section 5 details the **performance** of the Outcome 4 element of the BEDP WNF Programme. It sets out financial and output performance against targets, applies some conversion ratios to allow for performance comparison across contracts and delivery approaches, and provides a summary of data captured by the programme's Client Tracking System.
- Section 6 summarises a range of **project and contract level impacts and client experiences** drawn from a range of sources. The primary source of evidence comes from the project reviews, project manager and provider consultations and clients/beneficiaries sampled as part of the approach to this study. This evidence is supplemented by drawing from secondary evidence taken from a numbers of separate project evaluations commissioned either by BCC, or by the projects themselves.

- Section 7 analyses the high level outcome position of the programme in terms of Outcome 4 of the Local Area Agreement.
- Finally, Section 8 summarises the **key findings and conclusions** for Outcome 4, sets out a series of **recommendations** for future worklessness programmes, and summarises examples of **succession and forward strategy**.

1.5 Figure 1.1 summarises the approach used for the entire evaluation.



- 1.6 Following early evaluation scoping discussions with BCC, it was agreed that the approach to project reviews would require revising given the size and complexity of the NESP/CESP elements of the programme.
- 1.7 Table 1.1 sets out an agreed approach to the review of projects devised as a result of a series of scoping discussions with BCC. The table highlights the review status of the Strategic Outcome 4 projects, which was designed to ensure that appropriate project review resource was allocated to NESP/CESP activity.

Table 1.1: Strategic ESG Project Reviews

	Detailed Review and Beneficiary Engagement	Project Manager Consultation	Secondary Review of evaluation evidence
ESG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme ▪ Debt and Financial Inclusion ▪ Prolific and Priority Offenders ▪ Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaging with Workless Displaced Communities ▪ Drugs & Alcohol ▪ Pre Apprentice Academy Phase 1 ▪ CATE ▪ JASDUPP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workwise ▪ Addressing Worklessness with Homeless Service Users ▪ Improving Health Increasing Employment ▪ Town Centre Managers ▪ ESOL ▪ Innovations Fund

Source: DC Research based on consultation with BCC, 2011

- 1.8 A project/contract sampling approach for NESP/CESP was devised and agreed with BCC. This approach maximises coverage by ensuring that each constituency, activity type and delivery type is reviewed as part of this evaluation. This approach is summarised by Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Approach to NESP/CESP Reviews

Project (Type)	NESP/CESP	Provider	Provider Type
South Works (composite)	Edgbaston, Northfield, Selly Oak	PPDG	Private
Lone Parent Support	Erdington	ENTA	Social Enterprise
Skills and Jobs Match	Hall Green	Ashiana	3 rd sector consortium developed to deliver WNF
ILM	Hodge Hill	Prospects	Private
Targeted Engagement Campaign	Yardley	BEST Network	3 rd sector consortium, predates WNF
Supporting Clients with Disabilities	Ladywood	Birmingham Disability Consortium	3 rd sector consortium developed to deliver WNF
Supporting Clients NEET	Perry Barr	PPDG	Private

Source: DC Research based on consultation with BCC, 2011

- 1.9 To ensure that all NESP/CESP deliverers had the opportunity to contribute to the evaluation, a 'drop in session' was timetabled for early March for all those NESP/CESP providers that ran contracts that were not sampled for review under this evaluation. Of these providers, only Jericho Foundation took this opportunity.
- 1.10 The Study Team is most grateful to the consultees who engaged with this evaluation, to beneficiaries who shared their experiences, and to staff in the Development Directorate at BCC who provided advice and guidance and responded to a range of queries and requests for data and clarification.

2. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR INTERVENTION

This section briefly summarises the strategic and policy context for worklessness in Birmingham, and sets out the rationale for WNF intervention.

Worklessness in Birmingham

- 2.1 A very high level of worklessness exists in the city, and has done for many years. Over 120,000 Birmingham residents are in receipt of a workless benefit, accounting for 18.5% of the working age population - 50% above the national average, and the second highest rate of all the core cities. Within the city worklessness tends to be concentrated in the inner city and some deprived outer city areas.
- 2.2 Birmingham is highly committed to tackling worklessness and improving quality of life outcomes for all citizens, particularly those living in the most deprived areas. The WNF allocation in Birmingham is routed through the BeBirmingham Strategic Partnership, with Birmingham City Council (BCC) acting as fund holder of Area Based Grant and as the accountable body.
- 2.3 The context for the use of the Fund is the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) which sets out the overarching long-term vision for Birmingham 2026, with the Local Area Agreement (LAA) setting out 19 key local priorities for 2008/11 aimed towards delivering the first steps of the SCS.
- 2.4 In line with the Government's expectation, the LAA targets include NI 153, the specific National Indicator for Worklessness relating to working population claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods¹ (in Birmingham, those SOAs with 25% and above rate). The target was to reduce this rate by three percentage points from 30.8% to 27.8% by March 2011. This was then adjusted to a target relative to regional performance as a result of CLG acknowledging the impact of the recession.
- 2.5 The aim of the WNF Worklessness theme was to create effective access routes into employment for Birmingham residents who were demonstrably most distanced from the labour market and facing disproportionate barriers/exclusion from economic activity.

Working Neighbourhoods Fund and Area Based Grants

- 2.6 In 2007, as part of a concerted drive to get people off welfare and into work, the Government established the WNF. The fund replaced the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and incorporated the Department for Work and Pension's (DWP) Deprived Areas Fund to create a single fund.
- 2.7 DCLG pledged £450 million for the fund for 2008/09, and more than £500 million in both 2009/10 and 2010/11. In June 2010, the coalition Government cut the DCLG contribution by £50 million to £458 million.
- 2.8 The WNF provides resources to local authorities to tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise in their most deprived areas. It aims to provide the basis for a new approach, recognising the need to tackle worklessness on a

¹ i.e. 187 Super Output Areas (SOA - census unit of approximately 1500 people)

community-wide basis, including those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance and those on Incapacity Benefit.

- 2.9 A total of £114 million WNF was originally allocated to the city from 2008-2011 to help tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise in areas of high deprivation. This was, in turn, allocated to a number of themed activity areas, delivered through strategic thematic boards.
- 2.10 It is important to note that WNF was allocated as part of Area Based Grant (ABG) arrangements. Area Based Grant was a general grant allocated directly to local authorities as additional revenue funding to areas. It is allocated according to specific policy criteria rather than general formulae. Local authorities were free to use all of this non-ringfenced funding as they saw fit to support the delivery of local, regional and national priorities in their areas.
- 2.11 The focus of the BEDP Programme, and the majority of resources, was aimed at directly addressing worklessness. The programme also had a focus on addressing barriers to employment and tackling problems in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Approximately half of this resource (originally £57 million, reduced to £45 million as a result of the funding reallocations and cuts to Area Based Grant in the summer of 2010) was specifically targeted on worklessness via the BEDP Worklessness and Enterprise Programme. The BEDP allocation was then managed by the following Sub Groups:
- Employment Strategy Group (ESG).
 - Business, Enterprise, Innovation and Inward Investment Group (BEII).
- 2.12 This report focuses on the Outcome 4 activity targeted on reducing worklessness in neighbourhoods and delivered through ESG. Activity and interventions around business, enterprise, innovation and inward investment, delivered by BEII, is considered in the accompanying Outcome 2 evaluation report.

Post WNF and Welfare to Work Changing Policy Context

- 2.13 As announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review, the DWP is phasing out existing welfare-to-work initiatives, including WNF. The Department is introducing the **Work Programme** to simplify welfare to work provision and provide extensive, personalised support for job seekers. The existing programmes that will be rolled into the Work Programme include the Flexible New Deal, New Deal for Young People, New Deal 25+, Employment Zones and Pathways to Work.
- 2.14 Alternative provision through the Work Choice programme, which unifies the Workstep and Work Preparation Programmes, is designed to help the most disabled job seekers into work. The Work Programme will focus on getting service users into sustained employment with the majority of the payments to providers being made retrospectively and based on the outcomes they have achieved. A differential payment mechanism will provide greater incentive for supporting harder to help job seekers into employment.
- 2.15 The Work Programme will be delivered through a number of Prime Contractors that will contract directly with DWP and be responsible for delivery across a defined geographic area. The Prime Contractors will partner and subcontract with a range of organisations to deliver the Work Programme through their supply chains.

- 2.16 The introduction of these programmes is set against the backdrop of £18 billion in cuts to welfare spending and long-term reforms to simplify the benefits system designed to make work pay and penalise those who refuse work. This includes plans for mandatory volunteering opportunities for job seekers, with financial penalties for those who refuse.
- 2.17 The **Future Jobs Fund** was initially brought in as an emergency measure to tackle a particular peak in youth unemployment. However, the report by the Work and Pension Committee suggested that wider benefits that young people gained from the programme (such as work experience, increased confidence and employment potential) have demonstrated the effectiveness of the programme. Despite falling behind on its initial target, the Future Jobs Fund did create a significant number of temporary jobs for unemployed young people nationally and support many more in making steps towards the employment market.
- 2.18 The cancellation of the Future Jobs Fund in March 2011 coincided with increased levels of unemployment amongst young people and has presented challenges in developing the appropriate programmes to replace it. The Work and Pension Committee's recent report on Youth Unemployment and the Future Jobs Fund highlighted that whilst the project was costly (at a net cost of £5,000 per start) in comparison to other comparable interventions (such as the New Deal for Young People at a net cost of £3,480 per start), it did provide significant support for young people and may still be a more cost-effective option for young people who are furthest from the jobs market.
- 2.19 The **March 2011 Budget** highlighted the current high level of youth unemployment and proposed further investment in education and training for 16-19 year olds in addition to an apprenticeship programme costing £1.4 billion. The current level of 16 to 24 year olds not in employment or education is 9.4%, the Government aims to reduce this by specifically targeting skills, education and apprenticeship schemes.
- 2.20 In terms of education, the budget outlined plans to open 24 new technical colleges by 2014, providing opportunities for technical training for 11 to 19 year olds and setting the curricula to match the need of the local economy. The budget also proposed the funding of an additional 80,000 work experience places for young people in order to promote greater employment experience and potential amongst young people.

3. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

This section sets out the programme governance and management arrangements for the ESG element of the BEDP WNF Programme, and highlights key programme level findings

3.1 The original WNF 2008 – 2011 Worklessness Programme to be delivered through Birmingham Economic Development Partnership amounted to £57 million and was targeted at Outcome 4 of the LAA (*"to increase employment and reduce poverty across all communities through targeted interventions to support people from welfare into work"*). However, to support business and enterprise in the city and help cope with the impact of the recession, £11 million WNF was allocated to target Outcome 2 of the LAA (*"to increase the city's economic output and productivity through expansion of key growth sectors, greater enterprise and innovation in high value-added activity"*) this included £5.7 million from the Outcome 4 budget (that was reduced accordingly) and an additional £5.3 million from BeBirmingham. The majority of the BEDP WNF allocation is managed through the Employment Strategy Group (ESG) and is targeted at tackling worklessness in the city.

Governance and management processes

3.2 **Be Birmingham** (the Local Strategic Partnership for Birmingham) is responsible for ensuring effective delivery of Birmingham's Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the City's Area Based Grant, including the Working Neighbourhoods Fund. This responsibility was vested in its Executive Board, comprising representatives of Birmingham's key thematic partnerships and organisations.

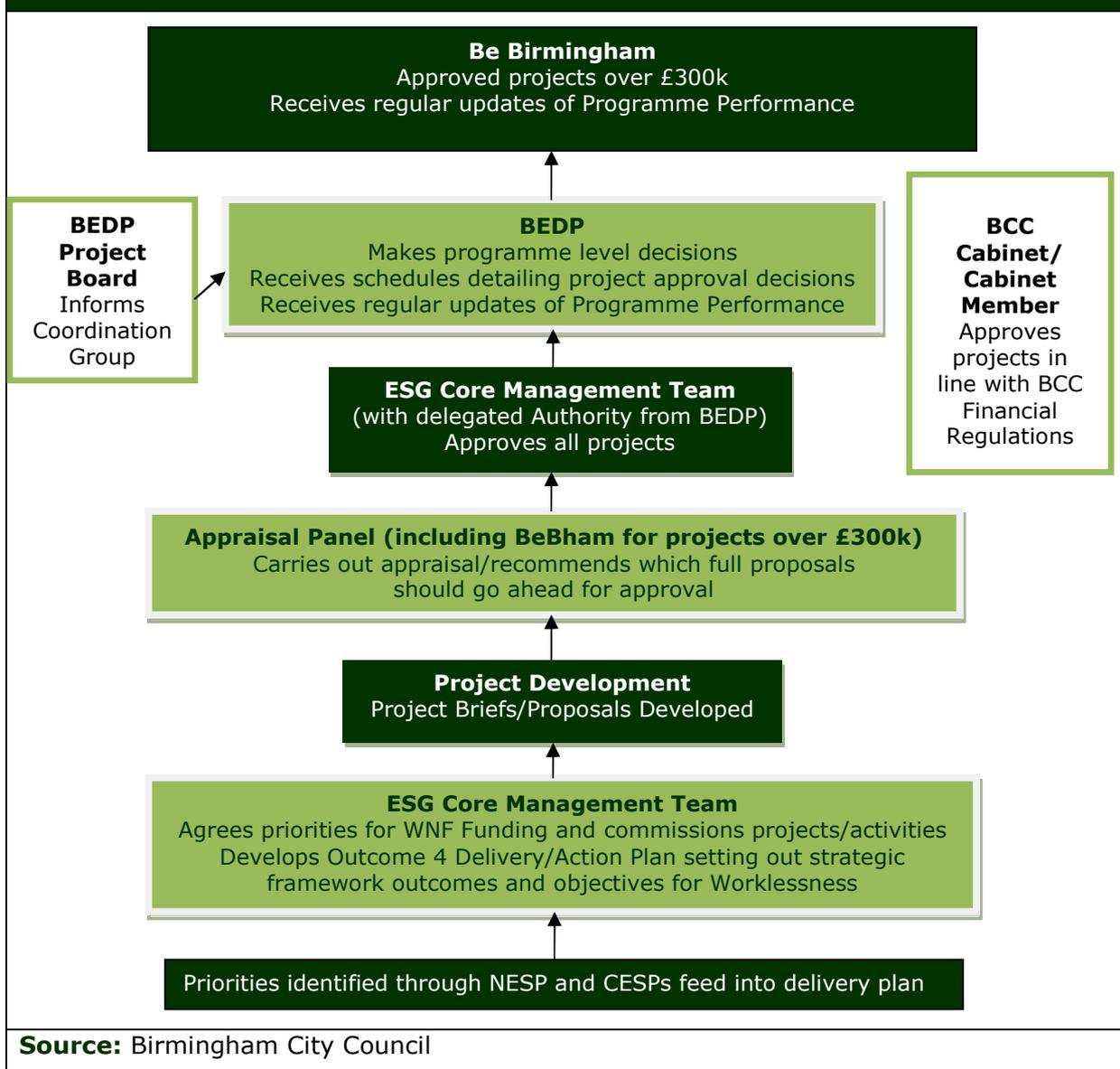
3.3 Be Birmingham's role in appraisal and approval of WNF projects developed during the early period of the programme. The final position included appraisal (as part of an appraisal panel) and approval (through the Chair and Director) of projects above £300k.

3.4 The **Birmingham Economic Development Partnership** (BEDP) is the thematic partnership responsible for the economic elements of the Community Strategy and the management of the Outcome 2, Outcome 4 and Recession Package elements of WNF. It carried out this responsibility through a Coordination Group. Whilst this Group retained overall management and decision making responsibility for the programme, it delegated the responsibility for development and approval of projects to the Core Management Team of the **Employment Sub Group** (including BCC, Job Centre Plus and LSC (now SFA) and the Business Enterprise and Inward Investment (BEII) Sub Group. In the later part of the programme, a BEDP Project Board was also established to help inform decisions taken by the Coordination Group.

3.5 The LAA Delivery Plan (specifically Outcome 4) provided the strategic framework for the delivery of the ESG element of the WNF Programme.

3.6 Birmingham City Council, as recipient of the ABG, is the accountable body for this funding. Therefore processes and governance arrangements for the delivery of WNF needed to comply with both Be Birmingham and BCC requirements. Figure 3.1 below summarises these WNF Worklessness governance arrangements.

Figure 3.1 Summary of WNF worklessness governance arrangements



- 3.7 Most strategic and delivery stakeholders agree that there was a programme management disconnect between BeBirmingham (the Local Strategic Partnership that sits above BEDP) and BCC leading up to WNF, and in its first year of delivery. The LSP wanted to lead and manage the programme in some detail on the basis that WNF would fund the delivery of the LAA, creating some early tension with other key stakeholders, as well as issues concerning approval and appraisal processes, rigid profiling and monitoring approaches, driven in part by a desire for programme processes to be more robust than those used for Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).
- 3.8 There were no agreed programme management systems and procedures put in place at the start of the programme by BeBirmingham, and when they were introduced they were seen not to add any significant value to those that had been established and well tested by BCC for previous programmes (and which had been implemented by Development Directorate staff in the meantime. There was a sense amongst a number of stakeholders that delivery mechanisms were reinvented despite them already existing.

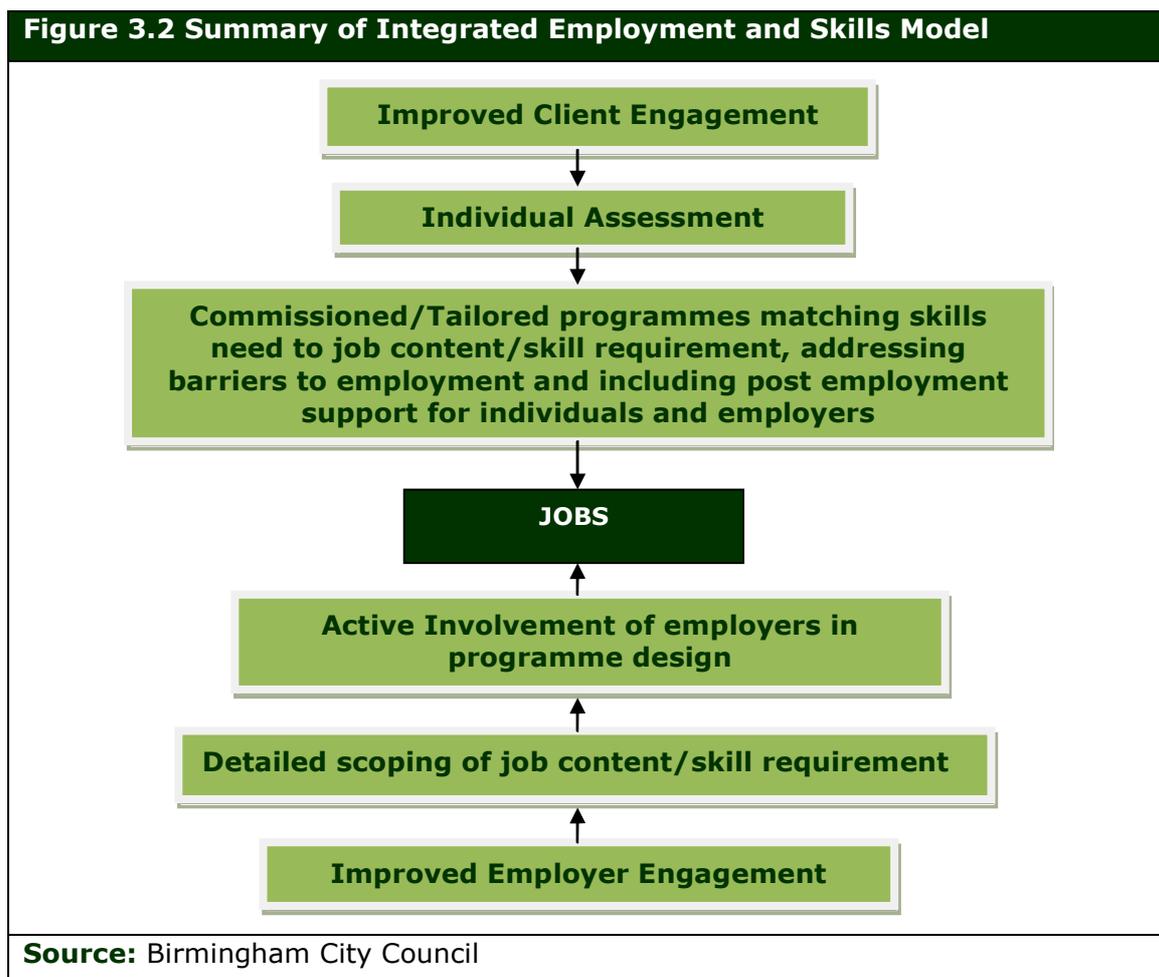
3.9 Furthermore, whilst BeBirmingham was the lead body for WNF, many stakeholders were unsure of the level of autonomy that the organisation actually had in terms of its relationship with BCC. Stakeholders were also critical about not having a dedicated WNF team for Outcome 4 at the outset of the programme. However, once the team was established at BCC, stakeholders recognise that they have been a strong team and praised the work that they have delivered and the support they have provided to deliverers.

Integrated Employment and Skills Model

3.10 The programme of WNF activities was developed with the Integrated Employment and Skills Model at its core. The aim of this model was to offer a seamless service led by individual client needs, and that recognised client progression would not be a simple or purely linear process. The model is focused on making step change to the way the infrastructure works, including improved partnership working and more joined up services - so individuals can be guided through the support process, encompassing:

- Employability skills to overcome personal barriers.
- Skills support linked to existing vacancies.
- Support to and through sustained employment.

3.11 The model is summarised in Figure 3.2 below:



- 3.12 Under the IES model services are commissioned strategically to ensure an integrated pathway for clients. Key features of the IES approach that were adopted as part of the WNF programme for Outcome 4 include:
- Improved local intelligence to effectively target resources to the needs of a particular group or individual.
 - A wider range of outreach and contact strategies to effectively engage specific groups or individuals.
 - A strong client focused approach, which addresses and meets the specific needs of individuals.
 - A portfolio approach with a coherent package of interventions to address the needs of individuals.
 - Proactive client tracking to support individuals to access employment and post-employment support.
 - Engaging with employers and providing bespoke training to match priority clients to vacancies.
 - Continuity of infrastructure to ensure joined up approach, confidence to clients and opportunities to build on learning.
 - Local worklessness champions to drive forward performance.
- 3.13 The agreement and sign up of the BEDP partners to IES model helped influence the approach to service specification through NESPs and CESP. However, the influence and connectivity of the IES model often became diluted at the delivery level. The reasons for this (which are set out in more detail in subsequent sections) included delivery delays and providers maximising delivery on employment targets by over engaging rather than focussing on existing clients.
- 3.14 Limited levels of cross referrals between contracts led to suspicions that some providers had a tendency to hoard clients rather than pass them on to other providers (who might well have been better placed to get them into employment) and limited levels of cross referrals between providers.
- 3.15 These issues are reinforced by national evaluation evidence which suggests that the availability of 'competing' initiatives (i.e. different intervention options for clients) can complicate the referral process, with some customers suitable for IES potentially being diverted to other interventions and vice versa². This study also emphasises the importance of JC+ staff being fully engaged to the success of the IES model, something that was not always the case for WNF interventions in Birmingham at the delivery stage.
- 3.16 IES as a model helped to shape and influence the approach to delivery for Outcome 4, providing a well understood model against which to commission activity and assess performance. However the effective translation of the model as a concept to the reality of delivery needs to be considered against the scale and timescales of the programme, and accepted issues involved in dealing with target client groups.
- 3.17 It is likely that a combination of factors led to this gap between IES as a model and delivery reality. These include a tendency to focus on output targets, notably around employment outcomes, and organisational culture barriers to cross referral between providers (who were in effect competing for outputs), barriers

² Qualitative evaluation of integrated employment and skills trials: Implementation report, Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 618, HMSO, 2009

that also led to providers taking a traditional project approach to delivery once contracts were signed. Additionally, providers tended to want to deliver an 'end to end' service instead of recognising relative strengths and referring clients to other providers to complete subsequent stages on their road to employment.

- 3.18 In terms of the 'end to end' aspect of the IES model, on the client side, most reported issues and blockages tended to be around referrals (particularly from mandatory provision) and the geographic specificity involved in targeting. In terms of employer engagement, there is little evidence to suggest that there was an integrated approach by providers, with most taking a unilateral approach on a client by client basis.
- 3.19 In summary, it is the case that both clients and employers were often not provided with a single offer, with conversion rates suggesting that clients that found work after being engaged were in the minority, and that there were issues with programme wide client tracking. However, on balance, the adoption of the IES model for the Outcome 4 element of the WNF Programme was appropriate, with the concept being well understood and communicable. IES was critical in shaping the NESP/CESP approach, in the commissioning of contracts and in the development of the thematic/strategic projects.

Development of the Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment & Skills Plans

- 3.20 The decision to take a locality driven approach to Outcome 4 provision was driven by a desire to include local priorities in the programme, but also to learn lessons from previous programmes (notably NRF, and building on the Integrated Employment and Skills model) and ensure that activity remained strategically commissioned. As a result, **Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans** (NESP/CESP) were drawn up on behalf of the Birmingham & Solihull Employment Strategy Group (ESG) in the first year of the WNF Programme.
- 3.21 The purpose of these plans was to set out key actions and targets for activities to support residents in the constituencies and neighbourhoods (particularly those resident in neighbourhoods where worklessness is extremely high) to access sustainable employment opportunities. The aim was to create a framework to improve integration of such services at a local level using the IES model, in order to ensure that service delivery is more effective and better focused upon the needs of residents living in the each Constituency. Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Plans (NESP) were developed for those wards in each constituency with worklessness rates in excess of 25%.
- 3.22 In order to plan interventions in these priority SOAs they were grouped as follows: 7 wards that had more than 11 priority SOAs within them were made the subject of a Neighbourhood Employment & Skills plan (NESP). These wards were Aston, Sparkbrook, Lozells & East Handsworth, Nechells, Washwood Heath, Kingstanding & Shard End. 9 constituencies were the subject of Constituency Employment & Skills plans (CESP) which cross reference the NESP where appropriate but also capture the needs of, and recommended interventions for, smaller clusters of priority SOAs lying outside the key wards. A tenth Constituency, Sutton Coldfield, also developed a plan to respond to the needs of its workless residents.
- 3.23 The NESP/CESP aimed to achieve the following:

- Analyse need in local areas and calculate local targets to be achieved in line with overall LAA targets.
 - Gauge and record the envisaged impact of existing provision on the priority wards and SOAs.
 - Identify service gaps (both in terms of volume and the style, nature and targeting of provision).
 - Propose additional activity to be commissioned to address service gaps and thus achieve targets.
 - Directly influence WNF commissioning³.
- 3.24 NESPS and CESPS specified quarterly assessment of collective performance against the actions and targets in the plan through information input by all relevant delivery agencies, both in order to identify and replicate good practice and to inform remedial action where the outputs /impact of funded activity is not on track.
- 3.25 NESPs and CESP s provided a clear rationale for a focus at the client level and the provision of targeted action/support that each individual required (whether this be education, skills or employment) no matter which provider they accessed. The approach was developed following the piloting of the IES model in Birmingham which had been developed as part of the City Strategy pilot, which included all proposed new contracts passing through a joint committee so as to avoid duplication amongst partners and to ensure a focus on the needs of the key priority neighbourhoods and client groups.
- 3.26 Early discussions between three core partners involved in developing the BEDP element of the Programme (BCC, Job Centre Plus and Skills Funding Agency) scoped a basic programme which involved strategic programmes and projects targeted at a local level. However, it is felt by a number of stakeholders this approach became increasingly complex as local politics began to engage in the process, particularly in relation to the development and finalisation of the NESPS/CESP s delivery contracts. Whilst at the time some stakeholders felt that the political involvement led to some delays in the programme, they also recognise that having the engagement of local councillors also helped to embed and raise the profile of the NESPS/CESP delivery contracts in their areas.
- 3.27 The approach taken to commissioning activity under Outcome 4 was finalised following the consideration of alternative options ranging from commissioning all activity centrally through the Core Management Team of ESG, to totally devolving all WNF budgets and decision making down to the constituency level.
- 3.28 The finalised approach, which entailed the commissioning of 43 NESP/CESP contracts, along with a suite of strategically and thematically commissioned activity, was an appropriate response that sought to balance the impact of WNF at a city wide level, with the need for locality service planning. Interventions were commissioned to complement and add value to existing (including mandatory) provision with strong emphasis placed on addressing service gaps (both quantitative and qualitative).
- 3.29 Services were commissioned through a strongly targeted approach, focused geographically on those key neighbourhoods where worklessness rates were demonstrably and consistently high. The outcome target, contained in the Birmingham LAA, was originally to achieve a 3 percentage point reduction in the

³ Source: 3rd Revised Local Employment & Skills Plans Draft Commissioning Process, BCC

worklessness rate (using National Indicator NI153) in priority Super Output Areas (SOAs) over a three year period from April 2008 to March 2011. SOAs were included in this target if they had a baseline worklessness rate of 25% or more. There are 187 such SOAs across Birmingham, to which a further 48 were added following subsequent review, which included consideration of job losses as a result of the recession.

- 3.30 There is some consensus that the barriers to worklessness were well understood in the city, and that delivery performance may have been improved through a citywide approach to delivery.

Reductions in funding

- 3.31 A key challenge for the governance of the programme concerned the reductions to the Programme. During 2009 concern had arisen over the delayed start and limited performance of the Worklessness WNF programme. This resulted in negative press coverage and a decision by Be Birmingham to reduce the worklessness WNF allocation by £11.562 million.
- 3.32 To support this reduction, £7 million of savings were identified from the Worklessness programme, funded from slippage, loss of reserve projects and cuts to underperforming projects. This left the Worklessness programme with a £4.5 million (10%) over-programming contingency.
- 3.33 In July 2010, as a result of the cut to Birmingham's ABG, BEDP had its allocation reduced by a further £3.7 million (£3.553 million from its Worklessness programme and £147,000 from the Recovery Taskforce allocation). However, the need to also reduce over-programming, meant that in reality savings of £4.956 million were required. This was achieved by reductions of £870,000 from Outcome 2 and the Task Force programmes; and £4.087 million from the Worklessness Outcome 4 programme.
- 3.34 Once again, these savings were funded from slippage, further loss of reserve projects, cuts to underperforming projects and ceasing some projects and activities early. NESPS/CESPS contract providers were also required to stop engagement activity by December 2010, leaving providers to focus on getting existing clients into work.
- 3.35 It is clear that funding cuts to projects were difficult to deliver for all involved. In respect of the initial £11.562 million cut, there was a lack of overall transparency to partners and deliverers as to who made the cuts in the programme, and for what reason. There is a perception that this process was a fait accompli, and it was not well received by BEDP.
- 3.36 This means that the funding of the programme was fluid across its lifetime. A report which summarises the various cuts made to the programme was made to BEDP in September 2010.
- 3.37 Finally, it should be noted that a number of stakeholders and deliverers highlighted a widely reported perception that the cuts to the WNF programme were used to subsidise other Birmingham City Council mainstream services. However, this issue falls outside the scope of the BEDP WNF evaluation and remains a matter for Birmingham City Council and its partners.

Delivery Timeframes

- 3.38 Most project stakeholders were frustrated with the time taken to appraise and approve WNF projects, and many felt significant pressure to get up and running and “hurried” to deliver due to the delays in approval. In particular, the fact that these delays meant that potential impacts that could have been achieved had to be reduced was a major source of frustration.
- 3.39 There are a number of points that need to be considered concerning the delivery delays experienced by the programme:
- Firstly, there were up to five stages from project concept to delivery commencing, all of which had to meet BCC’s financial regulations, standing orders, governance and decision making processes. The necessity of this process is the same for any funding programme administered by a local authority, and in addition to ensuring that activity is correctly commissioned, it is designed to ensure that projects aligned to strategic outcomes, are robustly developed, and will ultimately make an impact. As an example, the Addressing Worklessness with Homeless Service Users took 20 months to move from project concept to delivery (13 months of project development, 7 weeks for appraisal, 2 weeks for approval, and 5 months for the tender process)⁴, although it is understood that this particular project suffered from project development issues and an inability to identify a project lead in the early stages.
 - Secondly, it is important to note that whilst the approach towards NESP/CESP commissioning was innovative, consultation required in developing this approach to ensure appropriate and deliverable outcomes, took time.
 - Thirdly, there was limited capacity in the Development Team at BCC during the first year of WNF. No additional staff resources were made available during this time, and combined with delays caused by BCC’s moderation panel for recruitment to new posts, impacted on delivery timescales⁵.
- 3.40 A result of these issues, most of the projects under Outcome 4 had, at best, a delivery window stretching from Quarter 2 of 2009/10 to the end of Quarter 4 2010/11. The reality for many projects was that final contracts were signed in December 2009, with delivery running until March 2011 (a period of 14 months).
- 3.41 There is a clear consensus from programme and project stakeholders that the BEDP WNF Programme would have benefitted from a year zero, something that was highlighted in previous evaluations of area based programmes (notably SRB and NRF), and this would have significantly improved the delivery. A year zero would have been extremely beneficial to the delivery capacity of the programme, and would have lessened many of the issues set out above. However, the underlying issue around timescale is a national one, with the three year duration of the programme, and the sheer scale of resources allocated to Birmingham, and resultant capacity and political issues therein, being the root cause of delivery delays.
- 3.42 Whilst all these issues are valid, it needs to be noted that deliverers signed contracts fully aware of the delivery situation. Nevertheless, the almost immediate reduction in funding following the commencement of delivery, whilst necessary, further reinforced the frustration felt by many deliverers.

⁴ Regeneration and Overview Scrutiny Committee, Supplementary Paper, 24th November 2009.

⁵ Regeneration and Overview Scrutiny Committee, Supplementary Paper, 24th November 2009.

WNF reporting requirements

- 3.43 In addition to delivery delays set out above, many project stakeholders were also frustrated with the apparent “shifting sands” and “changing of goalposts” of monitoring and evidence requirements that were required by BCC. For example, moving from quarterly to monthly reporting, having to carry out retrospective evidence gathering from clients with particular reference to the request for photo ID, and the often required production of beneficiary wage slips for who successfully found employment.
- 3.44 Whilst these changes were understandably frustrating for stakeholders and providers, they were often necessary from a governance or accountable point of view. For example, the programme delays led to concerns about delivery contingency. In this context, quarterly reporting was seen as being high risk and leaving little scope for variation – which led to the decision being made to move to monthly reporting.
- 3.45 There are clear frustrations amongst NESP/CESP contract providers and thematic/strategic project deliverers that evidence requirements were not clearly outlined at the beginning of the contract, or indeed there was no “one message” being given to all contract holders. For example, a number of providers reported that part way through the contract period all clients supported were required to provide photo ID, and for those in employment, payslips. In many cases providers have had to undertake retrospective exercises to try to gather this evidence from clients who had previously been supported, and sometimes even having to help clients obtain this evidence themselves.
- 3.46 Consortium providers in particular have found it extremely challenging having to retrospectively gather evidence from clients that was not initially requested by WNF, and this has on occasion understandably led to tension between lead providers and the rest of the consortium.
- 3.47 Details of the eligibility criteria that needed to be met were included in NESP and CESP contracts. The issue arose when BCC provided a clear breakdown of different types of evidence that would be acceptable to confirm this, and providers had not been evidencing any checks that they had been carrying out so had to go back to clients already engaged to get correct evidence. This issue would have been avoided had such evidence lists been included in contracts.
- 3.48 The majority of projects described the monitoring as “admin intensive”, and a distraction from actual delivery. Many projects also believe that having to request the level of evidence that WNF specified from clients is a huge barrier to engaging the target clients and is therefore defeating the overall aim of WNF. It was also suggested by a number of projects that better use of existing client monitoring systems could have been used as evidence of job outputs for clients, in particular the use of the Job Centre Plus database which would provide evidence of when a client is no longer on benefit. However it is understood that there are issues with sharing client data between government departments and local authorities in this way.
- 3.49 Finally, many projects felt that there was a lot of pressure on them to spend, given the amount of political scrutiny faced by the programme. Again, this did not allow for projects to focus on delivery.
- 3.50 However, whilst project stakeholders expressed frustration on the reporting requirements of WNF, many also praised the support of the WNF team.

Summary of key findings

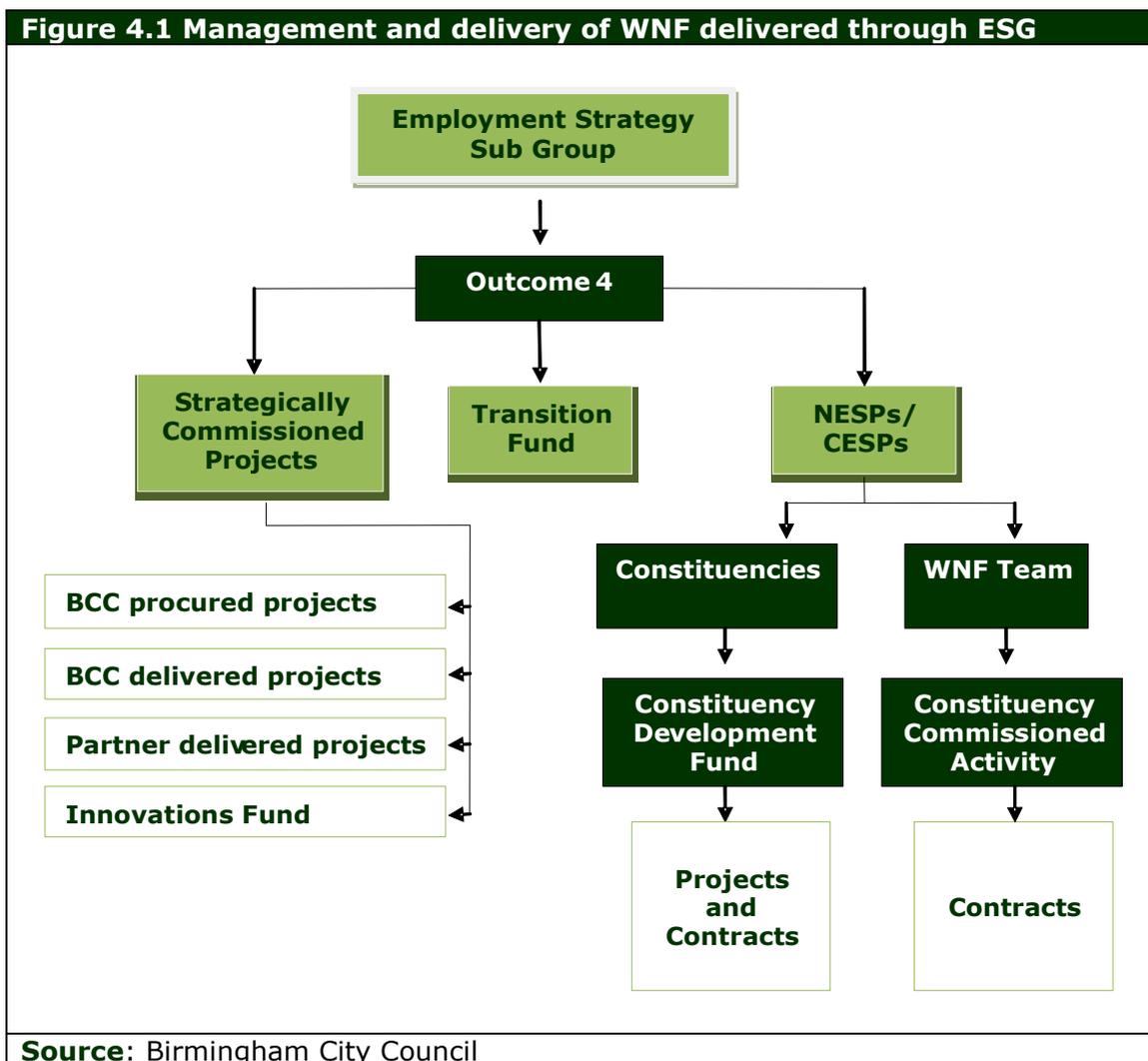
- 3.51 Throughout its lifetime the BEDP WNF Programme has been subject to political scrutiny, both at the City wide and at the constituency level. The main issues were around the **late start to the programme, and pressures to deliver in the time available**. Given the time it took to progress from commissioning to delivery (with many contracts not being agreed until the second quarter of the 2009/10 financial year), the **absence of a 'year zero'** in the structure of WNF at a national level (despite successive evaluations of other area based grant programmes highlighting the need for this), **and the scale of resources to spend**, a level of scrutiny over and above what might normally have occurred was inevitable.
- 3.52 Nevertheless, the programme has benefited from a **reasonable level of partnership stability over the duration of the programme**, with most partners on BEDP, and on the ESG sub group, staying constant during the lifetime of programme.
- 3.53 In terms of governance and management processes, most strategic and delivery stakeholders agree that there was a **programme management disconnect between BeBirmingham** (the Local Strategic Partnership that sits above BEDP) **and BCC** leading up to WNF, and in its first year of delivery. The LSP wanted to lead the programme on the basis that WNF would fund the delivery of the LAA, creating some tension with other key stakeholders, as well as issues concerning approval and appraisal processes, rigid profiling (that did not reflect delivery realities) and monitoring approaches, driven in part by a desire for programme processes to be more robust than those used for Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF). BCC stakeholders in particular felt they had a track record of experience and expertise in programme delivery that was not fully utilised in the early stages of WNF development.
- 3.54 This disconnect in governance arrangements between BeBirmingham and BCC left many stakeholders with an **impression of a lack of clarity around governance structures**, and that there were **constant "shifting sands"** that were being dealt with. However, since the end of 2009, many of the issues raised by stakeholders have been resolved, and there has been a considerable focus on effective delivery, supported by a well regarded Programme and Development Team at BCC.
- 3.55 Therefore, key lessons and learning from the first 18 months of the BEDP WNF Programme includes the need to **capitalise upon existing expertise and experience in programme management**, and the **importance of managing expectations** in communities and with delivery organisations.
- 3.56 **The adoption of the Integrated Employment and Skills Model for the Outcome 4 element of the WNF Programme was appropriate**, with the concept being well understood and communicable at a strategic level, in part as a result of its use in City Strategy processes. IES was critical in shaping the NESP/CESP approach, in the commissioning of contracts and in influencing the rationale and development of the thematic/strategic projects.
- 3.57 IES remains useful in providing a context against which to assess performance and client experiences. However, it is important to recognise that it represents a 'conceptual ideal', and a range of delivery issues (such as the scale of delivery, locality differences in commissioning, programme timescale and delivery delays, the level of cross referrals between providers etc) meant that **there was often a gap between IES ideal and the reality of client experiences**.

- 3.58 It is important to note that **using IES meant that WNF was, on balance, more thoughtful in terms of its strategic approach to commissioning worklessness interventions** than previous programmes. IES will have ongoing relevance in guiding BEDP partners in shaping and commissioning future activity in learning lessons from WNF and moving towards closing this gap.
- 3.59 **The decision to take a locality driven approach to Outcome 4 provision through the development of the NESP/CESPs and resulting contracting arrangements was appropriate** for a number of reasons that included locality expectations (based on experience of SRB and NRF), and a strategic rationale based on spatially targeting those neighbourhoods with the highest levels of worklessness.
- 3.60 However **many stakeholders were critical of both the processes and the length of time involved developing and approving the WNF programme**, the NESP and CESP plans and subsequent contracts, and suggest that this is the root cause for the delays suffered in terms of delivery. A number of consultees also felt that the BCC Development Team did not have the capacity to manage the scale of applications, approvals and appraisals in the first year of the programme. However it is also true that most projects take at least 6 to 9 months to develop, appraise and approve, so without a lead in year (a year zero) delivery delays were inevitable.
- 3.61 At the end of the programme, a number of stakeholders have argued that **the programme may have benefited from a more equal balance of Outcome 2 and Outcome 4 activity**. In part, this view is retrospectively informed by the current macroeconomic reality, with there being fewer vacancies in the City compared to the point at which the WNF programme was originally developed. This needs to be considered in the light of government expectations for WNF, prior to and during its early stages, and also by the reality that during this time period Outcome 2 initiatives could also look to ERDF and Single Pot funding, whereas there was little project or programme funding, aside from WNF, available to support the delivery of Outcome 4.
- 3.62 Finally, **WNF was not especially well aligned with other programme funding available in Birmingham during its lifetime. However, it would not be correct to assume that this was a result of programme inflexibility**, as other funding streams did not align either in terms of geography (such as ERDF) or timescale (such as Regeneration Zones and New Deal for Communities Programmes in Aston and King's Norton). Despite this, there are some examples of ERDF being aligned with Outcome 2 activity, and ERDF is also being used as a source of succession funding.

4. DELIVERY APPROACHES

Section 4 sets out the contracts and projects that make up the ESG element of the programme, summarises the underpinning rationale to the approaches taken, and highlights approaches and issues in relation to commissioning and delivery.

4.1 Outcome 4 delivery activity consists of NESP/CESP contracting (which represented the bulk of the Outcome 4 programme resources), strategically commissioned projects, and the Transition Fund. The delivery relationships between this activity, and the programme and governance of the programme as set out in the previous section are summarised by Figure 4.1 below.



4.2 The LAA Delivery Plan for Outcome 4 provided the framework for the delivery of the ESG element of the WNF Programme. It identified the following broad priority areas:

- Strengthening client engagement and on-going personal support (which included addressing barriers and pre and post employment support).
- Strengthening engagement with employers to secure vacancies for workless people.

- Maximising the impact of the city's economic growth, and development pipeline in reducing worklessness.
 - Maximising the impact of support to business and enterprise in tackling worklessness.
 - Developing a multi-agency approach to tackling worklessness.
 - Sustaining improved partnership working.
 - Strengthening the infrastructure to support effective delivery.
- 4.3 The approach taken to implement this plan consisted of activity commissioned through Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans, a series of strategically commissioned city wide thematic projects, a Transitions Fund, an Innovations Fund and a Constituency Worklessness Development Fund.
- 4.4 The **Transitions Fund** provided transitional support to 44 voluntary sector service providers whilst the Outcome 4 Programme was developed. The fund was designed to allow these providers to retain the capacity to potentially deliver employment support activity. The Transitions Fund continued to fund providers to continue what they were doing under NRF. The fund predated the WNF Client Tracking System by almost a year – where possible, the CTS team attempted to backfill data but this was difficult to achieve and beneficiary information on this project is limited. This early activity, funded before improved processes and systems were established, meant that poor project performance was difficult to remedy.

Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans

- 4.5 In terms of commissioning and delivery, an approach was designed to ensure that local needs were taken into account and overall contract values were set at a level that would allow third sector organisations to compete. This targeted and tailored approach involved the development of Constituency Employment and Skills Plans (CESPs) and the Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Plans (NESP) to move away from citywide contracting towards bespoke contracts to reflect local circumstances and meet local needs.
- 4.6 The NESP/CESP contracting approach was aimed at addressing identified service gaps and community barriers encountered at a local level, and were used to inform priorities for commissioning both strategic and locally focussed projects. Grounded by assessment of need at a local level, services were developed through constituency commissioning groups to assist those in greatest need. The approach was designed to ensure that target groups and individual clients received an individualised package of support, tailored to their needs to assist them in finding and staying in employment.
- 4.7 Following detailed consultation (with partners, local providers, community organisations and local members) NESP/CESP were signed off at relevant constituency committees or constituency strategic partnership meetings. The approach was also approved in detail by BCC's Cabinet.
- 4.8 As a result of this process, locally commissioned activity totalling £29 million was developed through a tendering process led through constituency commissioning groups and 43 contracts were let, involving a range of 11 specialist providers. A summary of the range of contracts let across the city via this NESP/CESP process is set out in Annex 2.

- 4.9 In terms of third sector delivery, 19 contracts (35% of the locally commissioned delivery) were awarded to eight third sector organisations as prime providers. Furthermore, an additional 20 third sector organisations were subcontractors on contracts led by private sector providers; and a further 15 also worked as sub contractors on third sector contracts.
- 4.10 Services were commissioned through a strongly targeted approach, focused geographically on key neighbourhoods where worklessness rates were demonstrably and consistently high. The outcome target, contained in the Birmingham LAA, was originally to achieve a 3 percentage point reduction in worklessness rates (using National Indicator NI153) in priority Super Output Areas (SOAs) over a three year period from April 2008 to March 2011. SOAs were given priority in this target if they had a baseline worklessness rate exceeding 25% of the working age population. There were 187 such SOAs across Birmingham at this time, to which a further 48 were added following subsequent review.
- 4.11 **Local Commissioning Boards** (which were also known as Constituency Selection Panels) were nominated by Constituency Strategic Partnerships/ Constituency Commissioning Groups to receive tenders, scores and comments sheets on NESP/CESP commissioned activity from an officer led tender appraisal process. The boards were chosen for neutrality and appropriate knowledge and skills, and received technical assistance from Planning & Regeneration Area Teams and where required, corporate procurement.
- 4.12 The boards were intended to take oversight of the process, and to ensure the selection of high quality contracted providers, giving value for money and best fit to agreed specification and local need. They were empowered to make recommendations to BCC's Cabinet procurement committee on contracts to be let.
- 4.13 Boards were not directly consulted as part of this evaluation. Stakeholders and providers tended to find Boards to be demanding, and on occasion very politically driven. The Boards were responsible for the locality specificity of NESP/CESP contracts, with much of the variation in contracts between areas (e.g. variances in targets and payments for specific activities) being the result. Often this specificity was based on locality need, but there were also instances of local interpretations of provision to address similar need.
- 4.14 The **Local Provider Forums** developed the capacity of local providers to deliver local interventions, support local strategic partnerships in monitoring NESP's and CESP's activities, and in identifying gaps in provision or areas of low impact. They also provided a mechanism for providers to network and swap ideas. However, most providers were in competition, and the level of discussion and idea swapping is likely to have been restrained by natural competitive pressures.
- 4.15 BCC evaluation evidence⁶ suggests that attendance and engagement at Local Provider Forum meetings was good. However, stakeholders highlighted some concerns around the commitment of contractors and of the continuation of the forums following funding reductions. Despite these concerns, it was generally felt that the forums had engaged successfully, allowing for a successful co-ordination of their work.
- 4.16 A total of 10% of the total WNF worklessness allocation in each constituency was allocated to the **Constituency Worklessness Development Fund** (CWDF). This

⁶ Local Provider Forums: Evaluation Report, BCC, February 2011

- was commissioned and delivered through constituency strategic partnerships and provided local flexibility to rapidly address pressing local worklessness issues and any service gaps identified. This approach is regarded by most stakeholders as appropriate and thoughtful, although the delays experienced in agreeing NESP/CESP contracts is viewed by some as having impacted on the timescale by which the CWDF could identify and address such issues and gaps. However, once the NESP and CESP's were written and tenders issued, there seems no reason why a significant element of CWDF could not have been progressed.
- 4.17 CWDF was a useful mechanism to engage especially hard to reach groups at the constituency and neighbourhood levels, and to fill gaps not covered by the NESP/CESPs. However, reduced delivery timescales meant that CWDF fell behind the NESP/CESP activity, with providers having reduced timescales to deliver as a consequence.
- 4.18 The range of **different types of commissioning, and also organisation types**, is a key feature of the Outcome 4 element of the BEDP WNF Programme. A number of provider partnerships have been brought together for the first time through WNF funding. These partnerships include providers of different sizes, different sectors, with varying geographical and target group focus. For example, contract 6 for Hodge Hill brought together Prospects, Jericho Foundation and Birmingham Enterprise. This partnership brought together a national provider, city-wide provider and a third sector local provider each offering complementary skills and expertise for supporting people into work.
- 4.19 Providers have been encouraged to work together to deliver a combined service for clients. Many third sector providers came together solely for the purpose of delivering WNF contracts. They have learnt how to deliver contracts more effectively and have also learnt how to adhere to payment on performance which is the future model being outlined by the coalition government. They have also been encouraged to work collectively again in the future when opportunities arise.
- 4.20 Whilst WNF has encouraged consortia of community and third sector groups to form and/or develop to deliver elements of Outcome 4, a significant proportion of commissioning went to well established private sector providers. Even though this was based on the quality and cost of competitive tenders, this created much anger and frustration in localities, and served to heighten the political scrutiny that the programme faced from an early stage.
- 4.21 Much of this frustration related to the proportion of contracts that were awarded to these private sector providers, and a perceived lack of follow-on sub contracting arrangements with community groups (although as detailed in paragraph 4.9, a significant number of contracts and sub contracts were awarded to third sector organisations). On balance, the level of delivery risk that existed at the time at which these contracts were being finalised is likely to have contributed to a more cautious approach to sub contracting amongst private sector providers.
- 4.22 Interestingly, a number of private sector providers noted at the time of review (March 2011) that their relationships with many community and third sector groups had markedly improved during the delivery phase of NESPs/CESPs, with many realising that they did not have the capacity or capability to deliver the scale required in the available timescale.
- 4.23 There is some evidence of competitive relationships existing between stakeholders and projects. For example, some of the internally commissioned (by BCC) projects felt this approach enabled more WNF funding to be spent on

delivery as opposed to management and administration, and layers of contracting. Other projects felt that some key stakeholder organisations perhaps saw them as competition for outputs instead of seeing services as complementary.

- 4.24 On balance, the decision to take a locality driven approach to Outcome 4 provision through the development of the NESP/CESPs and resulting contracting arrangements was an **appropriate approach** for a range of related reasons, including locality expectations (based on experience of SRB and NRF), and a strategic rationale based on spatially targeting those neighbourhoods with the highest levels of worklessness.
- 4.25 In terms of the **role of the third sector in engagement**, contracted providers had sub contracted delivery to third sector organisations for specific contracts, whilst others used third sector run venues for engagement and delivery, with some examples of delivery staff working from such venues on a full time basis. However, there is little evidence to suggest that there was a strategically driven approach to using third sector organisations for engagement activities, as providers tended to be responsive and opportunistic in their approach to engagement, driven in part by timescales and the delivery risk of relying on engagement from either the third sector or from the providers of mandatory support to clients.
- 4.26 A key issue for NESP/CESP contracts has been getting accurate **information/updates on the employment status of clients in work at 13 and 26 weeks**. WNF introduced the payment by performance for projects, and at the start of the programme the majority of contracts had 13 and 26 weeks retention targets included. However, due to the reduced delivery timescales of the programme, the 26 week retention output was removed from all contracts as it would have been difficult for providers to achieve, although where contracts had a 13 week retention output, a financial unit cost was retained.
- 4.27 On balance, in addition to the retention targets in NESP/CESP contracts, consideration could have been given to the inclusion of a retainer for 13 and 26 week updates on all clients obtaining a job. This would have enabled more effective tracking of beneficiaries in sustainable employment across the programme, although it is recognised that it is very difficult to obtain this type of data from employers.
- 4.28 In terms of the **relative merits of payment for engagement as opposed to job outputs**, the payment by results approach tended to lead to providers scaling up engagement to hit agreed job outputs. Future activity would benefit from an approach that maintained an agreed ratio between engagement and key delivery outputs to incentivise providers to increase rates of conversion, with at least some payment being held back to further reinforce 13 and 26 week job targets.
- 4.29 A number of projects were disappointed by the requirement from BCC and BEDP to cease engagement with new clients at the end of 2010, arguing that this would limit their ability to meet employment outputs.
- 4.30 Whilst this is noted, this decision has, on balance, merit, as it is forcing deliverers in the final quarter of 2010/11 to do more with harder to help client groups already engaged, rather than increase engagement further to hit employment targets. However, some providers have suggested that little more can be done with many of the clients that have been engaged but have not found employment.

- 4.31 NESP/CESP activity is regarded by most stakeholders as being very ambitious, and whilst it took much longer to start than had been intended, partners see its delivery as an achievement in itself. In particular, the movement towards a 'payment by results' approach for this activity is popular amongst stakeholders.
- 4.32 However, at the end of the BEDP WNF Programme, a number of delivery stakeholders are not clear about the added value of local commissioning in the delivery of activity of such scale, to such a challenging set of client groups, over such a short period of time. Furthermore, some are concerned that money has been spent on layers of contractors and not on delivery to clients, and others are concerned that what was envisaged as a straight forward process of strategic and local projects, became over-complicated and was subject to considerable political scrutiny.
- 4.33 Whilst there was significant early frustration around the involvement of third sector organisations in the delivery of contracts, levels of delivery risk are likely to have contributed to a more cautious approach to sub contracting amongst private sector providers. In addition, it has been suggested that as NESP/CESP contracts were delivered, a number of organisations did not have the capacity or capability to compete for, nor deliver, the scale required in the available timescale.
- 4.34 Despite a range of issues and challenges, many stakeholders are comfortable with the delivery performance of NESP/CESP contracts at the end of the programme, a position that one senior stakeholder described as *"highly acceptable in such a short delivery window."*

Strategic /Thematic ESG Projects

- 4.35 It was recognised at an early stage that there were a number of issues and opportunities that would require a more strategic approach to commissioning. This included activity that was common to all areas, key client groups with specialist needs, issues and activities that required the support of central infrastructure, as well as interventions that, on balance, where economies of scale meant that it was more efficient to commission activities strategically on a cross-city basis.
- 4.36 Therefore the final element of what was effectively a 'three pronged approach'⁷ to Outcome 4 was the development of the **thematic/strategic ESG projects**. This approach allowed Outcome 4 to target specific city wide barriers to employment and also client groups that might not be best suited to the locality approach (such as the homeless, ex offenders etc). These city-wide strategic interventions also aimed to support the capacity of the voluntary sector.
- 4.37 Projects commissioned through this element of the BEDP Programme included the following types of activity:
- The **Innovations Fund**, which provided grants for organisations to test new approaches and interventions tackling worklessness and aimed to provide learning for future projects.
 - Projects targeted at **key client groups with specific needs** that impact on their ability to secure employment, or engage with traditional mainstream support, including people with disabilities, prolific offenders and homelessness people.

⁷ The others being the NESP/CESP contracts and the Community Worklessness Development Fund.

- Projects providing **financial support and advice – supporting the transition from benefits to work**, provision of extended Housing Benefit and Council Tax benefit payments for people immediately after they have entered employment, financial advice and guidance to address debt issues, advice on budgeting, and information about benefits entitlement (both before and after moving into employment) and support in terms of travel to interviews and the early stages of employment.
- **Apprenticeship and post employment support**, providing paid supported work placements and accredited training, and mentoring programmes.
- **Employer engagement activity**, including Customised Access Training for Employment, (providing additional resources to meet the recruitment needs of employers) and town centre management (supporting local businesses in local centres, safeguarding and securing jobs).
- **Infrastructure** projects to support the delivery of WNF and other employment support activity such as the Client Tracking System and Local Provider Forums.

- 4.38 A summary of these strategic projects is set out in Annex 2.
- 4.39 The rationale behind the development of these projects was sound and is generally well accepted by partners (including the need to take city wide action to address these barriers, as well as efficiencies and economies of scale). However, some consultees highlighted concerns about the role of BCC sponsoring departments for these thematic/strategic ESG projects in terms of added value, and also risks that programme activity could be seen as serving to support mainstream delivery.
- 4.40 Given this, it is useful to note the approach taken in commissioning this Strategic/Thematic activity. Where a statutory provider existed (such as Workwise delivered by CENTRO, or Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment delivered through BCC's Benefit Service) they were engaged to deliver additional activity. Where no statutory provider existed, there were three different options available in terms of commissioning:
- Open tender based on approved specification (with examples being Specialist Employment Support for Homeless People, and Access to Financial Inclusion for Workless and Newly Employed People).
 - A tender process from a preferred supplier list (with examples being ESOL and CATE).
 - Hosting infrastructure projects (such as Innovations Fund and Client Tracking System) within the programme team at BCC.
- 4.41 WNF also brought together BEDP and Birmingham Safer Partnerships for the first time, allowing for a joint approach to reducing both worklessness and re-offending rates in Birmingham. For example, through Prolific and Priority Offenders, WNF has truly enabled a new model of working with PPOs through the co-location of dedicated PPO employment workers in each of the four Local Policing Units (LPUs) in the city.
- 4.42 Other projects highlighted by stakeholders as examples of good practice include the Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme, CATE, Workwise, ESOL, Engaging with Workless Displaced Communities and Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment. Some stakeholders would like to have seen projects reporting on qualitative as well as quantitative impacts. Where some stakeholders were able to do this they felt it provided a good insight into the softer impacts on the clients.

Summary of key findings

- 4.43 The development of NESP/CESP plans and the subsequent commissioning and delivery of NESP/CESP contracts is regarded by most stakeholders and providers as being very ambitious. Although it took much longer for delivery to start than had been intended, partners see delivery as an achievement in itself. In particular, the movement towards a **'payment by results' approach for this activity is popular amongst many stakeholders**. The third sector providers also benefited from the experience of payment by results, with many commenting that they felt better positioned for the future as a result.
- 4.44 However, at the end of the BEDP WNF Programme, **a number of delivery stakeholders are not clear about the added value of local commissioning in the delivery of activity of such scale, to such a challenging set of client groups, over such a short period of time**. Furthermore, some are concerned that money has been spent on layers of contractors and not on delivery to clients, and others are concerned that what was envisaged as a straight forward process of strategic and local projects, became over-complicated and was subject to considerable political scrutiny.
- 4.45 Whilst there was significant early frustration around the lack of involvement of third sector organisations in the delivery of contracts, **levels of delivery risk are likely to have contributed to a more cautious approach by private sector providers to subcontracting with third sector organisations**. In addition, it has been suggested that as NESP/CESP contracts were delivered, a number of third sector organisations did not have the capacity or capability to compete for, nor deliver, the scale required in the available timescale.
- 4.46 BEDP partners tend to lack a general understanding of NESP/CESP activity, and have little sense of locality flavour (in terms of addressing specific priorities). As a result this has served to create a low sense of added value from the NESP/CESP element of the programme amongst more senior stakeholders. In contrast, BEII projects tend to be more visible to many BEDP partners than the NESP/CESP activity, or even the ESG thematic/strategic projects.
- 4.47 Whilst this is a valid finding, it requires a degree of moderation. Those projects with a job creation and business focus (such as Outcome 2) tend to often be more tangible and more prominent to partners at the BEDP level, whereas **intensive worklessness interventions for hard to access and hard to help target groups can often have a lower profile at the strategic level**. This is not a criticism of BEDP, but an observation that the economic growth focus of the partnership is likely to naturally be more receptive to Outcome 2 projects.
- 4.48 **Despite a range of issues and challenges, many stakeholders are comfortable with the delivery performance of NESP/CESP contracts at the end of the programme**, a position that one senior stakeholder described as *"highly acceptable in such a short delivery window."*

5. REVIEW OF OUTCOME 4 FINANCIAL AND OUTPUT PERFORMANCE

Section 5 details the performance of the Outcome 4 element of the BEDP WNF Programme. It sets out financial and output performance against targets, applies some conversion ratios to allow for performance comparison across contracts and delivery approaches, and provides a summary of data captured by the programme's Client Tracking System.

Financial and Output Performance

5.1 This subsection assesses the performance of Outcome 4 (ESG) in terms of financial expenditure and progress towards outputs for this element of the Programme.

5.2 Table 5.1 below shows the actual funding accrued by this element of the Programme across each of the key strands for the three financial years of delivery. It should be noted that for the current year (2010-11) the data only covers the period up to and including 31st December 2010.

Table 5.1: BEDP (ESG) Outcome 4 Finance Summary – (to 31 December 2010)

	Total Revised Allocation (Nov 10)	2008/09 actual	2009/10 actual	2010/11 actual (to 31 Dec 2010)	Total actual spend to 31 Dec 2010	Progress to 31 Dec 2010
CDF	£3,360,110	-	£365,610	£1,157,976	£1,523,586	45.3%
Innovation Fund	£1,332,000	-	£149,403	£769,073	£918,476	69.0%
Mgt & Admin	£691,218	-	£298,949	£291,497	£590,446	85.4%
NESP/CESP Contracts	£19,102,441	-	£5,208,280	£10,179,259	£15,387,539	80.6%
Strategic projects	£9,679,161	£191,191	£1,785,944	£3,130,917	£5,108,052	52.8%
Transitional Funds	£1,748,190	£1,001,238	£746,952	-	£1,748,190	100.0%
Grand Total	£35,913,120	£1,192,429	£8,555,138	£15,528,722	£25,276,289	70.4%

Source: DC Research Analysis of finance data from Birmingham City Council (key source: WNF Business Plan P9.xls)

5.3 Table 5.1 shows that most of the strands of the Programme have (as would be expected at this stage) not yet spent their full allocation. Whilst some of the strands have a significant proportion of finance to be spent in the final quarter (as discussed elsewhere in the report), the actual timescales for delivery have been tight, and most/many projects do expect to achieve their financial targets by the end of the Programme, although this seems optimistic.

5.4 An update provided by the WNF Team, based on expenditure as at 31 March 2011, indicates that all but two of the ESG thematic projects will have achieved within 90% of their November 2010 target. Similarly, overall programme expenditure is within 90% of the revised target, and following the Partnership and Cabinet agreement for a short extension to provider contracts for delivery of the Employment and Skills Plans, overall programme performance will increase.

5.5 In terms of Outcome 4 Programme level output performance, Table 5.2 below shows what has been reported as being achieved against core outputs as at the end of December 2010.

Table 5.2: BEDP (ESG) Outcome 4 Output Summary (to 31 December 2010)			
	Revised Profile (Sept 10)	Total Actual (to Dec 10)	Progress to date
1A No of clients contacted	4,360	3,702*	84.9%
1B No of clients engaged	18,710	15,991	85.5%
1C No of clients starting pre-employment interventions	13,662	10,946	80.1%
1CI No of pre-employment interventions	3,115	2,998	96.2%
1D No of clients receiving post employment support	5,069	4,048	79.9%
1DI No of post-employment interventions	3,106	2,310	74.4%
1E No of clients obtaining accredited training	2,316	1,207	52.1%
1F No of clients obtaining a job	4,703.5	2,280	48.5%
1G Clients retained in continuous employment for 13 weeks	1,855.5	535*	28.8%
1H No of clients retained in continuous employment for 26 weeks	188.5	28*	14.9%
1I No of clients entering self-employment	94	53	56.4%
1J No of clients in voluntary work	1,165	592	50.8%
1K No of households supported with children under 16	2,078	2,031	97.7%
2A No of Jobs captured as part of employer engagement activity	64	49	76.6%
2B No of jobs secured by priority clients	581	404	69.5%
3A No of businesses supported	1,455	1,140	78.4%
3AII No of businesses created	5	0	0.0%
3B No of jobs created	171	139	81.3%
3C No of jobs safeguarded	449	290	64.6%
4A No of organisations supported	249	215	86.3%
4B Marketing campaigns initiated	27	111	411.1%
4C No of sustainable formal partnerships initiated/supported	28	82	293%
5A Public sector leverage (£'000)	6,185,000	5,005,128	80.9%
5B Private sector leverage (£'000)	201,000	3,004,621	1494.8%

Source: DC Research analysis of Birmingham City Council data (as at 31st December 2010), with subsequent reconciliation data provided by Birmingham City Council (up to and including May 2011 but as at 31st December 2010).
 *Excludes TDHP output performance as this project focused on employment sustainability but did not support people into jobs.

5.6 Table 5.2 shows that with three months (one full quarter) of delivery still to go, a number of outputs have either already achieved target, or are close to achieving target (being 90% or more towards target):

- 1CI No of pre-employment interventions – 96% of target (2,998 achieved compared to target of 3,115).
- 1K No of households supported with children under 16 – 98% of target (2,031 achieved compared to a target of 2,078).
- 4B Marketing campaigns initiated – 311% above target (111 achieved compared to a target of 27).
- 4C No of sustainable formal partnerships initiated/supported – 298% above target (82 achieved compared to a target of 28).
- 5B Private sector leverage (£'000) – 1395% above target (3,004,621 achieved compared to a target of 201,000).

- 5.7 In contrast, a number of outputs are well behind target, even with three months (one full quarter) still to go. The outputs that are more than one third (33.3%) behind target as at 31st December 2010 are:
- 1E No of clients obtaining accredited training – 48% behind target (1,207 achieved, target of 2,316).
 - 1F No of clients obtaining a job – 52% behind target (2,280 achieved, target of 4,704).
 - 1G Clients retained in continuous employment for 13 weeks – 71% below target (535 achieved compared to a target of 1,855, although this does exclude TDHP).
 - 1H No of clients retained in continuous employment for 26 weeks – 85% behind target (28 achieved, target of 188.5).
 - 1I No of clients entering self-employment – 44% behind target (53 achieved, target of 94).
 - 1J No of clients in voluntary work – 49% behind target (592 achieved, target of 1,165).
 - 3AII No of businesses created – 100% behind target (0 achieved, target of 5).
 - 3C No of jobs safeguarded – 35% behind target (290 achieved, target of 449).
- 5.8 An update provided by the WNF Team based on output performance at the end of March 2011, indicates that good progress has been made towards achieving the overall output targets shown in the table (which were agreed in September 2010). Over half the non-financial outputs have achieved 90% or above and seven (32%) have exceeded their target. Performance increases further if compared to revised targets agreed during the last quarter of the programme with 9 outputs (41%) exceeding their target.
- 5.9 The extension to provider contracts for delivery of the Employment and Skills Plans, should also increase performance of some key outputs: 1F – Clients obtaining a job, (currently achieving 75% of the revised target); and 1G and 1H Clients retained in continuous employment for 13 and 26 weeks (currently achieving 65% and 86%, respectively of the revised targets).
- 5.10 Overall, leverage figures indicate that 92% of the combined Public and Private Target will have been achieved, although the Public Leverage shown in the table at quarter 3 has been reduced because of evidencing issues.

Analysis of Conversion Rates

- 5.11 The development of output 'conversion' metrics is a useful mechanism to compare the relative success of different interventions in addressing a common need for a programme (which in this case is securing, and remaining in, employment). However, such approaches often do not allow, or account for, differences in delivery or the different needs of, or challenges with, specific client groups.
- 5.12 The tables below highlight 'ratios' of conversion from client engagement to employment and volunteering. To allow and account for differences between the relative challenges in delivering projects/interventions, each table sets out both target (i.e. pre-agreed delivery as contracted between the programme and respective provider) and actual conversion ratios on three key output indicators,

and compares them across four distinct sets of intervention under Outcome 4 of the WNF Programme.

- 5.13 For CDF, Table 5.3 below compares the target and actual conversion ratios for engagement to employment, employment to 13 weeks continuous employment, and engagement to voluntary work. Target data relates to the revised output allocation from September 2010, and actual data relates to all years actual outputs to December 2010.
- 5.14 The variance between target/allocation and actual conversion ratios for CDF activity is narrow – especially for engagement to employment (2 percentage points variance) and engagement to voluntary work (again 2 percentage points variance), suggesting that actual delivery has matched original expectations as expressed in output targets.

Table 5.3: CDF Conversion Ratios

Outputs	Target/Allocation ratio	Actual ratio	Variance
Engagement (1B) to employment (1F)	14%	12%	-2
Employment (1F) to 13 weeks continuous employment (1G)	19%	12%	-7
Engagement (1B) to voluntary work (1J)	17%	15%	-2

Source: DC Research based on BCC output data, March 2011

- 5.15 For the thematic/strategic ESG projects (for a full list, see Table A2.2 in Annex 2) Table 5.4 again compares target and actual conversion ratios for engagement to employment, employment to 13 weeks continuous employment, and engagement to voluntary work. Target data relates to the revised output allocation from September 2010, and actual data relates to all years actual outputs to December 2010.
- 5.16 The variance between target/allocation and actual conversion ratios for these ESG projects is greater than the Community Development Fund, but still relatively narrow, again especially for engagement to employment (a variance of 4.1 percentage points) and engagement to voluntary work (a variance of 3.3 percentage points). Whilst the variance between 1B and 1F is nearly 13 percentage points, on the whole delivery is fairly close to original expectations as expressed in output targets, with a quarter of performance remaining.

Table 5.4: Strategic/Thematic ESG Projects Conversion Ratios

Outputs	Target/Allocation ratio	Actual ratio	Variance
Engagement (1B) to employment (1F)	20.0%	15.9%	-4.1
Employment (1F) to 13 weeks continuous employment (1G)	47.8%	35.1%	-12.7
Engagement (1B) to voluntary work (1J)	14.2%	10.9%	-3.3

Source: DC Research based on BCC output data, May 2011

Notes:

- Excludes NESP/CESP contracts and Community Development Fund as covered elsewhere in this section.
- Excludes Targeted Discretionary Housing Payments, as this focused on employment sustainability but did support people into jobs.
- Excludes Transition Fund, which was not a Strategic ESG project.

- 5.17 For NESP/CESP's, Target data relates to the revised contracted outputs, and actual data relates to all years actual outputs to 31st January 2011 (therefore, including an extra month compared to the CDF data).

Table 5.5: NESP/CESP Conversion Ratios: Engagement (1B) to Employment (1F)

	Original Profile 1B*	Original Profile 1F*	Original Conv. Rate	Revised Profile 1B*	Revised Profile 1F*	Revised Conv. Rate	Actual Achieved 1B**	Actual Achieved 1F**	Actual Conv. Rate	Variance to Original ***
Erdington	1,820	684	38%	1,123	284	25%	1,123	196	17%	-21
Hall Green	2,140	704	33%	1,599	355	22%	1,598	154	10%	-23
Hodge Hill	4,041	1,148	28%	2,866	619	21%	2,866	337	12%	-16
Ladywood	3,216	950	30%	1,720	360	20%	1,720	274	16%	-14
Perry Barr	1,117	305	27%	690	106	15%	690	71	10%	-17
South Works	2,916	1,153	40%	1,893	768	40%	1,893	559	30%	-10
Yardley	1,587	525	33%	903	337	37%	903	227	25%	-8
TOTAL	16,837	5,469	32%	10,794	2,829	26%	10,793	1,818	17%	-15

Source: DC Research analysis based on BCC output data, May 2011. The final, revised contract profiles were used to calculate the 'contract conversion rate' and the actual outputs to end January 2011 to calculate the 'actual conversion rate'.

Notes:

* It should be noted that profiles were adjusted throughout the contracting period in line with the Performance Management Framework, and that all profiles for 1b (engagements) were removed from contracts at the end of December 2011. The analysis shows actual conversion rates against revised profiles, with original profiles added for the purposes of comparison.

** Actual conversion rates are based on performance to the end of January 2011 therefore will be higher by the end of the programme when performance for Feb and March is accounted for.

*** Variance of actual to original conversion rates is expressed as percentage points.

- 5.18 Table 5.5 highlights the original and revised conversion rates for each Constituency (as at the end of January 2011). The original conversion rates ranged from 27% to 40%, and from an end of programme perspective now appear to be optimistic. The revised conversion rates show (with the exception of South Works and Yardley) a notable drop in delivery expectations across the Constituencies. Nevertheless, whilst actual performance does not include the final two months of delivery in Quarter 4 of 2010/11, actual conversion rates are significantly below original revised profile rates in all areas.
- 5.19 The **best performing areas in terms of conversion rates are South Works and Yardley**, as well as being the best performing in terms of performance against original profile targets. In comparison, **Hall Green and Perry Barr are the worst performing areas in terms of conversion rates**, and performance against original profile. These areas hit 75% and 62% respectively of their original engagement targets, which reinforces the importance of converting engagement into employment opportunities.
- 5.20 These results (the variance between the expected or contracted conversion of engagement into employment against the actual conversion of engagement into employment) show that for all areas conversion has been lower than expected.
- 5.21 These variances could be due to a number of reasons – including (i) under-performance by providers in terms of job output achievements, (ii) unrealistic job output targets for these scales of engagement or (iii) the result of a time lag – whereby the actual job outputs achieved due to these levels of engagement will,

by the end of the Programme, be higher and therefore closer to the contracted (i.e. expected) conversion rates.

5.22 Potential reasons for variations provided by the WNF Team include:

- Areas such as Ladywood and Perry Barr having much more restrictive engagement targets for clients onto the programme. For example, the majority of clients needed to be a lone parent, NEET or have a disability, compared to Southworks, where anyone unemployed and claiming benefits could access the programme.
- Some areas being able to engage with clients from Day 1 unemployed, whereas other constituencies only allowed this later on in delivery.
- Some areas working with clients that had greater, more complex needs and were therefore more difficult to get into employment.

5.23 The reasons for these differences do merit further, in depth analysis, at a later stage.

The Client Tracking System

5.24 The Client Tracking System (CTS) was a project in its own right, and was intended to measure support given to clients from multiple projects. The CTS is designed to monitor the progress of clients from engagement to sustainable employment – at 13 and then 26 weeks. It is the provider's responsibility to update the system at these stages or indeed to update the system to reflect the termination of employment.

5.25 The CTS should contain only one client record irrespective of how many projects the client has been engaged in. However, in practice there are a significant number of duplications in the system – which could lead to double counting of outputs⁸.

5.26 CTS was not officially up and running until June 2009, although it is understood that the application to WNF for funding commenced in October 2008. Although this process was longer than intended, CTS still predated the establishment of the Programme Team.

5.27 A number of other WNF projects had already been commissioned before the CTS was established. This led to a number of projects being awarded funding but not necessarily being able to count outputs or track clients. This is particularly true of the Transition Fund projects which had received WNF funding to support their transition from NRF almost a year before the CTS was up and running.

5.28 Within this evaluation, data from the CTS has been used to identify the level of penetration engagement of the Programme on a spatial basis – i.e. by priority LSOA within a ward. To enable data comparison, figures have been calculated by attributing the LSOA to the ward in which its centroid is located. Table 5.6 below presents ward level data on the number of registrations, number of jobs, original baseline (May 2007) number of people claiming out of work benefits, and the ratio of the number of registrations to the number of individuals out of work at the baseline. The higher the ratio, the greater the level of engagement in that ward. The table has ranked the wards, from highest (i.e. the ward that has achieved the highest proportion of engagement compared to the baseline) to the

⁸ It is understood that the CTS Administrator is currently (as of March 2011) attempting to eradicate these duplications

lowest (i.e. the ward that has achieved the lowest proportion of engagement compared to the baseline).

Table 5.6: Ward Profile of Clients on CTS

Ward (in which centroid of Priority LSOA is located)	No. Clients reg on CTS in Priority LSOAs	No. Clients entering employment reg on CTS in Priority LSOAs	No. Workless claimants in Priority LSOAs (NI 153, May 2007)	Proportion of workless claimants from Priority SOAs reg on CTS
Sparkbrook	2,193	250	3,825	57%
Springfield	159	24	285	56%
Washwood Heath	2,229	298	4,185	53%
Aston	1,900	368	3,845	49%
Handsworth Wood	414	46	945	44%
Perry Barr	88	19	205	43%
South Yardley	488	93	1,140	43%
Lozells and East Handsworth	1,785	209	4,275	42%
Hodge Hill	711	100	1,800	40%
Bordesley Green	770	106	2,215	35%
Stechford and Yardley North	577	114	1,760	33%
Nechells	1,351	160	4,270	32%
Ladywood	816	72	2,595	31%
Bournville	103	23	330	31%
Moseley and Kings Heath	319	28	1,035	31%
Oscott	59	2	195	30%
Longbridge	361	69	1,195	30%
Soho	813	78	2,705	30%
Sheldon	212	43	740	29%
Quinton	388	103	1,405	28%
Edgbaston	82	9	300	27%
Weoley	533	127	1,950	27%
Northfield	230	51	845	27%
Kings Norton	527	105	1,970	27%
Shard End	861	128	3,440	25%
Tyburn	642	134	2,685	24%
Acocks Green	260	34	1,130	23%
Bartley Green	560	147	2,485	23%
Kingstanding	808	144	3,610	22%
Stockland Green	399	51	1,835	22%
Brandwood	298	71	1,860	16%
Erdington	166	27	1,045	16%
Billesley	183	31	1,255	15%
Hall Green	35	4	250	14%
Sutton Trinity	25	5	200	13%
Total Priority LSOAs	21,345	3,273	63810	33%
Non Priority LSOAs	5,597	700		

Source: DC Research analysis of CTS data (provided in May 2011 by BCC) and NOMIS data

Note: Includes: Employed less than 16 hours; Employed more than 16 hours; Self Employed; Future Jobs Fund and Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme

- 5.29 The results show that, in the main, it is the inner-city wards that have achieved the highest 'penetration rates', with Sparkbrook, Springfield and Washwood Heath having engaged with more than half of the target clients in the ward (assuming that those registered are all eligible, and were claiming out of work

benefits). In addition, Aston, Handsworth, Perry Barr, South Yardley, Lozells and East Handsworth, Hodge Hill, and Bordesley Green have all engaged with above the average (i.e. Birmingham average) having engaged with more than a third of the target clients (assuming that those registered are all eligible, and were claiming out of work benefits).

- 5.30 In contrast, according to the CTS data penetration has been less successful in the outer city wards, where the proportion of Incapacity Benefit Claimants is generally higher. Brandwood, Erdington, Billesley, Hall Green, and Sutton Trinity wards have been less successful (assuming that those registered are all eligible, and were claiming out of work benefits), engaging with less than one-fifth of the target clients in the ward.
- 5.31 In addition to spatial analysis, analysing the CTS data by gender and ethnicity provides a summary of some of the demographic characteristics of those that have received support from the projects supported through the Programme. The tables below show this demographic assessment, based on data provided as at mid May 2011.

Table 5.7: Ethnicity Profile of Clients on CTS

Count of Client Id – Ethnic Group	Total	Percent
Asian Or Asian British	6,753	25.1%
Black Or Black British	6,161	22.9%
Mixed Race	1,202	4.4%
Not Known / Not Provided	3,207	11.9%
Other Ethnic Group	975	3.6%
White	8,644	32.1%
Grand Total	26,942	100.0%

Source: DC Research analysis of Birmingham City Council CTS Data, May 2011

- 5.32 The data above demonstrates that that around half the clients registered on the CTS detailed their ethnicity as Black or Asian. JSA unemployment rates for these groups are at least 50% above the city average, demonstrating that the programme did successfully target communities of need.

Table 5.8: Age and Gender Profile of Clients on CTS

Age Range	Female	Male	Not Known / Not Provided	Grand Total
16-24	2,642	4,190	0	6,832
25-49	7,296	9,547	5	16,848
50+	1,144	2,110	3	3,257
Not Known	0	4	1	5
Grand Total	11,082	15,851	9	26,942

Source: DC Research analysis of Birmingham City Council CTS Data, May 2011

Summary of findings

- 5.33 In terms of financial performance, as at the end of December 2010, **most of the strands of Outcome 4** (with the exception of the Transitional Funds) **were showing an under-spend**. Whilst this is to be expected with one quarter of activity still to be delivered, both the strategic projects and the CDF show high levels of under-spend (47.2% and 54.7% respectively).
- 5.34 **Output performance is mixed**, with some outputs performing well, and others clearly underperforming (including some of the key employment related outputs).
- 5.35 Data to the end of December 2010 shows that **some key outputs are close to achieving (or exceeding) target**, including number of pre-employment interventions, number of households supported with children under 16, marketing campaigns initiated, number of sustainable formal partnerships initiated/supported and the level of private sector leverage achieved.
- 5.36 However, **other outputs** (including some of the key employment and jobs outputs) **are showing underperformance as at end December 2010**, with a number of outputs more than one-third behind target – including number of clients obtaining accredited training, number of clients obtaining a job, number of clients retained in continuous employment for 13 weeks, number of clients retained in continuous employment for 26 weeks, number of clients entering self-employment, number of clients in voluntary work, number of businesses created, and number of jobs safeguarded, although the **update provided by the WNF Team** in May 2011 (see paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9), **indicates significant improvement against some of these outputs**.
- 5.37 Analysis of conversion rates for the main types of interventions shows that for all areas **conversion has been lower than expected**, with NESP/CESP showing the widest divergence between planned and actual conversion rates. However, Outcome 4 conversion rates are generally comparable with typical expectations for this type of activity, with original WNF expectations in 2008 tending to be optimistic and not accounting for reduced delivery timeframes.
- 5.38 Finally, using CTS data, the level of penetration in terms of engagement with target clients in each of the target localities shows a varied picture. Some areas show high levels of engagement (Sparkbrook, Springfield, Washwood Heath, Aston, Handsworth Wood, Perry Barr, South Yardley, Lozells and East Handsworth, Hodge Hill and Bordesley Green) have all achieved above average 'penetration rates'). In stark contrast, Erdington, Brandwood, Billesley, Hall Green, and Sutton Trinity have been less successful, and have engaged with less than one-fifth of their target clients.

6. PROJECT IMPACTS AND CLIENT/BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCES

This section summarises a range of project and contract level impacts drawn from a range of sources. The primary source of evidence comes from the project reviews, project manager consultations and clients/beneficiaries sampled as part of the approach to this study. This evidence is supplemented by drawing from secondary evidence taken from a numbers of separate project evaluations commissioned either by BCC, or by the projects themselves.

Case study reviews and examples of client experiences of a sample of the Strategic/Thematic ESG projects and a sample of NESP/CESP contracts are set out in Annex 3.

Impacts and client/beneficiary experiences from Strategic/Thematic Projects

- 6.1 The **Prolific and Priority Offenders** project was one of the earlier projects to be appraised by the WNF team. It is understood that it took some time for the project to be appraised as it was essential for the appraisal team to ensure the proposal was sufficiently robust and aligned with existing resources.
- 6.2 Birmingham Safer Partnership Offender Management and Drug Treatment (OMDT) is the lead delivery agent for PPO. The project provides employment support provision for a particular cohort of offenders known as Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPOs) - these are the most chaotic and prolific offenders. The PPO project draws up individual employment action plans in consultation with all other agencies involved in managing the risk of the offender to ensure a holistic multi agency approach, in particular the agencies falling within the criminal justice arena. The ultimate goal of the project is to move this group of offenders who have been long-term unemployed into sustainable employment and facilitate the change in their offending backgrounds.
- 6.3 There is recognition by the project staff that the initial targets agreed at the time of the project appraisal were challenging ones. The PPO project was one of the earlier thematic projects to be appraised and the outputs were encouraged to be perhaps unrealistically high given the multiple barriers to employment experienced by this group. Also the targets for getting PPOs into work were agreed before the current recession. Prior to the recession, placing this client group in work was challenging, now this group will be facing competition for vacancies with other candidates without offending backgrounds.
- 6.4 Some slippage in project delivery occurred due to delays in the approval of the original variation for an additional post. Overall the project is well on track for achieving its outputs, with most already being over achieved. Partners believe that this is a significant achievement when considering the target group with which they are working and also within the economic climate.
- 6.5 It is reported in the project variation form (October 2010) and by project partners that the WNF re-offending targets for the Safer Birmingham Partnership are also being achieved. One target was to reduce re-offending by 19% which currently stands at a reduction of 27%, so this project is also contributing to this target by giving PPO's a realistic possibility of leaving crime behind and entering the labour market, many for the first time.
- 6.6 Birmingham Drug and Alcohol Action Team (BDAAT) are programme managers for **Enhanced Employment, Education and Training Support Pathway –**

Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Project. BDAAT oversee the delivery of activity which together makes up an integrated pathway of support for drug and alcohol dependent benefit claimants.

- 6.7 It is understood to have taken around nine months from initial application for WNF funding to the project being approved. This delay is reported to have been due to time taken in ensuring the proposal was robust. It was the initial intention for this project to be delivered over a longer period but due to the time it took for the project to be developed to a robust standard for approval, funding and outputs were reduced accordingly.
- 6.8 As of December 2010, the project has already over achieved on two outputs – number of clients contacted and number of clients engaged. This suggests a clear demand for this type of support. Furthermore, the project appears to be on track for achieving most of its other outputs. In particular, the project is on track for achieving the number of clients obtaining a job which, as suggested by partners, has been an excellent achievement considering the economic climate and the client group. It has also achieved well in terms of number of clients in voluntary work. The output which is behind target at this stage is clients retained in continuous employment for 13 weeks, although the project expects that this will have increased by March 2011.
- 6.9 The project has been able to significantly increase what was previously a limited BDAAT commissioned service. Prior to WNF funding there was a very limited level of targeted specialist EET support for some clients entering treatment. The service that was provided prior to WNF funding provided one worker who was only able to take on five case loads across the city at any one time. This has now increased to around 25+ cases per worker at any one time; workers may also have around 15 clients placed in work.
- 6.10 The expanded specialist support has also been able to provide the capacity to meet the needs of the wider treatment system rather than under the current system where referrals are only accepted from a limited number of identified treatment providers due to the lack of capacity. Around 22 referral agencies are engaged with the project which has more than doubled the numbers engaged with the limited commissioned service.
- 6.11 Prior to these projects (along with and a third project funded through the Birmingham Safer Partnership WNF), BEDP and Birmingham Safer Partnership had not worked jointly. Both this project and the Prolific Priority Offenders project have brought BEDP and the Birmingham Safer Partnership closer together. Through this joint working, Birmingham Safer Partnership was able to access a new partner who they had not previously worked with (for example the EAT team) and vice versa. It is understood that both partners welcomed this strategic engagement.
- 6.12 The **Worklessness Innovations Fund** provided small grants for feasibility studies, demonstration projects, and innovative actions and forward-looking research into the issues surrounding worklessness in the city. Projects had to contribute to the outcome of increasing employment and reducing poverty across all communities by supporting people from welfare to work, through targeted interventions to reduce worklessness in the worst neighbourhoods in the City. 40 projects were supported from total of 130 submitted proposals. Over three quarters of projects were delivered by Third Sector organisations.

- 6.13 According to a recent evaluation, the Innovations Fund⁹ has been successful in supporting people in priority areas and from specific hard to reach client groups in improving qualification levels, supporting households with children under 16 and supporting people who have gone into work over and above the WNF targets. A substantial proportion of activity supported by the Innovation Fund was designed to impact on “distance travelled” towards employment rather than necessarily achieving employment outcomes. The evaluation identified key areas of achievement from across the portfolio of projects:
- Tailored approaches for particular client groups (e.g. NEET, homeless, older Asian women).
 - Incorporating self reliance element in activity to encourage progression.
 - Volunteering as an important introduction/reintroduction to the work place within a supported environment.
 - Timing of progression driven by the needs of client.
 - Expanding role of enterprise and social enterprise as a means to stimulate involvement in positive activity.
 - Good examples of the positive role of the voluntary sector, particularly when providing a targeted approach for a specialist client group.
 - Development of effective partnerships in the delivery of projects.
- 6.14 An important objective for the Innovation Fund was the dissemination of learning and transferable good practice. This has been achieved through the development of a Good Practice Guide for Practitioners to share experience of critical success factors for employability schemes (attached as Annex 5).
- 6.15 Overall, a strong emphasis on trialling new approaches and developing new delivery models was evident across the Fund, with particular success in trialling and developing approaches with a focus on the nature and quality of interaction with clients. Delays in WNF funding, and a higher level of applications to the fund than anticipated, affected the outcomes as timescales for development of initiatives and delivery were reduced.
- 6.16 **Addressing Worklessness with Homeless Service Users**¹⁰ provided enhanced specialist support for homeless people, moving them into employment (as well as helping them find and keep accommodation). The project was based on an integrated employment and skills model co-designed by many of the specialist homeless agencies in the city over two years. Delivered by a consortium of organisations, it took an innovative approach by supporting clients simultaneously into jobs and accommodation, offering post-employment / post-accommodation support, and providing flexible financial help via a personal budget to overcome clients' transitional problems.
- 6.17 The project has exceeded its targets regarding number of clients engaged, contacted and in voluntary work. By December 2010, it had also achieved 84.4% of the target for the number of clients obtaining a job, however those remaining in employment for 13 weeks or more was low at 45.7%. Consultees from the programme suggested this was a result of the economic recession, as well as the predominance of temporary and seasonal work currently on offer in the entry-level jobs market. Despite these difficulties, participants in the programme have found the project to be very useful, with the majority of participants who have

⁹ Birmingham WNF Innovation Fund Evaluation, Ekosgen, February 2011

¹⁰ Roots to Work Evaluation Report, MWB Consultancy Ltd, February 2011

engaged in the project gaining in terms of job readiness even where they have not successfully gained work.

- 6.18 The project experienced delays in receiving WNF funding. However, it is reported that this delay is due to difficulty agreeing a sponsoring department to oversee delivery of the project. The project team found that these delays inhibited the length of time available from job-entry to the end of the project, meaning that less people may be able to receive the ongoing support they need. The project has assisted with Outcome 4 of the LAA by working to support employment take up from the homeless in priority areas and has also demonstrated the benefits of offering multiple support to vulnerable people to achieve long term independence.
- 6.19 **Pre-Apprentice Academy: Trainee Academy 16-18 NEETS** was a one year pilot to deliver enhanced apprenticeship style work placements in a range of skill shortage areas. An early evaluation¹¹ highlighted that the project recruited 90 young people onto the programme between October 2008 and September 2009, with 38 leaving early due to a variety of reasons (including gaining employment elsewhere, returning to education, dismissal from lack of commitment etc). Following the programme, 18 have been recruited by BCC (10 in Fleet and Waste Management, two within the Project Administration Team, six with Parks), and 28 trainees were offered a six month extension on the programme until March 2010.
- 6.20 A six month extension to the Pre-Apprentice Academy was negotiated following the lack of employment opportunities that were available following the recession and the subsequent freeze on recruitment at BCC. The extension aimed to further develop the participants' skill sets, allow participants to pursue further qualifications at Bourneville College, and ensured their daily working environments were highly visible to promote networking opportunities. Many beneficiaries were disappointed at the lack of employment offers at the end of the programme. Despite this, consultees overall commented that the programme had had a positive impact on their employment status/potential, with a high proportion stating they now had increased confidence and a clear action plan for their career goals where they did not before.
- 6.21 The project assisted with Birmingham's LAA by increasing employment opportunities in targeted areas, ensuring a high quality local environment and improving educational achievement through the provision of NVQ courses during training. Despite not achieving full targets following a recruitment freeze, consultees did find the experience positive, with all of those who completed the project gaining NVQ qualifications, work experience, portfolios of evidence of their skills and future references for employment.
- 6.22 More recent consultation undertaken for this evaluation highlights the that Pre Apprentice Academy has trained and supported young people to deal with a working environment, helped them to develop social skills, helped to build confidence and self-esteem, enabled them to work as part of a team and to develop a work ethic.
- 6.23 The trainees experience with the scheme is believed to have significantly strengthened their position to take advantage of job opportunities, education or training in the future. Project staff provided one example of a trainee who has now gone on to study at Warwick University and another who got a permanent contract in the Housing Directorate of BCC. One trainee had also become a mentor and had won Mentor of the Year.

¹¹Pre Apprentice Academy Evaluation Report, Dilloway and Goldman Associates, October 2009

- 6.24 Many trainees supported through the project had experienced many challenges and barriers in their life. Some trainees had been homeless, some were carers and some were single parents. Also, for some of the trainees, this was the first time that a member of their family had been in work and so it was helping to break a generational cycle of worklessness.
- 6.25 **Workwise Birmingham** has been successful in helping clients into work, with over 1500 assisted by December 2010. The project was designed to provide targeted travel support, including purchase of Bus Passes for interviews and initial stages of work. According to evaluation evidence¹², half of the clients said that they would not have been able to take up work without the support of WorkWise, resulting in considerable savings in terms of unpaid JSA when considering the much smaller cost of the travel passes (an initial economic analysis of WorkWise in Birmingham showed that the difference in cost between supporting a jobseeker on through WorkWise for 13 weeks compared to Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) can be as much as £790). The scheme has also had a positive impact in terms of employment retention, with the majority (88%) of clients still in employment.
- 6.26 Despite the successes, consultees from the project did express concerns with the boundaries in which the project had to concentrate (i.e. specific SOAs). This stipulation meant that many job seekers living in other SOAs did not qualify for help, despite having similar personal circumstances to those that did. Furthermore, some consultees also missed out on passes they were entitled to as their employers did not provide them with a letter of confirmation within the 7 day timescale and others missed out due to being unaware of support available.
- 6.27 The **Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme** aims to stimulate the supply of apprentice places in the work place available for residents of Birmingham. Whilst demand for apprenticeship places continues to be high, in the current economic climate employers are finding it increasingly difficult to support the business case for employing apprentices. Furthermore, Birmingham also has a lower take up and completions of apprenticeships when compared to the West Midlands and England. Birmingham has eight apprenticeship starts per 1,000 working age population and around 71% completion. This compares to around nine apprenticeship starts per 1,000 working age population and 74% completion for the West Midlands¹³ and around 8.5 apprenticeship starts per 1,000 working age population and around 74% completion in England.¹⁴
- 6.28 The initial WNF funding allocation for the project was increased. This included additional WNF funding that was available due to underspend elsewhere in the programme - Be Birmingham identified the project as a high priority for receiving this additional funding¹⁵.
- 6.29 The project is well on track towards achieving the majority of project outputs. In fact, it has already over-achieved on three out of seven of its outputs with the highest over-achievement being number of clients contacted through referrals, which by December 2010 had achieved 118%. The outputs which are behind target are clients retained in continuous employment for 13 weeks which has achieved 65 out of 108 (60%) and clients retained in continuous employment for 26 weeks which has achieved eight out of 50. It is understood that there has been further progress towards achieving these outputs since December 2010.

¹² Evaluation of Workwise Birmingham, MVA Consultancy, November 2010

¹³ Birmingham Apprenticeships Dashboard (West Midlands Regional Observatory, 23rd December 2010)

¹⁴ England Apprenticeships Dashboard (West Midlands Regional Observatory, 23rd December 2010)

¹⁵ Birmingham City Council Report to Cabinet February 2010

- 6.30 The main beneficiaries of the project have been young people from priority areas in Birmingham and employers in the Birmingham area. An overwhelming majority of apprentices have been recruited from within priority SOAs with around 8% from outside of these areas. The project has provided apprentices with a range of benefits including improved confidence, accredited qualifications, career development opportunities, a secure job for up to two years and an income. It has developed links with 93 employers, including local SMEs and also larger employers including the Hippodrome and the NEC.
- 6.31 A key element of the project which is seen as good practice is the mentoring programme. Whilst a relatively small amount of the project funding was attributed to the programme, it is reported to have been an essential element in terms of improving retention rates of apprentices in the workplace. Mentors from within the business sign a contract agreeing to provide around 40 hours in-kind mentoring support to their apprentices. This mentoring support also strengthens the sustainability of the project as it will be retained internally and helps to build ongoing capacity within the employer. The wage subsidy is also seen as a key incentive for employers to engage with the project. It also provides the “earn as you learn” incentive for the apprentice. The fact that employers sign a contract to employ an apprentice for two years is also an example of good practice.
- 6.32 It is understood that project staff were well engaged with other WNF projects and specifically aimed to engage with projects such as Prolific and Priority Offenders to provide apprentice opportunities for their clients. This was further enabled due to project staff being based within the WNF team and having good working relationships with other internal sponsoring officers.
- 6.33 The **Customised Access Training & Employment (CATE)** project was designed to link the City’s regeneration (physical and socio-economic) portfolio to employment by providing dedicated, financial resources to support the work of the recently established Employment Access Team (EAT) to complement and strengthen existing employer engagement interventions and develop customised training linked to specific vacancies.
- 6.34 CATE is very much a jobs focused intervention, and has need to protect its credibility with employers by ensuring that clients it puts forward are ready to take up the job related bespoke training opportunities that are created. CATE targets large developers (often via Section 106 agreements and capital works being done for BCC) and large employers (such as Cadburys), making best use of BCC planning and procurement activities to source opportunities for job ready individuals.
- 6.35 CATE has maintained very strong relationships with employers, which is vitally important to maintain their continued commitment. The approach taken to the CATE project has been further developed by BCC (through the JASDUPP project) and they now have an agreed policy for using contracting, planning and development powers (through Section 106 agreements and Standard Charge) to support employment activity. Successes to date include work on the New Library of Birmingham and the redevelopment of New Street Station.
- 6.36 CATE has on occasion suffered with the levels of ‘job readiness’ of clients provided by other Outcome 4 Projects, and has had to provide inputs to clients that should have been provided by other projects to protect its standing with key employers. Whilst it is not the case that all clients from Outcome 4 projects fall into this category, there is a very wide variance in quality.

- 6.37 **Targeted Discretionary Housing Payments** supports people from priority SOAs in the transition from welfare to work. Having managed to overcome those hurdles associated with getting a job in the first place, people may be faced with a series of issues, some social and some more practical which have to be addressed in order to support the sustainability of the employment. Among the most practical difficulties can be those relating to financial matters.
- 6.38 The Government has recognised this difficulty in a number of benefit changes in recent years but many claimants do not meet the strict eligibility criteria and those that do receive additional support only receive this for a four week period. The project aims to mitigate these problems by providing additional support by extending this critical period, for up to 12 weeks, in order to assist people to maximise their chance of sustaining their employment. This is an innovative approach which pre-dates the White Paper, Universal Credit, published by the Coalition Government in November 2010 and is also understood to have been used to inform the development of the White Paper.
- 6.39 On average since the start of the project each customer has been paid over £280. The project has met and benefited the proposed number of customers but at a lower cost, and as such has released funds back into the wider WNF Programme.
- 6.40 The statistics for the customers remaining in employment is revisited at the end of each month. The information available at January 2011 indicates that this outcome is good with currently over 91% of customers remaining in employment at the first milestone outcome of 13 weeks. At the end of January 2011 the figures show that over 77% of customers paid under the scheme are still in work at 27 weeks. This has again remained fairly consistent throughout the project.
- 6.41 The project has been successful at getting different organisations and departments within Birmingham City Council to work together such as the Benefits team, Regeneration, Housing and Neighbourhood Offices and has helped to show what impact relatively low-cost support can have on job retention.
- 6.42 The project team consulted believe it has been a well devised and conceived project and has been successful in achieving job retention targets. Iain Duncan Smith MP visited Birmingham City Council in February 2011 and came to talk about the TDHP project within the context of Welfare Reform. In addition, two Local Authorities have contacted the team to find out how the project works. Nominations for the project have also been submitted for the Municipal Journal and Local Government Chronicle Awards.
- 6.43 An original aspiration of the project was to develop closer, mutually supportive referral arrangements with other agencies and employment support providers. Whilst a great deal of work has been put into this area of work and the project team continue to maintain a dialogue with a wide range of employment support providers, this area of the project has been least successful. While the team receives some direct referrals from organisations and individual workers, the overall number of referrals from key organisations in this area such as JCP has remained low and most eligible clients were identified by the Benefits Team trawling its own database. The project team have reported that whilst meetings with JCP have taken place, it was felt that the information was not filtered down appropriately to those working directly with clients. The project managers feel that had there been a longer lead time to the project it would have been possible to get more referral agencies on board and that if they were setting up the project again they would have held a 'speed dating' event to tell other agencies about the project.

- 6.44 **Jobs and Skills Development Using Public Procurement (JASDUPP)** was developed to support the adoption and implementation of a BCC policy framework, harnessing the council's procurement resources to achieve outcomes on jobs and skills – a key priority within the City Council's Employment and Skills Action Plan.
- 6.45 The project provided additional staff resources and consultancy support, to develop and embed the policy, building on best practice nationally, and on the recently developed West Midlands Procurement Framework for Jobs and Skills.
- 6.46 From the onset securing the "buy-in" of key service areas was crucial, with Legal Services and Corporate Procurement active members of the project's steering group, which was chaired by the Assistant Director for Employment. This corporate approach has been key to the successful adoption and implementation of the policy.
- 6.47 The Procurement Policy Framework for Jobs and Skills was adopted by BCC's Cabinet, July 2010. A structured approach was adopted to ensure this policy and approach was embedded within the city council¹⁶. This has included:
- Training and awareness sessions with Corporate Procurement Heads of Categories and their teams to build in-house capacity to support future implementation of the policy.
 - Shared learning event, at the end of the project, with presentations from Officers who had applied the policy across a range of contracts, to build confidence and share learning across BCC Officers.
 - Toolkit – "how to do it" guide for each stage of the procurement process, key issues to consider and model documents for adapting to specific contracts.
 - Monitoring systems to enable the Employment Access Team measure the impact of the policy, and verify jobs and skills targets.
- 6.48 Alongside securing voluntary agreements with existing contracts, the project also supported implementation with a number of new contracts including:
- Construction West Midlands, where Targeted Recruitment and Training (TRT) considerations have been included at each stage of the procurement process, and targets agreed at 60 person weeks per £1 million spend.
 - Birmingham Energy Savers where TRT element for evaluating award of the contract was agreed at 20%, which may set a new benchmark nationally.
 - Adult Care Contracts, with TRT built into the Quality Assurance Framework.
- 6.49 A robust monitoring system was developed to capture the evidence base via contract managers e.g. jobs created and skills developed. The consultation revealed that the agreed output targets were quite low given the scope to meet substantial larger numbers e.g. Construction West Midlands has a total £1.5 - £3billion contract value. This equates to the creation of 60 person weeks for every £1million spent and has the potential to deliver 2,000 jobs. However, outputs were purposefully low as it is anticipated that delivery on this project will be in the future and outputs will not be achieved during the lifetime of WNF. Although, it is understood that the policy has impacted up to £5.2bn worth of contracts to date, with indicative 4,100 jobs captured for priority residents which will be realised over the next 5 years.

¹⁶ Report to BCC Cabinet "Procurement Policy Framework for Jobs and Skills – harnessing Birmingham City Council's buying power to achieve outcomes on jobs and skills" 12th July 2010

- 6.50 As of December 2010 the project had already significantly exceeded all three of its outputs.
- 6.51 Birmingham is now at the forefront in pioneering a strategic approach to the adoption of contract clauses across its procurement resources, and in developing this approach in relation to social care contracts. Many local authorities in the West Midlands and further afield are looking to Birmingham as an exemplar, as a result of the impact of the JASDUPP project.
- 6.52 **Engaging with Workless Displaced Communities** was originally planned to commence in September 2009 but did not start until March 2010. The delays are reported to be due to the time taken to develop a robust project and also a freeze on BCC external recruitment.
- 6.53 It aims to progress unemployed members of displaced communities towards appropriate training and employment. This was delivered through the deployment of "Information Advice and Guidance" (IAG) workers who speak appropriate languages and have a comprehensive understanding of the issues facing newly arrived displaced communities and whom understand their cultural backgrounds and their experience of forced migration.
- 6.54 Overall the project has underperformed on most of its project outputs. In particular, it has failed to achieve any progress towards Clients retaining a job for 13 weeks or Clients retaining a job for 26 weeks. The only output targets which have been achieved are Number of organisations supported and Number of sustainable partnerships supported. The funding appraisal documentation did raise concerns about the project, particularly the budget, and in terms of ambitious target outputs and the associated "over optimistic" risks attributable to them. Concerns were also raised in respect of clarity of roles and staffing structures.
- 6.55 From consultation, it is considered that the project has not been running sufficiently long enough and has been rushed given the unrealistic timeframe within which the programme has had to operate. Consequently, the lessons learnt are based around the delivery process and set-up, and it is believed that the project could have been delivered more successfully if the original timeframe had been adhered to. In terms of good practice, the project provides an understanding of the potential challenges for BCC in the future design and delivery of third sector relationships and the BIG Society agenda.
- 6.56 The **Debt and Financial Inclusion** project provides access to financial inclusion support for two core groups of people in priority areas of Birmingham – workless (pre employment) and newly employed (post employment). The project started in January 2010 after several months delay in approval and staff had to "hit the ground running".
- 6.57 Debt and Financial Inclusion aims to improve the sustainability of employment. Workless people are far more likely to be financially excluded than people in work, and many of them need assistance in accessing appropriate financial services such as bank accounts into which wages can be paid. This project works alongside employment and post-employment support, to guide workless and newly-employed people in priority SOAs towards the knowledge and skills they need to manage their own finances and sustain their employment. It incorporates the following elements: Money management advice and support, In-work benefits advice and Assistance with accessing appropriate financial services.

- 6.58 The Financial Inclusion Partnership Co-ordinator, based within Birmingham City Council's Regulatory Services Division of the Chief Executive's Directorate, has overall responsibility for the management and co-ordination of this project. In terms of delivery, this was externally commissioned via a competitive tendering process. Birmingham Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) was appointed to deliver the project. There is a team of six case workers and a supervisor. The team is based at Tyseley but workers can also access other CAB offices. The CAB had also managed a pilot project funded by the WNF Innovations Fund.
- 6.59 Overall the project is on track for achieving two of its three outputs. The Number of clients starting pre-employment interventions has already been achieved. The Number of clients receiving post employment support has achieved 76% so there is potential for this target to be fully achieved by the end of the project. However, the Number of pre-employment interventions has only achieved 69%. The total debt managed through the project is £2,461,181 and the benefits gained totals £168,326. However, CAB does not expect to know all of the outcomes for another three to four months and therefore anticipates further increases.
- 6.60 In addition to the hard outputs, the project has also achieved wider softer impacts. One of the most significant impacts has been the fact that clients have been taught about Financial Capability. Clients have learnt how to budgeting and how to make their money go further which is something that can be embedded in the individual's life skills – therefore leaving a legacy.
- 6.61 Whilst the project has not directly delivered job outcomes it has provided added value to standard employment support and helps to understand other issues that may be acting as barriers for clients either getting into work or indeed staying in work. The Financial Capability element of the project is recognised by project staff to be an example of good practice. It provides essential learning on budgeting alongside debt and benefit advice for clients. It has also developed Financial Capability expertise within Birmingham CAB which it is understood has never been available before.

Impacts and client/beneficiary experiences from NESP/CESP contracts

- 6.62 In the Hall Green Constituency, the **Skills and Jobs Match** contract delivered by Ashiana, a consortium comprising third sector working within the Hall Green Constituency area of Birmingham, provided a range of services to assist people into employment.
- 6.63 Whilst not all clients have gone into employment, there are a range of other impacts that have been achieved by the project. Clients have been given the confidence they need to consider work or to undertake education or training, which they would not have done without support. They have been given practical support by way of developing CVs and interview experience. They have been supported with job searches and some clients have also been supported into voluntary work which in the long term may translate into paid employment.
- 6.64 In addition to the impacts on the clients, WNF has also been able to strengthen each of the organisations involved in delivery of the contract in Hall Green. It has provided a good grounding for future delivery models, in particular the Single Work Programme. It has also embedded the organisations further within the community, and they are recognised by the local community as being able to support them into work.

- 6.65 Consortium providers are working together to look at opportunities for working collectively again in the future. They believe that they have learnt how to deliver contracts more effectively and have also learnt how to adhere to payment on performance which is the future model being outlined by the coalition government.
- 6.66 The **Intermediate Labour Market** Contract in Hodge Hill is also managed and delivered by a consortium of private and third sector providers (Prospects Services, Jericho Foundation and Birmingham Enterprise).
- 6.67 Through WNF funding, Jericho has been able to develop good links with local employers who have been able to employ local people. Many clients are not willing to travel outside of their local area and so having these local employers on board with the project has been essential. The project has engaged with around 13 local employers, including a local medical practice, training centres, local shops and Jericho's own social enterprise. Importantly, some employers who have had work placements have then gone on to employ them. By doing this it has given employers a different perspective on employing local people experiencing worklessness and will hopefully open up opportunities for other workless people in the future.
- 6.68 However, it is felt that the contribution towards reducing worklessness in Birmingham has been light touch. Providers believe that the contract has been difficult to deliver over the reduced timescale of less than two years and believe that given more time the project would have been able to achieve a lot more. For example, some of those clients that are only now finishing their placements could go on into work, but these outputs will not be captured. It is also difficult to shift a generation of worklessness within a relatively short period of time.
- 6.69 Consultation with key project delivery staff suggests that the most successful element of the contract has been the ILM element. It is reported that clients were more willing to engage with this element as opposed to the other two elements. Clients have been given the confidence to participate in a training course or to enter the work place. For some it has given them the confidence to travel outside of their local area and perhaps open up more opportunities for them. The project can also provide the structure for a client to encourage them to get into a routine of training or work.
- 6.70 Whilst progress is being made to achieve all outputs by the end of March 2011, it is unlikely that the project will achieve the target for number of clients into startup, self employment or social enterprise (11). The main reason for this is that it has been challenging for the providers to support the client into self employment. Another reason is also suggested to be the requirement of evidence of registering with HMRC within the first three months of the end of the first month of self-employment. This means that some evidence of achieving this output may occur after the project has ended.
- 6.71 **Supporting Clients with Disabilities** is delivered by Birmingham Disability Consortium (BDC, Lead agency Action for Blind People) in the Ladywood constituency (three identical contracts cross Ladywood & Soho, Nechells and Aston). The contracts relate to engagement with clients with disabilities, and health related barriers, provides vocational training linked to specific vacancies, and works closely with GPs and health related organisations to provide additional support.
- 6.72 The approach to locality working was fairly standard across NESPS/CESPS that BDC is involved in, with the key difference tending to relate to which outputs are

commissioned (for example in Erdington there is a focus on job outputs, whereas Ladywood took a wider focus that included volunteering and training outcomes). A wider approach tends to be more successful, as many of the clients BDC helps need a lot of support, which means that volunteering and training outputs are often more appropriate.

- 6.73 BDC find that many of their clients have 'gained a disability' over time, and that barriers to employment are less obvious, and more of a challenge, than the original disability itself. The main barrier that many have to overcome is confidence; so much of the activity delivered under this contract is aimed at raising confidence levels.
- 6.74 In terms of performance, BDC have found employment targets difficult to meet. These targets are mixed across contracts, and in retrospect were pretty unrealistic given the needs of clients in terms of progression to employability. BDC suspect that many clients with disabilities that are easier to get into employment are likely to have been supported by more mainstream styled provision, and not referred to the specialist support provided through disability specific NESP/CESP contracts.
- 6.75 The support many BDC clients require includes mental health, housing and benefits advice, IT and a range of added value services, with stable housing often being a critical barrier to address. At the commissioning stage this contract was supposed to work closely with the Ladywood Employment Connections contract in the referral of job ready clients. However, many of the clients supported by BDC needed a great deal of support to be job ready.
- 6.76 BDC found that concentrations of disability did not follow the SOA distribution of high levels of worklessness, and therefore engagement at this level was very difficult. Discussions were held with BDC about the SOAs and agreement was made to relax the priority SOA criteria for all disability contracts except for Ladywood. Given that the majority of this constituency covered by priority SOAs this was unlikely to significantly change performance levels.
- 6.77 Whilst delivery windows were much shorter than had been anticipated, BDC has concentrated on high quality delivery. All the clients that are currently engaged with BDC will continue to receive help and support beyond the lifetime of the programme.
- 6.78 The **South Works Neighbourhood Programme (SWNP)** contract was designed to provide a targeted, holistic, coherent Integrated Employment and Skills (IES) service to worklessness residents in Edgbaston, Northfield and Selly Oak Constituencies' 38 priority SOAs. Pertemps People Development Group (PPDG), a private provider, was awarded the contract to provide an end to end service to both individuals and employers in order to achieve sustained employment for workless residents.
- 6.79 Through SWNP, PPDG managed a flexible responsive suite of support including specialist provision for People with Disabilities and Lone Parent claimants, those aged over 50 and young people in receipt of a Working Age Benefit as required. PPDG worked with Freshwinds and Groundworks as sub contractors in the delivery of SWNP. There was a clear focus on employment outputs, and activities included specialist, expert targeted integrated, culturally sensitive and where required bespoke client engagement and customised support and interventions e.g. skills assessment, training, access to employment and post employment support to achieve sustainable employment for workless clients.

- 6.80 In delivering SWNP, PPDG found that the voluntary status of WNF support was a significant barrier to delivery, as they had very little leverage (i.e. control over benefit payments) with clients who were not willing to help themselves. Examples included interviews that clients either did not attend, or in some cases attended and 'threw' them.
- 6.81 Job Centre Plus did not allow outreach to occur at their premises, but did send a mailshot to 3000 clients in the South Works areas about the WNF provision, yielding a very disappointing 30 responses. This reinforced PPDG perceptions that bespoke approaches to outreach would be necessary to meet targets in the timescale available, and a range of community based approaches were developed as a result.
- 6.82 Conversion rates (from engagement to employment) have been disappointing, although across all NESP/CESP contracts, PPDG were confident that had the full three years been available for delivery, such rates would be much better. As such, approaches in SWNP and elsewhere have seen continuous change to engagement strategies, and constantly changing tactics, often with marginal results. Despite the challenges faced in terms of delivery timescales, SWNP is regarded by PPDG as a strongly performing contract that has been supported in the main by word of mouth engagement.
- 6.83 As a result of its scale, SWNP was able to work well with a range of community and third sector organisations once much of the frustration around commissioning had abated. This was also partly a factor of provision not being as densely concentrated in the South Works constituencies (where there are pockets rather than clusters of priority SOAs). This collaboration, often in providing outreach and engagement opportunities, was a critical factor in locality delivery, and through this process many of these groups realised how difficult they would have found delivery of WNF had they been successful at the commissioning stages.
- 6.84 The **Supporting Clients Not Engaged in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)** contract in Perry Barr is also delivered by the private provider PPDG. The contract had a focus on supporting 18 to 24 year olds into work through ILM and soft skills support. PPDG found that the three month eligibility rule was a barrier (clients had to be unemployed for three months to received support), and that they were not allowed into local Job Centre + premises to look for suitable referrals.
- 6.85 Support in Perry Barr had a focus on retail employment, highlighting the transition that this constituency has undergone from an industrial heritage. Clients are often not prepared to travel outside their locality, and there are a lot of family run small businesses. Like SWNP, PPDG found that mandatory provision often took precedence to WNF, and that they had to demonstrate the 'added value' of WNF to claim job outcomes.
- 6.86 The aim was to engage with disaffected/disengaged young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), who lack the skills to participate in further training/employment. PPDG and its subcontractors deliver combined individual skills support, employability skills, motivational training and learning activities to re-engage individuals and increase awareness of learning/work possibilities available and the range of support offered.
- 6.87 Outreach and engagement activity used existing networks of local referral agencies (e.g. Connexions, Pupil Referral Units, Youth Offending Teams) supported by a dedicated Outreach Team to ensure retention and positive outcomes. Engagement activities included awareness and publicity sessions in

community venues such as SureStart centres, supermarkets, distributing marketing/leaflets, attending local events/open days, engaging with the Extended Schools Network and Youth Organisations.

- 6.88 Delivery staff were based 'on the ground' undertaking detached youth work. Working at times and places where and when young people congregate as identified by other agencies, e.g. local police, social housing and the City Council. The staff were culturally appropriate role models for the area in which they are embedded, with cultural awareness being essential in targeting the differing ethnic mix.
- 6.89 The particular local partners involved in the delivery of this NEET provision in Perry Barr were: Family Housing, Groundwork, Worth Unlimited, Bangladeshi Youth Forum, Inspire Futures Ltd and Secure Health and Care.
- 6.90 Similar to SWNP, PPDG found that the voluntary status of WNF support was a significant barrier to delivery of NEET support in Perry Barr, reporting that many clients had very little urgency to find employment, and often little need to work, as there were no benefit sanctions applied. Tactics included arranged job interviews being cancelled as a result of sickness, or underperformance.
- 6.91 Given the concentration of priority SOAs in Perry Barr, the contract has been subject to a high level of constituency political scrutiny in comparison to SWNP. This was highlighted by both delivery staff and stakeholders engaged in Perry Barr.
- 6.92 The **Lone Parent Support** contract in Erdington aims to engage lone parents from Erdington, Stockland Green, Tyburn and Kingstanding wards in Birmingham and support them to access employment. The project is managed and delivered by the social enterprise Employment Needs Training Agency (Enta), working in partnership with Merlin Venture. The project also involves a consortium of 22 partner organisations with a track record of experience and success in working with groups who are a long way from employment, training and education. Of these 10-12 of them were considered to be very active within the project.
- 6.93 The project offers a holistic approach to addressing barriers to work for lone parents. The project partners have developed a range of activities to secure the initial engagement of the target group. All partners have local bases within the target constituency and therefore offer local access points for recruitment and delivery.
- 6.94 Once engaged with the project, an initial client assessment is undertaken using a range of assessment tools which included checking benefits and postcode eligibility. The assessment leads to the completion of an agreed action plan for the client which can be tracked by the beneficiary and the responsible officer. The action plans agreed with beneficiaries include short, medium and long term realistic actions. The clients receive ongoing support and mentoring from the project team and work towards achieving their action plan.
- 6.95 The project team continues to support clients once a job or placement has been secured. Contact takes place at 1, 13 and 26 weeks but may be more frequent if required. At this point, the team may also involve the employer so that he/she is aware that this support is available should there be issues to be overcome.
- 6.96 As an addition to the project, Erdington Constituency has paid for a Benefit Advisor as this was identified as a need by Enta. This has helped to address people's fears about coming off benefits. The Advisor goes into all centres,

partners and jobs clubs to advise on getting benefit roll on and housing benefit. He also advises on debt as this can be a major barrier for clients getting into work. Due to cuts in funding this service will not continue after April.

- 6.97 The project has already achieved its target for 1B Number of clients engaged. The project is at risk of underperforming on outputs 1F Number of clients obtaining a job and 1G Number of clients retaining in job for at least 13 weeks. However, you would expect that these outputs are more likely to be achieved towards the end of the project, particularly output 1G. Working with lone parents takes a long time to see results and so further impacts from this project are likely to emerge in the future.
- 6.98 In addition to the hard outputs, the project has also achieved a number of softer impacts. The project has had a particular impact on people who are long-term unemployed and enabled them to compete for jobs against people who are more equal. Outside of the project training has been an issue for many clients and the types of jobs that are available are not always child friendly – the project has helped to overcome these barriers. The project will consider on a case by case basis to fund some childcare and travel costs to volunteering and training sessions.
- 6.99 For many of the beneficiaries being able to sit with someone and talk through their concerns is a key impact of the project. These people are very vulnerable and the project has enabled them to break down barriers at an easy pace with staff that are friendly and approachable. Due to not being recognised as a statutory agency clients are able to bring their children in and this helps with issues surrounding childcare. Many clients also have wider health issues which need to be considered and which also act as a barrier to employment as they fear benefits will be lost – the project takes all this into consideration and helps them overcome these issues.
- 6.100 Staff on the project have been trained to Level 3 and above in Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) which further helps them to deal with the issues highlighted above. This enables them to build on the advisor–customer relationship and deal with any problems that arise. Partnership working has worked really well. It has helped to enhance the organisation’s reputation, capacity building and their profile. Relationships with the other organisations need to be well built and everyone needs to meet on a regular basis.
- 6.101 The **Targeted Engagement Campaign** contract in Yardley involves the following elements: Targeted outreach and support for participants who have experienced difficulties in accessing main stream employment and skills support by linking with local health service providers, voluntary groups, other community partners and specialist organisations.
- 6.102 The contract is managed and delivered by the BEST Network. The BEST Network predates WNF and was established in summer 2008 with a grant from the Learning and Skills Council with a remit to support third sector organisations to develop their capacity and bid collaboratively for public sector training and employment contracts. Since its inception the BEST Network has successfully recruited a membership of approximately 40 third sector organisations.
- 6.103 The providers involved in the delivery of this contract are: Bangladesh Women’s Association ERC, BDRC, Crossmatch Solutions, Crossover 616, Enter Key Training, The Jericho Foundation, Remploy, Tysley and Greet ERC.

- 6.104 All partners have employed full time equivalent or part-time Employment Engagement Officers to deliver project activity. A Project Manager employed by the BEST Network has overall responsibility for day to day management and coordination of the Employment Outreach Officers. These Officers, the Project Manager and the finance and administrative support are all co-located in offices in the constituency.
- 6.105 The project team uses a variety of form based tick boxes, qualitative questionnaires and innovative client led on-line assessment tools such as Jericho's www.barrierbreaks.org.uk to identify and assess barriers. These assessment tools inform a detailed Jobs and Skills Action Plan containing a combination of short, medium and long-term SMART objectives to enable clients to overcome individual barriers. The project team then provides, or arranges through referral to partner agencies, a range of personal support tailored to the needs of individuals to assist them in overcoming barriers preventing them from entering and sustaining employment.
- 6.106 The project team continues to support the individual through the first six months of employment including offering a minimum of three employment support meetings / interventions at 1, 13 and 26 weeks.
- 6.107 Overall the project is on track for achieving half of its outputs but is underperforming on outputs 1F Number of clients obtaining a job and the additional outputs of 1G Number of clients retaining in job for at least 13 weeks and 1J Number of clients into voluntary work. These outputs are more likely to be achieved towards the end of the project, particularly output 1G. The late start to the project is felt to have impacted on the delivery of targets, as did the re-profiling of payments processes to the partners.
- 6.108 The principal conclusion from the consultation was that the project had had a positive impact. It had achieved its aim of providing employment solutions, and had complemented these with benefits in terms of increasing client confidence, and providing relevant vocational training. One of the leading employment support initiatives that had had particular impact was the interview competitions, but overall it was the personal touch that had been successful in keeping clients engaged and motivated.
- 6.109 Overall the partners believed that there needed to be a legacy for the people of the area. A suggestion that arose from several organisations was a "Volunteer Hub", to lease a vacant retail unit at a peppercorn rent and provide service delivery through trained volunteers. All partners believed that whatever the legacy was this needed to be communicated clearly to the people of the area.
- 6.110 The partners felt that the joint work of all organisations was a blueprint for extending the BEST approach into wider areas of work.

Summary of key findings

- 6.111 Most providers (both thematic and contracts) were frustrated with the **time taken to appraise and approve WNF projects**. In particular, the fact that these delays then meant that **potential impacts that could have been achieved were reduced**. Many providers then also felt pressure to get up and running and "hurried" to ensure spend and outputs were delivered.
- 6.112 For a number of the thematic projects, stakeholders have however reported that **delays in approval of projects were not due to the appraisal process but were due to the poor quality of project proposals being submitted**. It is

felt by stakeholders that BCC departments and external agencies were underscoping the upfront effort needed to develop good projects. This is also demonstrates the heightened rigour that WNF demanded in comparison to other regeneration programmes such (for example Neighbourhood Renewal Fund).

- 6.113 **Most providers were also frustrated with the apparent “shifting sands” and “changing of goalposts” of monitoring and evidence requirements** that were imposed by the WNF team (although, as noted in earlier sections, output guidance was made available). For example moving from quarterly to monthly reporting and also the retrospective evidence gathering from clients (with particular reference to the request for photo ID). For the third sector providers of NESP/CESP contracts, particularly for lead partners of a consortium, it was often challenging having to inform partners of these changing goalposts which did on some occasions create conflict and suspicion between partners.
- 6.114 The majority of providers described the monitoring as “admin intensive” therefore distracting from actual delivery. This is both “admin intensive” for clients and also for project staff. **Many providers also believe that having to request the level of evidence that WNF specified from clients is a huge barrier to engaging the target clients** (which is therefore defeating the overall aim of WNF). Many third sector providers also noted their concern over the storage of all of this client data that has been collected at the request of WNF. As third sector organisations they do not want to have the liability of retaining this information and believe this should be the responsibility of Be Birmingham or Birmingham City Council.
- 6.115 It was also suggested by a number of providers that better use of existing client monitoring systems could have been used as evidence of job outputs for clients. For example the use of Job Centre Plus’ database which provides evidence of when a client is no longer on benefit. However it is understood that there are issues with sharing client data between government departments in this way.
- 6.116 **There are mixed opinions from providers on the effectiveness of the CTS.** Whilst some providers recognise that CTS is a much improved system compared to other databases they have used, others believe that the system was not appropriate. A number of providers criticised the robustness of the CTS in particular the fact that it allowed for duplication, it did not track errors and also it did not produce monitoring reports that project stakeholders felt were appropriate for their needs. Some projects felt that the requirements of CTS also duplicated the System K monitoring systems used by the WNF team.
- 6.117 Many providers felt that there was a lot of pressure on them to spend as **WNF was a “politically charged” programme and experienced heavy scrutiny.** This often caused a distraction and did not allow for projects to focus on delivery. For the NESPs/CESPs contract providers, consultees recognised from the outset that WNF was going to be challenging but in reality it was more demanding than anticipated. Whilst providers expressed frustration on the “bureaucracy” of WNF many also praised the support of the WNF team.
- 6.118 At a thematic level, there are also **examples of new models of working that have been developed due to WNF.** For example CE010 Prolific and Priority Offenders whereby WNF has truly enabled a new model of working with PPOs through the co-location of dedicated PPO employment workers in each of the four LPUs in the city. WNF also brought together BEDP and Safer Birmingham Partnerships for the first time, therefore being able to provide a joint approach to reducing both worklessness and re-offending rates in Birmingham.

- 6.119 **The NESP/CESP contracts brought a number of new provider partnerships together to deliver a combined service for clients.** These partnerships include providers of different sizes, different sectors, with varying geographical and target group focus. For example, contract 6 for Hodge Hill brought together Prospects, Jericho Foundation and Birmingham Enterprise. This partnership brought together a national private provider, city-wide provider and a third sector local provider each offering complementary skills and expertise for supporting people into work. Contract 5 for Hall Green also brought together a consortium of third sector providers which had never previously worked together.
- 6.120 **Many third sector providers have suggested that their involvement in delivering NESP/CESP contracts has given them invaluable experience for the future.** Many providers will continue to look at opportunities for working together in the future. They believe that they have learnt how to deliver contracts more effectively and have also learnt how to adhere to payment on performance which is vital experience for delivering future policy.
- 6.121 **NESP/CESP providers also reported that having the provision available at a very local level has been essential for engaging clients.** Many report that clients do not want to travel outside of their neighbourhood and so it is important to have a visible presence in the community, and to use partners with which the clients were familiar. Most NESP/CESP providers reported that the most effective method of engaging clients was through door knocking and outreach at local community venues. Some consultees also developed good working relationships with their local Job Centre Plus whereby they were able to agree arrangements to be based at their local Job Centre Plus on regular occasions.
- 6.122 However, many providers also commented that they were disappointed with the level of referrals that were provided by Job Centre Plus. Some thought that given the complexity of provision, Job Centre Plus staff were not always fully up to speed as to precisely what provision was available in specific localities, and the geographic targeting of WNF in particular might have been a barrier to referral. Other providers simply argued that the focus of Job Centre Plus was on mandatory provision, and that little consideration was given to voluntary support (including WNF).
- 6.123 It should be noted that for Jobcentre Plus, WNF was one of many possible avenues of support for the workless in Birmingham and precedence was given to provision which gave direct access to jobs or work experience leading to jobs. WNF was successfully utilised in Jobcentres where Advisers and Providers had existing, or forged, strong local relationships with providers often on site and able to directly recruit. However many of the NESP and CESP WNF contracts targeted specific groups such as IB/ ES customers who are not dealt with in jobcentres but supported by other DWP contracting arrangements, and WNF providers were not always aware of such processes. Nevertheless, **a number of joint Jobcentre Plus and WNF Provider Events were staged and this increased mutual understanding and forged individual relationships between frontline Jobcentre Plus Advisers and the WNF providers.**
- 6.124 More generally, **limited levels of cross referrals between interventions** led to suspicions that some providers had a tendency to hoard clients rather than pass them on to other providers (who might well have been better placed to get them into employment) and limited levels of cross referrals between providers.
- 6.125 **WNF has also enabled some projects to develop new relationships with employers and therefore creating greater opportunities for clients to access work.** For NESP/CESP contracts, a number of providers employed

Employment Engagement workers whose remit was to target local employers. One contract provider used intermediaries where possible to gain access to employers including the Town Centre Managers. This worked well because the Town Centre Managers had already developed the trust with employers. Other providers were able to employ clients directly for example Jericho Foundation through its social enterprise arm was able to do this. A number of thematic providers did however suggest that a more strategic and coordinated approach to employer engagement could have been taken by the WNF team. For example, it was suggested that some WNF projects working directly with employers (such as EAT) could have ring fenced some outputs for particular target groups such as PPOs.

6.126 In terms of the impacts, providers strongly believe that had there been less of a delay at the beginning of the programme that WNF funding would have had a greater impact on worklessness. They also believe that the impacts on reducing worklessness have been further compounded by the recession with less jobs available and therefore greater competition. Despite their frustrations, **providers also believe that there have been very positive impacts for clients.** Whilst not all clients have gone into jobs or indeed come of benefits, WNF has supported them to take steps towards it including:

- Significantly increasing confidence and self esteem.
- Accessing training.
- Undertaking qualifications.
- Improving skills.
- Accessing work experience.
- Volunteering.

6.127 **Many providers do however agree that Birmingham would now be in a worse position had it not had WNF.**

7. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF LAA OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

Section 6 sets out analysis of the high level outcome position of the programme in terms of Outcome 4 of the Local Area Agreement.

LAA Target Analysis

- 7.1 This sub-section presents the analysis of the high level outcome position of the BEDP programme in terms of Outcome 4 of the Local Area Agreement – i.e. **reducing the gap between the worst performing neighbourhoods and the rest of the city.**
- 7.2 For LAA Outcome 4 there are two outcome indicators:
- NI 116: Proportion of children in poverty.
 - NI 153: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods.
- 7.3 The key findings relating to progress made against the baseline position for each of these two indicators is presented below. More detailed information about the approach taken, the data sources used, any issues with the data available, and the comparative analysis carried out are provided in Annex 4.
- 7.4 For each of the indicators, the core information presented below includes: the original baseline position, the original targets for the outcome, the revised targets – where targets were renegotiated with GOWM in 2010 as part of a national process following recognition by DCLG of the impact of the recession on targets, the data sources used, findings from the data analysis in terms of progress against the final target, and additional comparator data analysis – which focuses on comparing Birmingham (and where relevant the regional average) with the most appropriate core cities comparators, namely Liverpool and Manchester.

NI 116: Proportion of children in poverty

- 7.5 For NI 116 - Proportion of children in poverty, the original baseline showed that the proportion of children in poverty was 31.5% (2007). At the outset of the WNF Programme, there were annual targets set against this baseline as follows:
- 2008-09 – reduce to 31%.
 - 2009-10 – reduce to 30%.
 - 2010-11 – reduce to 28.5%.
- 7.6 The targets were revised following discussions and negotiations with GOWM in 2010, and the agreed revised target for NI 116 for 2010-11 is to maintain the gap with the West Midlands average at the 2008 level – i.e. a target of a gap of 10.2 percentage points.
- 7.7 It should be noted that this data is only available for NI 116 up until 31st August 2008, and therefore this data is not presented below as it does not relate to the time period during which the Programme was being delivered. For information, the data is included in Annex 4 and presents data as at 31st August 2006, 2007 and 2008.

NI 153: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods

- 7.8 For NI 153 - Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods, the original baseline showed that the proportion of working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods was 30.8% (May 2007).
- 7.9 At the outset of the WNF Programme, there were annual targets set against this baseline as follows:
- 2008-09 – baseline minus 0.5 percentage points (i.e. 30.3%).
 - 2009-10 – baseline minus 1.5 percentage points (i.e. 29.3%).
 - 2010-11 – baseline minus 3 percentage points (i.e. 27.8%).
- 7.10 However, the targets were revised following discussions and negotiations with GOWM in 2010, and the agreed revised target for NI 153 for 2010-11 was to achieve a gap with the West Midlands region average of +0.1 percentage point.
- 7.11 In terms of the data sources used, careful consideration was given to the particular data sources used, as there have been (for a range of reasons) issues with availability of data – e.g. some of the original data sources are no longer being updated (due to changes at the national level, such as the cessation of the National Indicator Set and the (related) decision not to update key source of NI data. In addition, some data sources have already started using the new/forthcoming change to working age population (which has previously been calculated for females between the ages of 16 and 59, but will be calculated for females between the ages of 16 and 64 (making it the same as the male age range).
- 7.12 The exact approach for the analysis has adopted a twin track approach to ensure that a sufficiently robust and detailed level of analysis can be achieved – in terms of assessing the progress against the agreed target above, and also in terms of using the most reliable and up to date LSOA level data available.
- 7.13 For Birmingham, there were originally 187 LSOAs identified as the worst performing neighbourhoods – i.e. where the rate is 25% or more (when the baseline was set in May 2007). However, analysis of the relevant data in May 2009 (using the average rate for the four quarters to May 2009) led to the identification of a further 48 LSOAs whose rate had risen above 25%. As such, there are a total of 235 LSOAs in Birmingham that have been the target localities for Outcome 4 and, as such, data is presented below at appropriate points for all 235 LSOAs.
- 7.14 The data used below is sourced from a DWP data source - (http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=national_indicators). The reasons for the selection of this source over the other potential sources are outlined in Annex 4.
- 7.15 The DWP data shows that, as at Quarter 2 2010, the Birmingham rate is 30.3% compared to a regional rate of 31.3%. As such, the Birmingham rate is actually 1.0 percentage point lower than the regional rate and the target has been achieved.

Table 7.1: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods

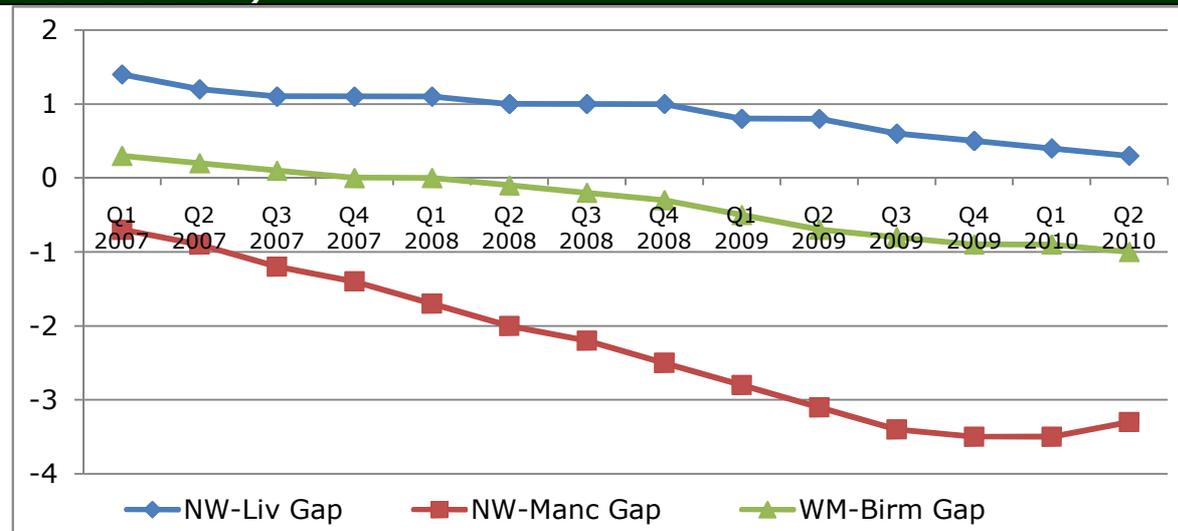
	Birmingham	West Midlands	Difference
Q1 2007	30.3	30.0	+0.3
Q2 2007	30.0	29.8	+0.2
Q3 2007	29.6	29.5	+0.1
Q4 2007	29.2	29.2	0.0
Q1 2008	28.8	28.8	0.0
Q2 2008	28.5	28.6	-0.1
Q3 2008	28.3	28.5	-0.2
Q4 2008	28.4	28.7	-0.3
Q1 2009	28.8	29.3	-0.5
Q2 2009	29.3	30.0	-0.7
Q3 2009	29.9	30.7	-0.8
Q4 2009	30.3	31.2	-0.9
Q1 2010	30.5	31.4	-0.9
Q2 2010	30.3	31.3	-1.0

Source: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=national_indicators

Summary position for NI 153: Based on most recent DWP data (Quarter 2, 2010), this indicator is on target.

- 7.16 Focusing on the data from appropriate comparator core cities for Birmingham – namely Liverpool and Manchester (see <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/566881.pdf> for reference to these three cities having the highest number of concentrations outside of London) Annex 4 shows the performance of Birmingham against its regional average as compared to the performance of both Liverpool and Manchester against their regional average. The data shows that when compared against Liverpool in absolute terms Birmingham’s rate is consistently lower. Similarly, when compared with Manchester in absolute terms, Birmingham’s rate is comparable, being of a very similar level, especially during 2009 and 2010.
- 7.17 Looking at the gap between the city average and the regional comparators, the figure below shows the trend over time for each of the three ratios against the regional comparators.
- 7.18 The data shows that Birmingham’s performance as a proportion of the regional average compares favourably with Liverpool, but is behind Manchester.

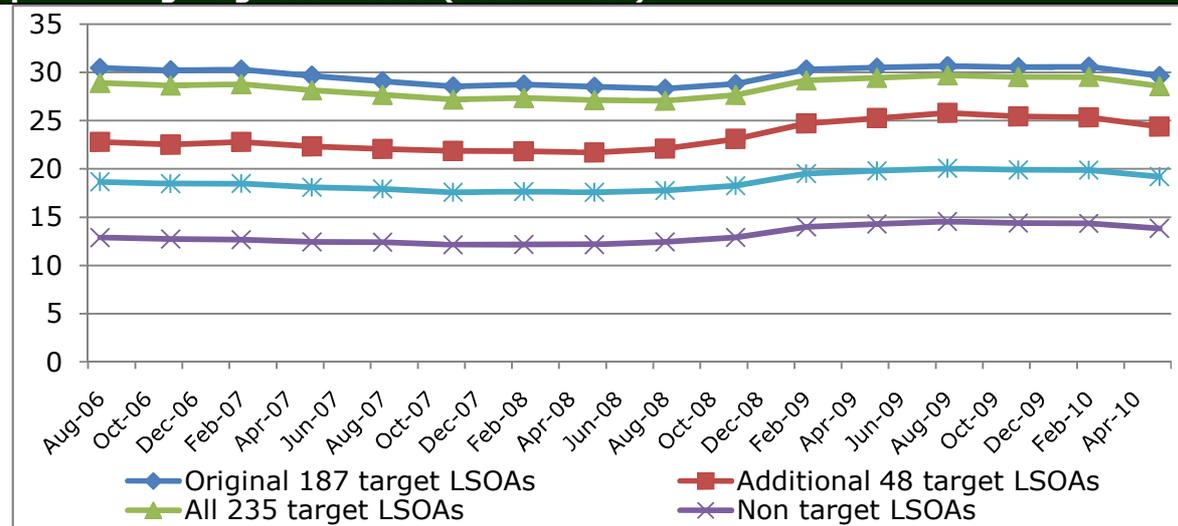
Figure 7.1: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods area (Comparator Data – Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester)



Source: DC Research analysis of data from: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=national_indicators

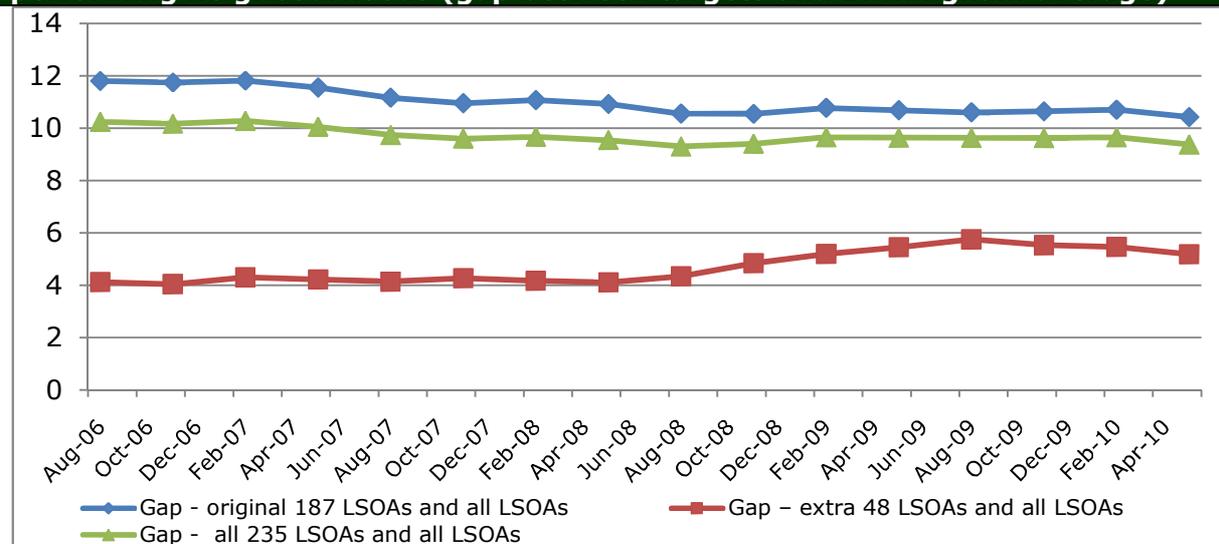
7.19 The results presented Annex 4 for NI 153 consider more specifically the priority areas within Birmingham (using data from NOMIS and ONS to calculate LSOA specific rates for the original 187 LSOAs, the additional 48 LSOAs, all 235 target LSOAs, and a Birmingham average). Whilst the results below are not comparable with regional, core city or national averages, it does provide a more considered assessment of NI 153 at the LSOA level. Figures 7.2 and 7.3 below present this data graphically.

Figure 7.2: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (actual rates)



Source: DC Research analysis of data from NOMIS (working age clients for small areas) and ONS (LSOA population estimates), March 2011

Figure 7.3: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (gap between targets and Birmingham average)



Source: DC Research analysis of data from NOMIS (working age clients for small areas) and ONS (LSOA population estimates), March 2011

- 7.20 The results show that the actual rates for all groupings of LSOAs reduced over time and then increased (during the peak periods of the recession) before reducing again in more recent periods. A clearer assessment of the impact in the target LSOAs can be considered by comparing the gap between the target areas and the average for the city. For the original 187 LSOAs this gap has narrowed over the time period. The additional 48 LSOAs were incorporated into the target because their rate rose above 25% during the early part of the recession. This rise is reflected in the increase in the gap with the city between August 2008 and August 2009. However since the LSOAs were targeted, the gap has reduced.
- 7.21 Figure 7.3 in particular, shows that the gap between the worst performing areas and the Birmingham average has been reduced.

Attribution of changes in NI outcomes to the BEDP WNF Programme

- 7.22 Overall, stakeholders and deliverers believe that whilst WNF has provided local support and got many people into work, training and volunteering opportunities, it is difficult to attribute its impact on worklessness outcomes for Birmingham. This is partly due to the changing economic climate within which the programme was developed and delivered, although action was taken by the team to try to address this through the establishment of Outcome 2 projects and the Recession Package. Despite this, there is a clear consensus amongst stakeholders that Birmingham would have been in a much worse position without the Outcome 4 WNF interventions.
- 7.23 In terms of a quantified consideration of progress against outcomes, further analysis of the data containing in Table 5.6 in Section 5 (based on CTS data as at mid April 2011) suggests that from a total of 63,810 NI 153 claimants at the baseline (May 2007), the programme has supported 3,272 (5.1%) of these into employment.

8. LESSONS LEARNED AND OUTCOME 4 LEVEL CONCLUSIONS

Section 8 summarises the key findings and conclusions for Outcome 4, sets out a series of recommendations for future worklessness programmes, and summarises examples of succession and forward strategy.

Key findings and conclusions

- 8.1 Overall, stakeholders and deliverers believe that **WNF has provided local support and got many people into work, training and volunteering opportunities**. There is also a clear consensus amongst stakeholders and deliverers that Birmingham would have been in a much worse position without the Outcome 4 WNF interventions over the lifetime of the Programme.
- 8.2 The agreement of the BEDP partners to sign up to the IES model helped influence the approach to service specification through NESPs and CESPs. It was critical in shaping the NESP/CESP approach, in the commissioning of contracts and in the development of the thematic/strategic projects. On balance, **the adoption of the IES model for the Outcome 4 element of the WNF Programme was appropriate**, with the concept being well understood and communicable at a strategic level.
- 8.3 The **commissioning of 43 NESP/CESP contracts, along with a suite of strategically and thematically commissioned activity, was an appropriate response** that sought to balance the impact of WNF at a city wide level, with the need for locality service planning.
- 8.4 However, the **influence and connectivity of the IES model often became diluted at the delivery level, with providers tending to be driven by targets rather than looking to fully integrate with complimentary provision**. Both clients and employers were often not provided with a single offer, with conversion rates suggesting that clients that found work after being engaged were in the minority, and that there were issues with programme wide client tracking. Whilst there is little contemporary evidence of WNF worklessness evaluation evidence to compare against, conversion rates from engagement to employment are in line with both BEDP expectations, and broader expectations for such activity.
- 8.5 At the organisational level, **WNF has enabled different departments (at BCC) and provider organisations to work together and provide joined-up support for clients** rather than working in isolation (e.g. BCC's housing department linking to employment support that is available to the homeless, and BEDP and Safer Birmingham Partnership working together for the first time reducing worklessness and reoffending).
- 8.6 **Providers have been encouraged to work together to deliver a combined service for clients**. Many third sector providers came together solely for the purpose of delivering WNF contracts. They have learnt how to deliver contracts more effectively and have also learnt how to adhere to payment on performance which is the future model being outlined by the coalition government. They have also been encouraged to work collectively again in the future when opportunities arise.
- 8.7 WNF has also enabled some projects to develop **new relationships with employers**, therefore creating greater opportunities for clients to access work (with the JASDUPP and CATE projects being the most prominent examples).

However, a number of deliverers have suggested that a more coordinated approach to projects engaging with employers could have been undertaken by the WNF team. For example, it was suggested that some WNF projects working directly with employers (such as CATE) could have ring fenced some outputs for particular target groups such as PPOs. However, providers also found that some employers will not recruit from such groups.

- 8.8 WNF has encouraged some providers to **focus more on sustainable job outcomes** for clients than they had previously, therefore contributing to a more sustainable impact on worklessness in Birmingham.
- 8.9 **Whilst there are frustrations** from project stakeholders that more could have been achieved, they do believe that **there have been very positive impacts for a large number of clients**. These impacts include individuals previously experiencing worklessness that have:
- Significantly increased confidence.
 - Accessed training.
 - Improved skills.
 - Accessed work experience.
 - Have benefited from volunteering experiences.
 - Have gained employment.
 - Are no longer on benefits.
- 8.10 The majority of projects also **highlighted the impact that the recession has had on being able to achieve job outputs**, because there are less jobs available in which to place clients and much more competition for available vacancies.
- 8.11 In terms of financial performance, **as at the end of December 2010 most of the strands of Outcome 4** (with the exception of the Transition Fund) **were showing an under-spend**. Whilst this is to be expected with one quarter of activity still to be delivered, both the thematic/strategic ESG projects and the Community Worklessness Development Fund show high levels of under-spend. **An update provided by the WNF Team, based on expenditure as at 31 March 2011, indicates that overall programme expenditure is within 90% of the revised target**, and following the Partnership and Cabinet agreement for a short extension to provider contracts for delivery of the Employment and Skills Plans, overall programme performance will increase.
- 8.12 **Output performance is mixed, with some outputs performing well, and others clearly underperforming** (including some of the key employment related outputs). Analysis of conversion rates for the main types of interventions shows that for all areas conversion has been lower than originally expected, with NESP/CESP showing the widest divergence between planned and actual conversion rates. However, Outcome 4 conversion rates are generally comparable with typical expectations for this type of activity, with original WNF expectations in 2008 tending to be optimistic and not accounting for reduced delivery timeframes. Again, **updated output performance reported at the end of March 2011, indicates that good progress has been made towards achieving the overall output targets**. The extension to provider contracts for delivery of the Employment and Skills Plans should also increase performance of some key outputs.

- 8.13 The level of penetration in terms of **engagement with target clients in each of the target localities shows a varied picture**. Some areas show high levels of engagement, having engaged with more than half of their target clients. Others have been less successful, engaging with less than one-fifth of their target clients.
- 8.14 Finally, it is **difficult to attribute the impact of the Outcome 4 element of the Programme on worklessness outcomes for Birmingham**. This is partly due to the changing economic climate within which the programme was developed and delivered, although action was taken by the team to try to address this through the establishment of Outcome 2 projects and the Recession Package. Nevertheless, **at the end of the programme all revised outcome targets have been exceeded and 3,407¹⁷ individuals have gained employment through the programme**.

Lessons learned, good practice and innovation

- 8.15 The priority SOA focus of Outcome 4 activity was regarded by stakeholders to be the correct approach to identifying and targeting priority neighbourhoods and constituencies. However, once identified, **contracts and projects should have had more delivery flexibility**, as the SOA rigidity made little sense to beneficiaries, and was very limiting on the 'word of mouth' impacts of the programme. For example, friends and family of supported beneficiaries found that they were not eligible for support when engaging with deliverers, despite being in need. As a solution, some providers and stakeholders advocated that WNF could have been allocated by SOA, but been delivered across eligible constituencies, with others arguing that a higher tolerance level (say 25% rather than 10%) would have helped to resolve this issue. **Changes to the approach would, however, have diluted the deliberate targeting that was a key innovative feature of Outcome 4 WNF activity**.
- 8.16 From a programme management perspective the **decision requiring NESP/CESP contract providers to stop engagement activity by December 2010 was sound, and should be regarded as good practice**. Providers had a tendency to maximise delivery on employment targets by over engaging rather than focussing on existing clients, and this decision was designed to make providers focus on getting existing clients into work. This approach could be used in the future at a mid point in each delivery year (i.e. allowing engagement to occur in 2 out of 4 quarters) as a means of encouraging providers to work with the clients who require the most support to be job ready, although this might carry a risk of lost momentum.
- 8.17 WNF was not especially well aligned with other programme funding available in Birmingham during its lifetime. However, it would not be correct to assume that this was a result of programme inflexibility, as other funding streams did not align either in terms of geography (such as ERDF) or timescale (such as Regeneration Zones and New Deal for Communities Programmes in Aston and King's Norton).
- 8.18 The level of political scrutiny that the BEDP WNF programme, and particularly Outcome 4, was subjected to, has been a recurrent theme of this evaluation. Much of this related to a desire for constituencies to have greater autonomy over the spending of WNF, and to be able to hold deliverers to account. Whilst **a significant proportion of locally commissioned contracts were awarded or**

¹⁷ Based on actuals to 31st March 2011 for outputs 1F and 1I, as provided by WNF Team

subcontracted to third sector organisations¹⁸, a key lesson for future programmes is the need to **manage locality expectations in terms of the processes and limitations of such funds**, and to **provide relevant training for elected members** involved in programme governance.

- 8.19 The development of NESP/CESP plans and the subsequent commissioning and delivery of NESP/CESP contracts is regarded by most stakeholders and providers as being very ambitious. Although it took much longer for delivery to start than had been intended, partners see delivery as an achievement in itself. In particular, **the movement towards a 'payment by results' approach for this activity is popular amongst many stakeholders, and is a strong learning point for future programmes**. The third sector providers also benefited from the experience of payment by results, with many commenting that they felt better positioned for the future.
- 8.20 Whilst there was significant early frustration around the lack of involvement of third sector organisations in delivery of contracts, levels of delivery risk are likely to have contributed to a more cautious approach by private sector providers to subcontracting with third sector organisations, and in part led to a relatively similar offer across localities and contracts. Nevertheless, **Outcome 4 benefited from a range of different types of commissioning, and also organisation types**, with a number of provider partnerships being brought together for the first time through WNF funding. These partnerships include providers of different sizes, different sectors, with varying geographical and target group focus.
- 8.21 The learning point for the involvement of third sector organisations in the delivery of future programmes surrounds managing delivery expectations, with **an early assessment around capacity and delivery risk for such organisations being desirable**. Three independently facilitated pre-bidding seminars in respect of NESP/CESP contract opportunities were convened in the spring of 2009. These were focused on preparing third sector agencies for submitting bids (particularly those looking to develop a consortium response). It should also be noted that NESP/CESP contracts were awarded on the basis of a competitive tender process.
- 8.22 Another key learning point for future programmes surrounds **the criticality of referral mechanisms** in terms of delivery performance. For example, many providers commented that they were disappointed with the level of referrals that were provided by Job Centre Plus and felt that little consideration was given to voluntary support (including WNF). However, it must be recognised that Job Centre Plus are part of a national programme of delivery, and as some providers commented, this mandatory provision had to be the primary focus for staff within Job Centre Plus. The issues here are perhaps more about communication and managing expectations, than the willingness of staff and partners to engage.
- 8.23 The **lack of sanctions connected to WNF activity** led to providers having further incentive to pursue easy wins in terms of client groups. Examples of lack of attendance at interviews, and interviews being 'thrown' by some clients were directly attributable to a lack of such credible sanctions.
- 8.24 Another learning point relates to the provision of client evidence, as in many cases providers have had to undertake retrospective exercises to try to gather

¹⁸ According to Birmingham City Council, 19 contracts (35% of the locally commissioned delivery) were awarded to eight third sector organisations as prime providers. Furthermore, an additional 20 third sector organisations were subcontractors on contracts led by private sector providers; and a further 15 also worked as sub contractors on third sector contracts. See Section 4, paragraph 4.9.

this evidence from clients who had previously been supported, and sometimes even having to help clients obtain this evidence themselves. Moving forwards, **programme management needs to be clear as to what evidence is required from clients at the very start of delivery.** Furthermore, regard should be given to the potential barriers that can be created in requesting evidence from clients.

- 8.25 In terms of innovation, whilst NESP/CESP contracted provision tended to provide a relatively standard menu of support, **the decision to take a locality and IES driven approach to delivery on this scale, the development of the NESP/CESP plans, and the contracting process itself were highly innovative in process terms.** The preparedness of BEDP partners to take the delivery risks that came with such an innovative approach, especially given the timescales involved, is a notable highlight of the Outcome 4 element of the programme, as is the scale of delivery achieved in what became a reduced delivery period.
- 8.26 **Another innovative approach was the separate strategic commissioning of thematic projects,** recognising the need for specialist intervention beyond the locality provision through NESP and CESP contracting (for example Prolific Priority Offenders, Drug and Alcohol Misuse and Addressing Worklessness with Homeless Service Users, including giving clients control on personalised budgets).
- 8.27 A number of these projects were also innovative in terms of their approach to client engagement, and in sourcing training, volunteering and employment opportunities for clients (for example JASDUPP and CATE, which have influenced changes to BCC development policy, and apprenticeship projects). Others were innovative in addressing supporting actions to help people as they moved into employment (such as Workwise Birmingham, Targeted Discretionary Housing Payments and Debt and Financial Inclusion, which have all provided tangible support to ease the costs of transition into work for clients).
- 8.28 The **Innovation** Fund was developed and included in the WNF Programme specifically to address an identified need to encourage and facilitate research and innovation. Three key features of the project that promoted good practice and innovation were¹⁹:
- **Flexibility:** A bottom up and flexible approach was applied in terms of activity that was delivered. Bidding organisations were given the freedom to design projects and develop their own targets within the overall programme aims of tackling worklessness and testing new approaches.
 - **Learning:** Learning and review was embedded in the delivery of Innovation projects. Many produced learning reports and toolkits to be shared with others to support the promotion of 'what works'. The Good Practice Evaluation of the Innovation Fund also supported learning themes emerging from the programme as a whole.
 - **Innovation and good practice:** Organisations supported through the fund demonstrated project plans that trialled different approaches to tackling worklessness, or developed good practice either through direct delivery or evidence-based research.

¹⁹ Tackling Worklessness in Birmingham: Learning from the Evaluation of the WNF Innovation Fund, Ekosgen, February 2011

- 8.29 The development of the **Good Practice Guide for practitioners (set out in Annex 5) is an important learning output for the Innovation Fund**²⁰. This guide identifies critical success factors for employability projects and interventions that have emerged from the Innovation portfolio, and includes practical examples of good practice lessons from Innovation projects. It is being shared with strategic partners and Work Programme providers with a view to influence and shape future activity, particularly for specialist client groups. The guide is also being shared with delivery organisations to promote good practice and quality in frontline employment support provision.

Succession and forward strategy

- 8.30 As a result of the experiences and learning from the BEDP WNF Programme, approaches that will transfer WNF activity to mainstream programmes are being discussed at the time of writing (March 2011). For example, the **use of planning and development powers to support employment activity** (through Section 106 agreements and Standard Charge) is being discussed, building on the good practice established by the CATE project. In addition, **BCC now has an agreed policy to direct its procurement processes to support pathways into employment** for residents.
- 8.31 The **Prolific Priority Offenders project has been successful in its application for NOMS Regional ESF funding**. The project will be sustained for a further four years funding with circa £200,000 per year to sustain the project team in its existing structure. PPOs that are now more job-ready will be supported into employment at the end of the project and the numbers of client obtaining a job and number of clients in voluntary work will be realised in the next financial year.
- 8.32 The forward strategy for the Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Project is currently unclear, although partners are currently awaiting clarity as to future priorities of the Birmingham DAAT. Emerging policy does suggest that this type of project is needed going forward, with the recent Drugs Strategy and Green Paper on sentencing and reoffending which both are understood to emphasise the need for routes to employment.
- 8.33 In addition, the **successful Regional Growth Fund Round 1 bids** in the region (Alstom Grid UK; Birmingham Chamber of Commerce (on behalf of Birmingham City Council); Bosch Thermotechnology; Jaguar Land Rover and Prince's Regeneration Trust) will create a significant number of new jobs, and partners will **need to ensure that such opportunities are accessible to residents in the WNF priority neighbourhoods**.
- 8.34 It is understood that BeBirmingham has undertaken a review of all WNF projects to establish their individual forward strategies. Some projects will have already ended, other projects will be seeking future funding such as ERDF and others will have to close. One stakeholder was critical of the forward strategy requirements that were put in place for projects during the application process – suggesting that all forward strategies focussed on the provider's strategy for sustainability and not on a strategy for supporting clients once WNF funding came to an end.
- 8.35 It is further understood that a risk assessment of projects has also been undertaken by BeBirmingham which highlights those projects where clients are most at risk of being affected by projects closing. For those projects categorised

²⁰ Tackling Worklessness in Birmingham: Learning from the Evaluation of the WNF Innovation Fund, Ekosgen, February 2011

as “high” risk BeBirmingham have made recommendation for Senior Officers at BCC to take on responsibility for forward strategy.

- 8.36 Projects have been given until April 2011 to submit their cumulative monitoring forms for the final quarter of the programme. It is understood that BeBirmingham has requested that providers also complete a summary report of their projects. However, it is unlikely that these reports will be completed due to the funding cuts that are facing many organisations and the associated impact this is having on staff resource.
- 8.37 At the time of writing (March 2011) there is no mechanism/resource in place for the long term monitoring of future outputs that are likely to occur after the WNF programme closes. Providers are keen to know whether BCC will take responsibility for storing all client data collated.

Recommendations

- 8.38 In terms of the ‘end to end’ aspect of the IES model, on the client side, most reported issues and blockages tended to be around referrals (particularly from mandatory provision) and the geographic specificity involved in targeting. Limited levels of cross referrals between contracts led to suspicions that some providers had a tendency to hoard clients rather than pass them on to other providers (who might well have been better placed to get them into employment).
- Moving forwards, **improvements in referrals (including those from mandatory providers) will need to be better specified and encouraged and, if necessary, contractually incentivised**, to encourage providers to pass on clients who would benefit from complementary provision.
 - In future programmes, **cross referrals might be better supported by having niche and specialist provision (such as support for non job ready clients with disabilities) at the city wide level rather than being provided by locality contracts.**
- 8.39 It is fair to conclude that the programme did not manage to provide a wholly integrated approach for employers. However there are significant examples of good practice and new ways of working developed. Future programmes would benefit from **the further development of approaches to employer engagement highlighted by initiatives such as projects JASDUPP and CATE.**
- 8.40 Future programmes should also review the **balance between client focussed interventions** to support people into employment, **and activity focussed on creating jobs** for employment-ready clients to access.
- 8.41 For future programmes, **consideration should be given to the inclusion of a contractual retainer for 13 and 26 week updates on all clients obtaining a job.** This would enable more effective tracking of beneficiaries in sustainable employment, and in tandem with the better use of aggregate DWP data would serve to better evidence the contribution of such interventions to wider outcomes. Nevertheless, it is widely recognised that it is very difficult to obtain this type of data from employers, and providers will need to continue contact with clients. Therefore, for future interventions commissioners will need to assess the relative advantages and disadvantages of either contractually enforcing targets (ensuring that such retainers are ‘credible threats’ that do not get re-profiled at a later date), or convert retainers into an additional provider incentives. However, improved data sharing of DWP data would resolve this issue.

- 8.42 There is a clear consensus from programme and project stakeholders that **the BEDP WNF Programme would have benefitted from a year zero**, something that was highlighted in previous evaluations of area based programmes (notably SRB and NRF), and this would have significantly improved the delivery. The underlying issue around timescale is a national one, with the three year duration of the programme, and the sheer scale of resources allocated to Birmingham, and resultant capacity and political issues therein, being the root cause of delivery delays. Nevertheless a year zero would have been extremely beneficial to the delivery capacity of the programme, and would have lessened many of the issues set out above.
- It is therefore recommended that **BEDP and strategic stakeholders should continue to seek the inclusion of a 'year zero' in all future programmes.**
- 8.43 For future programmes that aim to close the gap between worst performing neighbourhoods and city (or regional) averages, it is recommended that the **targeting of specific priority neighbourhoods is retained.**

Key Conclusions

- 8.44 The Outcome 4 element of the BEDP WNF Programme has got **many people into work**, and provided a significant number of training and volunteering opportunities. **Without WNF Birmingham would have been in a much worse position** in terms of worklessness in 2011.
- 8.45 This is not to say that the programme has not faced **a number of challenges**, including managing early expectations, making the best use of existing systems and processes, and a number of delays in project development and contracting which resulted in reduced delivery windows across much of the programme. Many of these challenges provide **helpful learning points to shape future commissioning and delivery.**
- 8.46 Developing NESP/CESP plans, and commissioning and delivering subsequent contracts, was clearly ambitious. Nevertheless, the scale of delivery achieved in the time available is a notable achievement, and the **programme benefited from a range of commissioning approaches and provider types.** Furthermore, whilst target outcomes have changed during the programme (to reflect significantly worse macroeconomic labour market conditions as a result of the recession), **all measurable target outcomes have been achieved.**
- 8.47 From the evidence and analysis contained in this report, **it is reasonable to conclude that the locality approach delivered against local need** (need that remains highly significant in all constituencies). It is possible that **job related outcomes might have been higher had an alternative approach to delivery been taken** (e.g. a City wide approach to delivery). **However, on balance such an approach would not have enjoyed the benefit of locality specific targeting**, would have had a higher propensity to engage with a higher number of 'job ready' clients, and resulted in less even delivery in the 235 SOAs in the priority constituencies.
- 8.48 There are some **notable examples of process innovation** from Outcome 4. Taking a **locality and IES driven approach to delivery** on this scale, both the development of the NESP/CESP plans, and the subsequent contracting process, were highly innovative decisions and processes. Furthermore, the development of a 'three pronged' approach (NESP/CESP contracts, thematic/strategic ESG projects and the Community Worklessness Development Fund) to **balance the need for locality specific delivery, and target specific city wide** barriers to employment was also innovative in programme terms. Finally, the **experience of a payment by results approach to contracting has been of benefit**, both

to a number of providers in terms of being better positioned for future work, and is a source of learning for future interventions.

ANNEX 1: CONSULTEES

Stakeholder Consultees:

- BeBirmingham (3 consultees).
- Birmingham City Council (11 consultees).
- Skills Funding Agency.
- Job Centre Plus.
- BEDP Private Sector Partner.

Outcome 4 was also discussed with partners who were consulted with as part of the Outcome 2 and Recession Projects Evaluation.

Strategic Projects Consultees

- CE001 Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment: 2 consultees from Birmingham City Council.
- CE006 Debt and Financial Inclusion: Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Financial Inclusion Partnership, Birmingham Citizens Advice Bureau (4 consultees).
- CE009 Drugs and Alcohol: Birmingham City Council, Turning Point (2 consultees).
- CE010 PPO: Birmingham City Council, Turning Point (2 consultees), Safer Birmingham Partnership.
- CE012 Engaging with Workless Displaced Communities: Birmingham City Council.
- CE015 Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme: Birmingham City Council.
- EE002 Pre Apprentice Academy: Birmingham City Council (2 consultees).
- GB002 JASDUPP: Birmingham City Council (2 consultees).
- EE001 Customised Access Training for Employment: Birmingham City Council (2 consultees).

NESP/CESP Contract Case Study Consultees

- Contract 3 Erdington - Lone Parent Support: ENTA (2 consultees), Merlin Venture (2 consultees)
- Contract 1 Yardley - Targeted Engagement Campaign: BEST Network (4 consultees), Remploy
- Contract 6 Hodge Hill - ILM: The Jericho Foundation (2 consultees), Prospects
- Contract 5 Hall Green - Skills and Jobs Match: Ashiana (9 consultees), MECC, Fastline Associates, MCDT, Muath Trust, Local Leagues/Route to Work (2 consultees), BTUC
- Contract 3 Perry Barr - NEET: PPDG (2 consultees)
- Contract 1 - Edgbaston, Northfield, Selly Oak - Southworks: PPDG (2 consultees)
- Contracts 1-3 Ladywood: Supporting Clients with Disabilities: Action for Blind People/BDC (2 consultees), Birmingham Rathbone Society.

ANNEX 2: OUTCOME 4 CONTRACT AND PROJECT SUMMARY TABLES

Table A2.1: Contracts let across the city via the NESP/CESP Commissioning Process				
Constituency	Contract	Summary	Lead Provider	Provider Type
Edgbaston, Northfield & Selly Oak	South Works Neighbourhood Project	Client engagement, creating job opportunities and progression into employment. Delivered across all three constituencies with a focus on community based support.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Hodge Hill	Disability support	Engage with people with disabilities and support them to return to work. Engage with people with Mental Health/Learning Difficulties and supporting them in return to work using skills assisted planning.	Birmingham Disability Consortium (Lead agency Action for Blind People)	Third Sector Consortium
Hodge Hill	Lone parents programme	Engage with Lone Parents and supporting them in return to work using skills assisted planning.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Hodge Hill	NEET Programme	Engage with young people not in employment and support them in returning to work using skills assisted planning.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Hodge Hill	Targeted engagement and employment support (over 50s, carers, street advice)	Engage Individuals and support them into work, and also into further education/training and Volunteering. Specific focus on supporting clients over 50 and carers.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Hodge Hill	Skills and Jobs Match	Individuals supported into work, and into further education/training/volunteering.	Prospects	Private Sector
Hodge Hill	ILM	People supported into business 'start ups'/social enterprise/work, and into further education/development.	Prospects	Private Sector
Perry Barr	Supporting Clients with Disabilities	Engage with clients with disabilities, and health related barriers. Vocational training linked to specific vacancies. Working closely with GPS and health related orgs to provide additional support.	Birmingham Disability Consortium (Lead agency Action for Blind People)	Third Sector Consortium
Perry Barr	Supporting Lone Parents	Targeted engagement to support lone parents into employment, working with organisations including schools and children's centres. Ongoing support and mentoring to make employment more accessible.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Perry Barr	Supporting Clients Not Engaged in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	Engagement activity to work with young people not in employment. Ongoing support specific to client to support specific barriers, including single parents, offender's confidence building, skills levels.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Perry Barr	Employment Connections (Wage Subsidy Scheme)	Employer engagement to identify suitable work placements. Subsidised work placements for those furthest from the labour market. Ongoing support throughout work placements, and	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector

Table A2.1: Contracts let across the city via the NESP/CESP Commissioning Process				
Constituency	Contract	Summary	Lead Provider	Provider Type
		support to assist into long term employment.		
Perry Barr	Working it Out (Wage Subsidy Scheme)	Engagement with offenders. Provision of a specific support package for low/medium risk ex-offenders seeking employment. Mentoring Support Programme to support and guide the beneficiary in order to fully prepare them for employment and to seek to identify issues and potential problems that may affect the ability to stay in employment.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Yardley	Targeted Engagement Campaign	Engagement and assessment of priority group clients, moving towards employment.	BEST Network	Third Sector Consortium
Yardley	Disabilities Support Programme	Engage with clients with disabilities, and health related barriers. Targeted support and development to support individual needs, provision of training and support into employment. Post employment support.	Work Directions	Private Sector
Yardley	Lone Parents Programme	Targeted engagement of lone parents, working with schools and children's centres. Provision of ongoing support and training to move clients into employment. Post employment support.	Work Directions	Private Sector
Yardley	NEET Programme	Targeted engagement of young people not in employment. Individual assessment and action plans, with focused training and support to move people into employment.	Work Directions	Private Sector
Yardley	Employment Support Programme for: carers, ex-offender etc inc. English language support	Engagement of specific target groups not in employment. Individual assessments and action plans. Provision of pre employment training aimed at specific vacancies and support into employment.	Best Network	Third Sector Consortium
Yardley	Local Business Support (SME Engagement Measure)	Support to local businesses to provide job vacancies for local residents.	Work Directions	Private Sector
Ladywood	Supporting Clients with Disabilities	Engage with clients with disabilities, and health related barriers. Vocational training linked to specific vacancies. Working closely with GPS and health related orgs to provide additional support.	Birmingham Disability Consortium (Lead agency Action for Blind People)	Third Sector Consortium
Ladywood	Supporting Lone Parents	Targeted engagement to support lone parents into employment, working with organisations including schools and children's centres. Ongoing support and mentoring to make employment more accessible.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Ladywood	Supporting Clients Not Engaged in	Engagement activity to work with young people not in employment. Ongoing support specific to client to support	Pertemps People Development	Private Sector

Table A2.1: Contracts let across the city via the NESP/CESP Commissioning Process				
Constituency	Contract	Summary	Lead Provider	Provider Type
	Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	specific barriers, including single parents, offender's confidence building, skills levels.	Group	
Ladywood	Employment Connections (Wage Subsidy Scheme)	Employer engagement to identify suitable work placements. Subsidised work placements for those furthest from the labour market. Ongoing support throughout work placements, and support to assist into long terms employment.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Ladywood	Working it Out (Wage Subsidy Scheme)	Engagement with offenders. Provision of a specific support package for low/medium risk ex-offenders seeking employment. Mentoring Support Programme to support and guide the beneficiary in order to fully prepare them for employment and to seek to identify issues and potential problems that may affect the beneficiaries' ability to stay in employment	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Erdington	Engagement & Employment support addressing: Multi-Generational Unemployed Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) Older Workers (aged 40yrs+)	Targeted engagement campaign to tackle the problem of worklessness with Multi-Generational unemployed, NEETs and older workers. Provide post-employment support to clients whilst they are making the transition from long-term worklessness back into employment.	ENTA	Social Enterprise
Erdington	Engagement & Employment support addressing Alcohol Misusers Those at risk of re- offending	Targeted engagement campaign to tackle the entrenched problems of worklessness with vulnerable clients such as alcohol mis-users and re-offenders. Provide post-employment support to clients whilst they are making the transition from long-term worklessness back into employment.	ENTA	Social Enterprise
Erdington	Lone parent support	Targeted engagement campaign to tackle the problem of worklessness with lone parents. Provide post-employment support to clients whilst they are making the transition from long-term worklessness back into employment.	ENTA	Third Sector Consortium
Erdington	Employment Support Allowance & Incapacity Benefit Claimants	Additional support for clients claiming ESA/IB Vocational training linked to specific vacancies. Working closely with GPS and health related orgs to provide additional support.	Birmingham Disability Consortium (Lead agency Action for Blind People)	Third Sector Consortium
Erdington	Intermediate	The Intermediate Labour Market	Merlin Venture	Third Sector

Table A2.1: Contracts let across the city via the NESP/CESP Commissioning Process				
Constituency	Contract	Summary	Lead Provider	Provider Type
	Labour Market	programme provides subsidised placements for engaged clients who are furthest away from the labour market.		
Hall Green	Disabilities support	Engage with clients with disabilities, and health related barriers. Vocational training linked to specific vacancies. Working closely with GPS and health related orgs to provide additional support.	Birmingham Disability Consortium (Lead agency Action for Blind People)	Third Sector Consortium
Hall Green	Lone Parents	Targeted engagement to support lone parents into employment, working with organisations including schools and children's centres. Ongoing support and mentoring to make employment more accessible.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Hall Green	NEET	Engagement activity to work with young people not in employment. Ongoing support specific to client to support specific barriers, including single parents, offender's confidence building, skills levels.	Pertemps People Development Group	Private Sector
Hall Green	Employment support for carers	Targeted support to engage with carers, and working with their individual needs to support them into employment.	Jericho Foundation	Third Sector
Hall Green	Skills & Jobs Match	Engaging clients from priority groups. Provision of training and development to support individual needs.	Ashiana	Third Sector Consortium
Hall Green	Intermediate Labour Market	The Intermediate Labour Market programme provides subsidized placements for engaged clients who are furthest away from the labour market.	Jericho Foundation	Third Sector
Hodge Hill	Women Only Workshops	Engage women with little or no record of work and support them into employment through dedicated programme of support, including basic skills, ESOL support and confidence building	Ashiana	Third Sector Consortium
Hodge Hill	ESOL & Skills for Life Support	Engage and take referrals for clients with ESOL and Basic Skills requirements	Enterkey	Third Sector
South	Social Enterprise Support	Supporting existing social enterprises to expand and created job opportunities	ISE	Third Sector
Source: Birmingham City Council				

Table A2.2: Summary of Strategic /Thematic Outcome 4 Projects	
Project Name	Project Description
CE001 Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment	Supports the transition from benefits to work, by providing enhanced assistance towards rent and council tax payments, to work starters for a minimum period of 12 weeks.
CE004 Improving Health Increasing Employment Phase 3	A new approach to tackling the links between ill-health and worklessness - a joint initiative between the Employment Strategy Group and the Health and Well-being partnership
CE004 Improving Health, Increasing Employment Phases 1 & 2	A new approach to tackling the links between ill-health and worklessness - a joint initiative between the Employment Strategy Group and the Health and Well-being partnership.

Table A2.2: Summary of Strategic /Thematic Outcome 4 Projects	
Project Name	Project Description
CE005 Enhanced English Language Skills/Language Support	Addresses gaps in current provision of ESOL and English Language support provision, and pilot approaches to facilitate transference of learning and best practice into mainstream service delivery.
CE006 Access to Financial Inclusion Support for Workless and newly employed people	Providing timely, accessible and comprehensive financial advice and guidance to address debt problems, and improve financial capability in target SOAs, and support transition from benefits to work.
CE008 Addressing Worklessness with Homeless Service Users	Providing enhanced specialist support for homeless people, moving them into employment, as well as helping them find and keep accommodation..
CE009 Engaging Drugs & Alcohol Treatment Service Users	Improved client engagement with drug and alcohol treatment users to assist them moving into employment
CE010 Prolific & Priority Offenders	Improved client engagement with Prolific and Priority Offenders, to support them into sustained employment, and reduce re-offending.
CE011 Workwise	Targeted travel support including purchase of Bus Passes for interviews and initial stages of work.
CE012 Engaging with Displaced Communities	Intensive Employment support, information Advice and Guidance, focused upon members of new and displaced communities. Includes recruitment and training of IAG workers from within target communities.
EE001 Customised Access Training & Employment	Link the City's regeneration (physical and socio-economic) portfolio to employment by providing dedicated, financial resources to support the work of the recently established Employment Access Team (EAT) to compliment and strengthen existing employer engagement interventions and develop customised training linked to specific vacancies.
EE002 Public Sector Skills Challenge – Pre-Apprentice Academy	A one year pilot to deliver enhanced apprenticeship style work placements in a range of skill shortage areas.
EE003 Public Sector Skills Challenge - Graduate Internships	Internships to graduates in both public and private sectors – addressing the impact of the recession on this group
GB001Town Centre Management	To enhance Town Centre Management, which will support local businesses and help capture churn of jobs through local SMEs. 12 TCM will be supported across the city.
GB002 JASDUPP (Jobs and skills development using public procurement)	To develop a policy and toolkit to embed the best practice as the norm with regard to community benefit clauses and procurement.
IF001 Transitional Funding	Transitional support to 44 voluntary sector service providers, so that they can retain the capacity to potentially deliver employment support activity, whilst the mainstream programme has been developed.
IF002 Local Provider Forums	Resources to convene local provider forums; develop the capacity of local providers to deliver local interventions, and support local strategic partnerships in monitoring NESPs and CESP activities, and in identifying gaps in provision or areas of low impact.
IF003 Innovations Fund	Small grants to fund demonstration/ pilot projects, and feasibility/research studies, to test new approaches and interventions, which will support continuous service improvement.
IF004 Client Tracking System	Development, purchase and maintenance of a client tracking system for projects funded through WNF.
Source: Birmingham City Council	

ANNEX 3: SAMPLED CONTRACT AND PROJECT REVIEW SUMMARIES

Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Prolific and Priority Offenders

The **Prolific and Priority Offenders** (PPO) project was delivered by the Birmingham Safer Partnership Offender Management and Drug Treatment (OMDT) and it was one of the first thematic projects to be appraised by the WNF team. The project provides employment support provision for a particular cohort of offenders known as Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPO's) - these are the most chaotic and prolific offenders. Individual employment action plans are drawn up for participants as part of the project in consultation with other key agencies to provide a holistic approach. The overall aim is to facilitate change in those with offending backgrounds by supporting offenders who have been long-term unemployed into sustainable employment.

The case studies below highlights the impact of the project upon clients of the project. One case study is from the client's perspective and the second is from the perspective of an PPO project worker.

Table A3.1: Client and Mentor Perspectives on the PPO Project

Case Study A: Client's Perspective

Client X had in his own words been in and out of jail a lot since he was 16 years old. He was a heroin user and would commit crimes in order to find money and pay for his habit. He was last sent to prison in 2005 and was sentenced for four years.

He was released from prison in 2009. Following his release from prison, and as a PPO, he was required to attend certain appointments, for example with the probation service. These appointments were initially held at Erdington OCU and then at Stechford (following the restructure of West Midlands Police), which worked well for Client X as it was closer to home. One of these appointments was also with his Turning Point EESPro Worker.

Client X needed to become stable in order to break the cycle of re-offending and drugs misuse. His EESPro Worker provided a personal approach. He was able to listen to him and understand what it was that he wanted to do with his future as opposed to "forcing him down a certain track". Until receiving support from EESPro, client X had always felt that he would receive "knock backs" instead of positive support.

Since receiving support from his EESPro worker, client X has completed all nine modules provided by the service, including for example Why Work, CV Writing and Interview Preparation. He has undertaken training in painting and decorating and also a course in plastering which EESPro were able to provide funding to purchase necessary course materials. In September 2010, client X's EESPro worker identified a potential job opportunity at Ikea in Coventry. Client X was successful in getting the job which involved travel to Coventry, for which EESPro was able to provide the essential funding to cover costs, and shift work starting in the early mornings. Despite what could have been potential barriers, client X maintained a working routine.

Unfortunately, in December 2010 Ikea made redundancies and client X lost his job. However, having had a job has provided client X with a routine and also the confidence he needed for him to realise he is able to work. Before working at Ikea he had never worked. He states that if he was not working he would get bored and he would go back to his old life. Through EESPro, client X has realised that he does not want to back to his old life as he "just wants to live a normal life" and with "no worries of losing freedom". Since engaging with EESPro, he now has a less chaotic life and has a home and a girlfriend which has given him stability. He also plays a key role in the EESPro PPO Peer Support Group where he is able to give confidence to other PPOs who are going through what client X experienced. He has also recently submitted an application to undertake voluntary work with Turning Point's Drug Line where he will be able to share his positive experiences to users that are in the position he was once in.

In December 2010, client X was de-selected as a PPO but will continue to receive support from EESPro for a further six months. He now sees that he has a "positive future" and it has been the longest he has been clean from drugs and offending. EESPro has been a helpful service that has give client X the confidence to progress. His ambition is to get a long-term job and to say drug free. Client X states that without the support he received from his EESPro worker that getting to

where he is now would have been hard.

Case Study B: Worker's Perspective

I started working with this client in August 2010 after he had just been released from custody after receiving a five year term for Robbery. He has a number of previous offences including - Theft and Battery, Possession of a bladed article and numerous Robbery convictions. The offences were committed mainly to fund the client's crack cocaine habit.

Since being released and engaging with EESPro, this client has shown his commitment to change even when facing numerous barriers. He has had problems with his family and accommodation situation, but has not let this deter him in any way.

This client has continued to produce negative drug tests whenever he has been tested and is not currently on a script. Although this client has not been on the scheme very long, he has utilised all available help to change his life and rehabilitate back into the community.

The client is an individual that has never worked before. The only 'work experience' this person has ever had was based on jobs completed whilst inside prison settings.

The client now has a CV which we worked on together and has successfully gained employment as a Warehouse Operative. This was achieved through identifying a suitable position in a large retail outlet that were open to recruiting people with limited experience. Constructive dialogue that took place between EESPro and the prospective employer led to the interest being raised with a request for a copy of the CV. By guiding this client with the application process, supporting them to pass the literacy and numeracy tests and confidence building through the screening/selection process we learnt that the client would be offered a position to start with immediate effect.

Of course this needed further support by purchasing the essential equipment to work on site such as steel-toe capped boots and a high-visibility jacket. As a goodwill gesture EESPro also funded his first day's travel in order to maximise this person's ability to succeed.

A quote from the client was "thanks for helping".

Source: Turning Point Case Study

Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Enhanced Employment, Education and Training Support Pathway – Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Project

Birmingham Drug and Alcohol Action Team (BDAAT) are the programme managers for **Enhanced Employment, Education and Training Support Pathway – Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Project**. The project provides targeted specialist employment, education and training support for some clients entering treatment. BDAAT oversee the delivery of this and a range of other projects (such as Prolific and Priority Offenders) which together make up an integrated pathway of support for drug and alcohol dependent benefit claimants in order to ensure a consistent approach.

The case study below highlights the impact of the project upon one of the project's clients from the perspective of an project worker:

Table A3.2: Impact of Drugs and Alcohol Misuse Project

Client x led a chaotic lifestyle. He started using Heroin at the age of 12 and grew up in a household where drug use and violence were prevalent. He spent most of his teenage years in and out of care and began offending to support his drug use.

When client x was last released from Custody he had completed his food hygiene course in HMP and was referred to EESPro.

In an initial assessment client x said that he was keen to get into employment but was unsure of what to put into place to achieve this. His worker initially completed some work modules with the client including Why Work, CV preparation, Interview techniques, and telephone techniques and application forms. They agreed to apply for mainly kitchen vacancies and his worker contacted all the public houses in his local area enclosing a copy of his CV.

Client x then moved to another town, so the search changed but he still attended weekly appointments over the course of nine months. A copy of client x's CV was dropped in at his local Tesco express along with an application form obtained from the website which the worker and the client completed in their appointment.

Tesco stated that at that time they had no vacancies but within two weeks he was called and asked to attend a trial for a cleaning role. Client x attended this and was offered the role. EESPRO funded him with a Burtons' voucher as he did not have any appropriate clothing to work in. He was offered a part time cleaning job starting the following Monday. The worker was able to complete a referral to Work Wise and as the worker could evidence his employment they could provide him with a three month rail and bus pass so that he could attend work and attend appointments.

Client x has been able to stay stable on his script and continues to engage. He has also enrolled in a part time art course at college. The worker continues to support the client to sustain work and continue his college studies.

Source: Turning Point Case Study

Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme

The **Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme** was led by Birmingham City Council and aimed to stimulate the supply of apprentice places in the workplace for residents in Birmingham. The demand for apprenticeship places was found to be continuously high, and as a result initial funding allocation was increased for this project to support such demand.

An overwhelming majority of beneficiaries for this scheme were recruited from priority areas (with only 8% coming from outside these areas). The project has also engaged with and formed links with many employers through this project. Table A3.x below includes a sample case study of employer engagement in the Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme:

Table A3.3: Client Experiences, Birmingham Apprenticeship Scheme

Care Through The Millennium (CTTM) run homes providing specialized healthcare and rehabilitation services for adults with learning disabilities, mental health and Neurodisability needs.

The company was established in 1996 and has 20 residential homes for clients from eighteen years of age onwards who need support and care. The managers and staff of the individual CTTM units all receive extensive training and support, from the central team which is made up of professionals in the fields of HR, training, finance and marketing.

Due to the complex needs of the service users which the organisation supports, the company usually likes to take on experienced, qualified staff who have worked with people with disabilities previously. Understanding the importance of confidentiality is also a very important part of the role due to the nature of the work involved both within the homes and in the central office. The BAS programme encouraged CTTM to take on six young people, five to work in the care homes providing additional support to the regular staff and one to work at head office supporting the administration/accounts team. This has meant that CTTM has been able to provide additional support to its clients who can now participate in additional activities in their care homes and this is further improving their quality of life.

For the young people concerned, the BAS scheme has given them a sense of purpose and provided them with an opportunity to develop a fulfilling career. They have all grown in confidence and are highly regarded by both staff and clients. They have all become fully integrated into the CTTM team and all are likely to be offered full-time permanent posts with the company at the end of the scheme.

For the mentors, the First Base Learning programme has provided them with a structured framework for working with the young people and also provided models that can be used for future staff development. The learning programme has helped staff to reflect on the way they train the young people and to develop more personal self-awareness. They found sharing their experiences and views with others in their learning groups particularly useful.

For the company, the benefits definitely outweighed the costs because the wage subsidy meant that they could spend time developing the apprentices at minimum additional cost to the business.

Quote from mentor: "We would have no hesitation in taking on apprentices in the future should the scheme be re-run. The benefits to the company, the service users and the apprentices themselves definitely outweighed the costs for us and allowed us to consider employing staff that we would not have been able to offer an opportunity to previously."

Quote from apprentice: "The apprentice scheme has allowed me the opportunity to gain new skills in the workplace and given me the chance to start a career in a friendly and warm environment. Without this opportunity I believe that I would have found it hard to get into work".

Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Targeted Discretionary Housing Payments

Targeted Discretionary Housing Payments is led by Birmingham City Council and the aim of the project is to support people from priority SOAs in the transition from welfare to work. The project provides additional financial and practical support to clients in this transition period for up to 12 weeks to maximise their chance of sustaining their new employment. The project also aimed to develop closer, mutually supportive referral arrangements with other agencies and employment support providers, and overall the project has been successful in promoting such joint working amongst supporting organisations and departments within Birmingham City Council.

The case studies below highlight the impact of the project upon some of the project's clients:

Table A3.4: Client Case Study, Targeted Discretionary Housing Payments

Client Case Study A: Miss A

Miss A is a single parent with 2 children aged 15 and 10. She describes her ethnicity as Asian Indian.

Miss A started work on 11 August 2009 after being unemployed for 28 weeks. She then made a claim for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit on her new income. Noting that she had started work, the Benefit Services sent out an application/agreement form for the Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment scheme.

The TDHP was calculated and Miss A qualified as she lived in a Super Output Area and was entitled to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit on her new income. As she had been on Job Seekers Allowance for more than 26 weeks she automatically qualified for the 4 weeks Extended Payment Period under Housing Benefit regulations for her Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit which gave her full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. After this, under the Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment project she qualified for a further 8 weeks 100% Council Tax benefit, 4 weeks 100% Housing Benefit and another 4 weeks Housing Benefit at a slightly reduced rate. The amount of TDHP Council Tax Benefit awarded was £80.56. The Housing benefit awarded under TDHP was £231.64. In total Miss A was paid £312.20 under the scheme.

Miss A explained that the extra assistance she received helped towards her rent arrears. Before becoming unemployed she had fallen in to arrears with her rent. When she commenced work, the £231.64 helped towards her arrears, keeping her housed. Miss A said the financial assistance helped reduce the amount of anxiety that she was feeling with starting a new job. She commented on the difficulties of dealing with 2 children, meeting new colleagues, learning new skills and rearranging her finances. Now that is aware of the scheme she confirmed that she would advise her friends about it. Miss A is still in work.

Client Case Study A: Mrs T

Mrs T is a single parent with two children. Her Income Support claim ended on 16 March 2009. As she had been on Income Support for more that 26 weeks she automatically qualified for the 4 weeks Extended Payment Period for her Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. After this under the Targeted Discretionary Housing Payment project she qualified for a further 8 weeks 100% Council Tax benefit, 4 weeks 100% Housing Benefit and another 4 weeks tapered Housing Benefit. The amount of Council Tax Benefit awarded under the TDHP was £80.00. The Housing benefit awarded under TDHP was £136.30. In total Mrs T was paid £216.30 under the scheme.

She received information about the scheme from the Job Centre Plus and Benefit Services. She felt that she was assisted financially through the scheme and that the al benefit had helped her remain in work. She was pleased in the speed that the payment was made. She advised that the rent credit was extremely useful. She did admit that until she had received a call from Benefit Services she did not fully understand the scheme as she had not read the letters sent to her.

Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Debt and Financial Inclusion

The **Debt and Financial Inclusion** project was co-ordinated by Birmingham City Council and aims to improve the sustainability of employment through supporting the – workless (pre employment) and newly employed (post employment) in priority areas of Birmingham. It aims to guide these groups towards the advices, knowledge and skills they need to manage their own finances and sustain their employment.

The case study below highlights an example of the impact of the project has had upon its' clients:

Table A3.5: Client Case Study, Debt and Financial Inclusion

Get it & Keep it Project (GIKI) Case Study 1 (Quarter 3 2010-11)

"Summary of outcomes achieved for Client:

Priority debt: Rent arrears due to benefit problems £979

Non priority debt: Severn Trent water arrears £265

Financial outcome achieved: £1080 Housing benefit reinstated and credited to the rent account.

Non financial outcomes achieved: Possible possession action avoided

Ongoing assistance from GIKI team: Appointment to complete application to Severn Trent trust

Ongoing assistance from GIKI team: Appointment to complete application to Severn Trent Trust fund and explore ways of reducing spending.

Client Details/Circumstances

The client lives in Birmingham and has a 5 year refugee status. Although she is married, her partner lives in Eritrea, Africa. The client has no dependents and resides in Birmingham City Council property; the clients rent per week is: £86.00.

The client has been unemployed for 4 months having been made redundant. Prior to this she was working as a waitress for 8 months on a prt time bases- her salary was minimum wage. This has been the clients 1 and only job. The client states she wants to go to work again and is very eager to get back into the workforce. As a result of the loss of her employment she is struggling to cope financially and has had problems with her benefits which has resulted in priority debts that she is worried about.

The client has no family in the UK; and in August 2010 she had to go back to Eritrea for two weeks due to family issues. The client had informed the job centre that she would be out of the county for 2 weeks and subsequently closed her JSA claim. The client was not familiar with benefit claim rules and did not know that it is permissible to take a 2 week break from JSA without the claim being stopped.

After cancelling her JSA claim the client had to wait 2 months until she received her visa for travel, this meant that she had not received any jobseekers allowance between August and October 2010. Her housing benefit and council tax benefit had also stopped as a result of her ending her JSA claim. The client stated that she was not aware that she would be made liable for council tax as these had always been covered by benefit.

The client stated when she came back from Eritrea she placed a new claim for income based jobseekers in November 2010. She has also been in receipt of full housing and council tax benefit since November 2010. Although her rent and council tax benefits are not being paid by benefit she is struggling financially to purchase essential items such as food and cannot currently afford to pay back the rent arrears.

As a result of her jobseekers allowance being stopped when she left the country the client had accrued rent arrears of £979. She also has a debt with Severn Trent Water. The client has sought the assistance of the Get it & Keep It team so that she can manage her limited budget while she is on JSA. She also needs help from the team to resolve her benefit issues.

Action taken by caseworker/client:

A quick benefit calculation was conducted to make sure the client was in receipt of the correct amount of benefits; it could be determined the client was in receipt of £15.83 p/w for CTB; and the remaining amount of benefits was correct. The client is in receipt of the following benefits since 16th November 2010; Housing benefit- £86.00 p/w, full Council Tax Benefit, Income Based JSA- £65.45 p/w.

To have the full financial picture the advisor completed a monthly budget sheet with the client which was looked at the clients income and expenditure. It was clear from the budget that the client was having deductions from her benefit which were impacting on her ability to buy essential items including food. The advisor explained to the client that it may be possible to have these deductions which would give her more money for essential items and priority debts.

The advisor contacted the DWP during the appointment to find out more about the reason for the benefit problems. The advisor was informed the client had not told them of any changes in her circumstances and that it was this which had led to her benefits being stopped. The GIKI advisor explained that she can assist the client to provide the information required by the DWP and that she has 6 months to provide the information but with ongoing assistance from the advisor it is likely that the client will be able to provide the required information much sooner. The advisor also requested that the benefit payments were backdated. The DWP said that they would accept an application for backdated benefits but this must be done in writing. The client said that due to her lack of language skills she would like the advisor to send the letter on her behalf; to which the advisor agreed.

The advisor then contacted required the Ladywood rent team and they stated the client is having £19.80 deducted per week from her benefit. The advisor explained the client's situation and the rent team agreed to reduce the weekly deduction to £3.30 until the issue is resolved which has saved the client £16.50 per week.

After completing the budget sheet the advisor and client could see the client had £9.96 at the end of the month to pay her creditors. The advisor explained to the client that they could submit her financial statement with the offer to Seven Trent as a gesture of good will towards paying the debt. In addition to this it was agreed that the GIKI advisor would also assist the client to apply to the Severn Trent trust fund as her arrears are more than £250.00. This may result in the client's arrears being written off if her application is successful. As the client has difficulty with written English she felt it would be unlikely that she would be able to apply to the trust fund without help from the advisor.

It was agreed with the client that another appointment would be provided to help with the trust fund application and to look at her budget to see if there are any other ways that she can be assisted to save her money on her expenditure. The client was also advised about credit unions as a means of being able to make savings to help her budget for unforeseen expenditure; this will be explored again in more detail at her next appointment.

As a result of the interventions carried out by the GIKI caseworker the clients housing benefit has not been backdated to the amount of £1088.50- which has cleared the clients rent arrears and has credited her bank account by £108.31! The client is now able to continue her job hunting without the fear of losing her home caused by the problems she had with her benefits. She is also finding her budget easier to manage now that her deductions from benefit have been reduced. The advisor will provide ongoing assistance to reduce the clients water debt and achieve a sustainable budget which the client can manage."

Ref: 169475797 Advisor NA

Source: CAB Case Study

NESP/CESP Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Skills and Jobs Match

The **Skills and Jobs Match** was delivered in the Hall Green Constituency by Ashiana, a consortium comprising third sector working. The contract provided a range of services to assist people into employment, education and training. The project offered support to clients in developing CVs and interview experience as well as job searches and voluntary work experience.

The client feedback in Table A3.X below is from clients who have received support from a range of consortium providers. The quotes demonstrate the impacts that the project has had upon them as individuals.

Table A3.6: Client Feedback from Hall Green

"I have had a lot of support from Ashiana... I have had support to develop my CV which makes me proud... I am happy with the service and have recommended it to others who have also used the service."

"I heard about TUC from a worker on the street...I have been out of work for a year and want to get back into work and earning...Without TUC I would not know where else to go...I go to TUC every week for help with job searches and they have helped me with my CV...It has been very helpful support and there is nothing they could do better."

"I am a lone parent and I hadn't worked for some time...I had lost my confidence and didn't know where to start...I first went to MEC last year and have completed basic skills courses, interview skills courses, participated in women only classes and they have helped me with my CV...I have also been helped with job searches and have been to several interviews...I have been to two interviews this week and I am waiting to hear back...The best thing has been gaining my confidence...My goal is to get a job and stand on my own two feet and they have put me on the right path."

"Local Leagues has supported us with writing our CVs and job searches...We have also attended a number of free courses...We live near to the offices which has been really helpful...they have provided us with excellent support."

NESP/CESP Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Intermediate Labour Market Contract

The **Intermediate Labour Market (ILM)** contract in Hodge Hill is managed and delivered by a consortium of providers (Prospects Services, Jericho Foundation and Birmingham Enterprise). Through securing funding, Jericho has been able to form links with local employers in order to help local people into local work or work placements. Such employment reduces travel costs and improves the accessibility of employment.

The case study below highlights the experience of a client who received support from Jericho Foundation for the ILM element of the contract:

Table A3.7: Client Experiences, Hodge Hill ILM Contract

Originally from Zimbabwe, client X moved to England in 2002 and joined Jericho's Hodge Hill programme in April 2010. Slow immigration processes, as well as other barriers meant that she had no UK work experience or qualifications, although she had worked for 10 years as a shop manager back home in Zimbabwe. Being out of work for so long had a negative effect on client x's confidence and the lack of UK employment proved to be a significant barrier when applying for work. Through unfortunate circumstances, Client x had also gained a criminal record soon after entering the UK, which made finding work even more difficult.

Client x began receiving employment support from Jericho, writing a CV, developing interview skills and confidence and moved into an external paid placement for 4 months with a care company in the September. Client x worked primarily with sufferers of dementia and showed huge commitment to this work, travelling on 2 buses each way, 3 times a day to work with the client in her care. She made such a positive contribution that the care company employed her for an additional 10 hours each week to supplement hours funded by her placement.

Client x's confidence grew as she progressed through the placement and she was able to attend different training events offered by Jericho. A confidence building workshop helped give Client x tools that she could implement in different areas of her life and she also enrolled at Birmingham Metropolitan College on an NVQ Level 2 course in Health and Social Care. This course required her to have a Basic First Aid qualification, which Jericho was also able to source and fund, allowing her to progress with her course.

These opportunities have provided Client x with UK employment on her CV, as well as confidence she has gained through the work experience. In particular, a placement in care has shown her that she can still pursue this career and use her skills despite her criminal record and proved that people believe in her. Following her placement, Client x has now moved into employment with a care agency, working in different nursing and residential homes and continues to apply for permanent positions within the care sector.

NESP/CESP Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Supporting Clients with Disabilities

Supporting Clients with Disabilities is delivered by Birmingham Disability Consortium (BDC, Lead agency Action for Blind People) in the Ladywood constituency (alongside three identical contracts cross Ladywood & Soho, Nechells and Aston). The aim of the projects is to support clients with disabilities and health related barriers to employment through providing vocational training linked to specific vacancies as well as working closely with GPs and health related organizations to provide additional support.

The case studies below highlight the experience of clients who received support from the Supporting Clients with Disabilities contract:

Table A3.9: Client Experiences, Ladywood Supporting People with Disabilities

Client A is partially sighted. Between 1987 and 2008 he worked in hotels, but was made redundant. Following attendance on the Advance to Work programme, was told about support through RNIB. Client A has received support in applying for jobs, gain help from a disability employment advisor at JC+, and has conducted a number of test interviews. To date Client A has had interviews for catering roles at a local hospital, and also at Bourneville College.

Client A has recently had the opportunity to do voluntary work at Civic Catering, working four hours a day, three days a week at Lancaster Queensway. This is providing good experience, and is very enjoyable. Client A speaks very highly about the support received to date: "Thumbs up – totally fantastic. I did not know about support like this. I am hoping to have a catering job, and I have taken my basic food hygiene certificate".

Client B was referred to BDC by Job Centre Plus, and values the way in which support provided relates to people with eye conditions. Support included financial support, training, attendance at events, role playing in terms of different employment situations and campaigning. According to B "It is hard to find people who understand my condition, and I have had help to break back into a routine. I don't know what I would have done without it. I hope to find an employer who understands my condition".

Client C has longstanding physical and learning disabilities. Support received includes a package of learning support provided by Rathbones in a timetabled approach around role play, core skills and IT, as well training in Health and Safety. C had engaged with other providers, commenting "I got fed up of writing the same CV and taking it to every shop I could find". C wants a job that is suited to his needs, and values the support he gets from Rathbones "they even come to interviews with you".

Client D likes role playing drama, and computer work on job searches. D wants work in caring or cleaning, and feels that the support has helped with confidence.

NESP/CESP Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: South Works Neighbourhood Programme

The **South Works Neighbourhood Programme (SWNP)** contract was awarded to Pertemps People and Development Group (PPDG) to provide a coherent, end to end service for individuals and employers in order to achieve sustainable employment. The project targeted workless residents in Edgbaston, Northfield and Selly Oak Constituencies' 38 priority SOAs. PPDG worked with Freshwinds and Groundworks as sub contractors in the delivery of the project and provided a range of specialist provision for with Disabilities and Lone Parent claimants, those aged over 50 and young people in receipt of a Working Age Benefit as required. Support and interventions included: skills assessment, training, access to employment and post employment support to achieve sustainable employment for workless clients.

The case study below highlights the experience of clients who received support from the South Works Neighbourhood Programme:

Table A3.9: Client Experiences, South Works Neighbourhood Programme

Clients engaged at SWNP were helped with finding work, interview techniques, training, updating CVs and gaining qualifications. A number had recent experience of short time work (such as manufacturing, cleaning and seasonal retail work).

Clients were confused as to why they qualified for support, but friends and family did not "I can't understand why I got supported, but others didn't".

Help with interviews was an area that was area of support that was regularly raised by clients "When I first started working I never needed interview skills, as I worked in manufacturing. Now to get a job you need to be good at interviews, and be confident. PPDG has really helped me with interviews".

Other areas of support included help with equipment (such as protective work wear) and help with transports, and benefits advice. Clients felt that PPDG listened to their needs and aspirations "you are not treated as just a number – they work hard to find you real jobs" and "PPDG will tell you what you are entitled to".

In general, clients were very positive about the support they had received, and felt confident in their ability to get another job. "It's bad enough losing your job, but PPDG listen".

NESP/CESP Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Supporting Clients Not Engaged in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

The **Supporting Clients Not Engaged in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) contract in Perry Barr** was also being delivered by Pertemps People and Development Group (PPDG). This project had a focus on supporting 18 to 24 year olds into work through the Intermediate Labour Market and soft skills support. The project also focused on retail employment and engaging disaffected/disengaged young people who had been out of employment for 3 months+. Existing networks of local referral agencies were used and publicity sessions were held in key locations to encourage participation.

The case studies below demonstrate the client experiences of the Perry Bar NEET programme:

Table A3.10: Client Experiences, Perry Barr NEET Contract

Client A heard about the support as a result of a family member working for PPDG. She has been out of work for a number of months, and was struggling with motivational issues in terms of looking for work. Client A has received support in updating her CV and general help in looking for work. She found she got the most from 1 to 1 support, adding that PPDG will chase you, and keep in touch.

Client A is still looking for work, but was employed for 6 months by PPDG, which provided her with a real confidence boost. She has recently started a CTEC course. She is looking for admin or customer service work.

Like Client A, Client B was first made aware of the support through a family friend who worked at PPDG. Client B received support in updating her CV, with interview techniques, IT training. Client B benefited from a 6 month placement, with a bus pass helping her get to work every day. Client B now has a full time job at a library, where she works on the counter, as well as back office tasks and "lots of training!"

PPDG gave Client B the push she needed from the start to find work. They arranged information days at the library, and ensured that everyone who attended was given an interview – which is how Client B found her job.

Client C dropped into a centre where support was being delivered, and found that he qualified. He has received help in getting a job through interview techniques and CV updating. Client C is now working 20 hours a week since June 2010.

NESP/CESP Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Lone Parent Support

The **Lone Parent Support** contract in Erdington was managed and delivered by Employment Needs Training Agency (Enta), working in partnership with Merlin Venture. The project also involves a consortium of 22 partner organisations with a track record of experience and success in working with groups who are a long way from employment, training and education. The project itself aims to engage and support lone parents from Erdington, Stockland Green, Tyburn and Kingstanding wards in Birmingham in accessing employment. Partners have developed a range of activities including checking benefits and postcode eligibility, completion of an agreed action plan and ongoing support and mentoring from the project team in achieving this plan. Continual support is given after the client enters employment, with contact made in weeks 1, 13 and 26.

Erdington Constituency have also paid for Benefit Advisor as an addition to the project to offer advice on debt, benefit roll on and housing benefit support. The client feedback below is from an interview with four beneficiaries who have received support through the project and illustrates how the project has impacted upon them.

Table A3.11: Client Feedback, Lone Parent Support

"I have been attending sessions since the summer and there is no limit on how long I can keep coming. It is really nice to just walk in and not feel intimidated. All the staff are really friendly and down to earth – I feel that they understand me at the same level. The service has been so good I have recommended it to my family and friends."

"The support has been a lot better than Jobcentre Plus because I don't feel as intimidated."

"The support has given me the confidence to go ahead and make phone calls because the staff have helped build my confidence to do so."

"I was already working but Jobcentre Plus wanted me to do more hours therefore I came here to get some more support and am now doing bar work which I really enjoy."

"The support has helped me apply for specific jobs and because it's local it is a lot easier to attend the sessions particularly as I can take my child along. It is a really important service for young mums."

"The staff sit with you and help with things like CV's if I get stuck. Nothing I have been to in the past is like this."

Partnership working for the Lone Parent Support programme has worked really well. It has helped to enhance the organisation's reputation, capacity building and their profile. Relationships with the other organisations need to be well built and everyone needs to meet on a regular basis.

NESP/CESP Project Case Study Beneficiary Summary: Targeted Engagement Campaign

The **Targeted Engagement Campaign** contract in Yardley is delivered by the BEST Network. The BEST Network includes approximately 40 third sector organizations and the providers involved in the delivery of the Targeted Engagement Campaign include: Bangladesh Womens Association ERC, BDRC, Crossmatch Solutions, Crossover 616, Enter Key Training, The Jericho Foundation, Remploy, Tysley and Greet ERC.

The campaign targets participants who have experienced difficulties in accessing mainstream employment and skills support by linking with local health service providers, voluntary groups, other community partners and specialist organizations. The campaign then offers a diagnostic assessment of skills and needs, links to employment and skills support programmes, access to trained and qualified advisors, access to work placements/volunteering opportunities and intensive support and mentoring for participants for up to 26 weeks after they gain employment.

Set out below is a sample of the quotes received from five case study interviewees who had benefitted from the Targeted Engagement Campaign in Yardley.

Table A3.12: Case Study Quotes, Targeted Engagement Campaign

"It was very difficult to find the project – there were no signs for the BEST network".

"I would definitely come back – I've found 2 or 3 great opportunities I hope to work towards. I have always worked and always want to."

"I would recommend BEST stay open for as long as possible – if it closes where will I go for help."

"If it wasn't for BEST I would never have known about my new job. It's been difficult since I lost the last job as I also lost a lot of friends – BEST helped me build my confidence back".

"I've recommended BEST to my mother, sister, brother and a friend."

"BEST gets the Job Centre off your back. BEST is far better than the Job Centre – they actually do help and they can't stop your benefits".

"I like everything about BEST – there's nothing wrong with it".

ANNEX 4: APPROACH FOR OUTCOME ANALYSIS

This appendix outlines in more detail the approach used to carry out the analysis of progress against outcomes for the BEDP WNF Evaluation. The Appendix summarises the approach that has been taken, identifying the data sources used, any issues with the data available, and then presents the data for each of the five National Indicators (NI's).

APPROACH

Presented below are data on each of the key outcome National Indicators in turn. The approach adopted for each Indicator is the same and covers:

- Baseline position
- Original target
- Revised target
- Data sources used
- Summary of Birmingham and West Midlands regional data
- Summary of other comparators (national and core cities data)

Given recent changes around LAAs, National Indicators and related data sets, there are issues with some of the data sources. This includes changes to the way some indicators are measured (e.g. working age population calculations – which impact on rates for employment (NI 151) and worklessness (NI 153), cessation of availability of some data sets, changes to the benefits system – which affects comparability over time for specific benefits, etc.) Where these issues and changes have the potential to affect (or have affected) the data presented below, these are noted in the relevant discussion below.

NI 153

Baseline position: The baseline for NI 153 Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods was 30.8% (May 2007).

Original target: The original target for NI 153 was to improve this position as follows:

2008-09 – baseline minus 0.5% percentage points (i.e. 30.3%)

2009-10 – baseline minus 1.5% percentage points (i.e. 29.3%)

2010-11 – baseline minus 1.5% percentage points (i.e. 29.8%)

Revised target: The targets were revised following discussions and negotiations with GOWM, and the agreed revised target for NI 153 for 2010-11 was to achieve a gap with the West Midlands region average of +0.1 percentage point.

Data sources used: There are a range of data sources available that provide data on NI 153 (Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods). However, given that some of the original data sources are no longer being updated, and others use alternative working age population data the exact approach for the analysis of NI 153 has had to adopt a twin track approach to ensure that a sufficiently robust and detailed level of analysis can be achieved – in terms of assessing the progress against the agreed target above, and also in terms of using the most reliable and up to date LSOA level data available.

It should also be noted that, for Birmingham, there were originally 187 LSOAs identified as the worst performing neighbourhoods – i.e. where the rate is 25% or more (when the baseline was set in May 2007). However, analysis of the relevant data in May 2009 (using the average rate for the four quarters to May 2009) led to the identification of a further 48 LSOAs whose rate was 25% or more. As such, there are a total of 235 LSOAs in Birmingham for which data is presented below.

In order to assess progress against the final agreed target (i.e. relative to the West Midlands regional average figure for NI 153) data from two sources are presented.

First, data from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is presented. This is taken from http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=national_indicators, and provides data from Quarter 1, 2007 to Quarter 2, 2010. This data uses the 'old' definitions of working age population (i.e. 16/64 for males, and 16/59 for females), and allows for comparison between Birmingham rates and West Midland regional rates. It also allows for comparator analysis to be carried out against national data and core cities data (including relevant regional data for the other core cities). However, this data source does not clarify which LSOA's are included in the data.

Second, data from data.gov.uk is presented. This is taken from <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/ni-153-working-age-people-claiming-out-of-work-benefits-in-the-worst-performing-neighbourhoods>, and provides data (rates) from May 2000 to November 2009. This source also uses the 'old' definitions of working age population (i.e. 16/64 for males and 16/59 for females), and identifies the worst performing neighbourhoods using the baseline of the four quarter average between May 2006 and February 2007. (It is therefore assumed that it includes only the original 187 LSOAs but not the additional 48 LSOAs from the 2009 analysis). This data also allows for comparison between Birmingham rates and West Midland rates, but only for the original 187 LSOAs. This source also allows for comparator analysis to be carried out against national data and core cities data (including relevant regional data for the other core cities).

In addition to the use of national data sources, which enable (notwithstanding the aforementioned assumptions and caveats) progress to be assessed against the final, agreed target for Birmingham, as well as comparator analysis to be carried out, further data analysis has been carried out.

Using NOMIS <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk> data on benefit claimants (working age clients for small areas) has been used to provide a more accurate assessment of NI 153 for Birmingham only. Using this NOMIS data source, and including the relevant benefit claimants (i.e. job seekers, ESA and incapacity benefits, lone parents, and other on income related benefits) provides a count for the number of individuals in each LSOA on claiming out of work benefits.

This data source, alongside data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14357> allows LSOA level rates for NI 153 to be calculated. This data can then be aggregated to provide a NI 153 rate for the original 187 target LSOAs, for the additional 48 LSOAs, for all 235 target LSOAs and for a Birmingham wide rate (covering all LSOAs). The rate for the target LSOAs can then be compared to the Birmingham wide rate to assess any narrowing of the gap with the city-wide average. Whilst this does not allow an assessment of the final agreed target for NI 153, it will allow an assessment of the extent to which the rate for the target LSOAs has changed relative to the city-wide rate.

There are a number of aspects that need to be noted about using this source (NOMIS combined with ONS population estimates). This source provides raw data (number of claimants for various types of out of work benefits) from August 1999 to May 2010,

although data is only used to cover the period from the baseline (August 2006-May 2007) forward. It allows the rates for all 235 target LSOAs to be calculated (i.e. the original 187 from 2007 plus the additional 48 from 2009). In order to calculate the rates, ONS data on mid-year estimates (MYE) of LSOA level population - <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14357> - is used.

In order to use the most relevant data for each rate calculation, it was decided that:

- The LSOA population MYE for 2006 was used to calculate the rates for the quarters ending August 2006, November 2006, February 2007 and May 2007.
- The LSOA population MYE for 2007 was used to calculate the rates for the quarters ending August 2007, November 2007, February 2008 and May 2008.
- The LSOA population MYE for 2008 was used to calculate the rates for the quarters ending August 2008, November 2008, February 2009 and May 2009.
- The LSOA population MYE for 2009 was used to calculate the rates for the quarters ending August 2009, November 2009, February 2010 and May 2010.

This approach (NOMIS and ONS data) does not allow for comparison between Birmingham rates and West Midland rates – as it is not possible to identify the “worst performing LSOA’s for the region” from NOMIS. In addition, and for the same reason, it does not allow for comparator analysis (i.e. with national data and core cities data to be carried out).

Finally, NOMIS data on working age clients for small areas at the LSOA level is rounded to the nearest 5: “To ensure data do not allow the disclosure of confidential information, all counts have been adjusted using a variant of controlled rounding to avoid the disclosure of any personal information. All cells have been rounded to the nearest 5 and the total equals the sum of the disaggregation shown. Any count that is shown as zero may not be a real zero.” (Source: NOMIS website).

Summary of Birmingham and West Midlands regional data:

Data from both DWP and also data.gov.uk are presented below. Whilst the rates are slightly different, the target for Birmingham – of achieving a rate that has a gap with the West Midlands region average of +0.1% - has been achieved using either data set.

The DWP data shows that, as at Quarter 2 2010, the Birmingham rate is 30.3% compared to a regional rate of 31.3%. As such, the Birmingham rate is actually 1.0 percentage point lower than the regional rate and the target has been achieved.

Table A4.1: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods			
	Birmingham	West Midlands	Difference
Q1 2007	30.3	30.0	+0.3
Q2 2007	30.0	29.8	+0.2
Q3 2007	29.6	29.5	+0.1
Q4 2007	29.2	29.2	0.0
Q1 2008	28.8	28.8	0.0
Q2 2008	28.5	28.6	-0.1
Q3 2008	28.3	28.5	-0.2
Q4 2008	28.4	28.7	-0.3
Q1 2009	28.8	29.3	-0.5
Q2 2009	29.3	30.0	-0.7
Q3 2009	29.9	30.7	-0.8
Q4 2009	30.3	31.2	-0.9
Q1 2010	30.5	31.4	-0.9
Q2 2010	30.3	31.3	-1.0

Source: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=national_indicators

Summary position for NI 153: Based on most recent DWP data (Quarter 2, 2010), this indicator is on target.

The data.gov.uk data shows that, as at November 2009, the Birmingham rate is 30.9% compared to a regional rate of 31.5%. As such, the Birmingham rate is actually 0.6 percentage point lower than the regional rate and the target has been achieved.

Table A4.2: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods			
	Birmingham	West Midlands	Difference
15/05/2007	30.1	-	-
15/08/2007	29.8	-	-
15/11/2007	29.3	-	-
15/02/2008	28.9	28.9	0.0
15/05/2008	28.6	28.7	-0.1
15/08/2008	28.5	28.6	-0.1
15/11/2008	28.5	28.8	-0.3
15/02/2009	29.0	29.4	-0.4
15/05/2009	29.6	30.2	-0.6
15/08/2009	30.3	30.9	-0.6
15/11/2009	30.9	31.5	-0.6

Source: <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/ni-153-working-age-people-claiming-out-of-work-benefits-in-the-worst-performing-neighbourhoods>

Summary position for NI 153: Based on most recent data.gov.uk data (November 2009), this indicator is on target.

Evaluation of the BEDP WNF Worklessness and Enterprise Programme: Outcome 4

Summary of other comparators (national and core cities data):

Table A4.3: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (Comparator data)

	Liverpool	Manchester	NW	Newcastle	NE	Nottingham	EM	Bristol	SW	Leeds	Sheffield	YH	England
Q1 2007	34.5	32.4	33.1	32.6	31.8	28.6	29.5	29.9	29.5	28.6	29.5	30.1	30.7
Q2 2007	34.0	31.9	32.8	32.4	31.6	28.3	29.3	29.7	29.3	28.2	29.2	29.8	30.5
Q3 2007	33.7	31.4	32.6	32.2	31.3	27.9	29.0	29.3	29.0	27.7	28.7	29.5	30.2
Q4 2007	33.3	30.8	32.2	31.8	31.0	27.4	28.6	28.9	28.6	27.3	28.3	29.2	29.8
Q1 2008	33.1	30.3	32.0	31.4	30.6	27.0	28.2	28.5	28.4	27.0	27.9	28.8	29.5
Q2 2008	32.8	29.8	31.8	31.1	30.4	26.8	28.0	28.3	28.2	26.9	27.5	28.6	29.2
Q3 2008	32.7	29.5	31.7	30.7	30.3	26.6	27.9	28.1	28.2	26.8	27.4	28.5	29.1
Q4 2008	32.8	29.3	31.8	30.7	30.4	26.7	28.1	28.2	28.4	27.1	27.5	28.8	29.2
Q1 2009	33.1	29.5	32.3	30.8	31.0	27.1	28.7	28.5	29.0	27.6	28.0	29.4	29.7
Q2 2009	33.6	29.7	32.8	30.9	31.6	27.4	29.3	29.0	29.6	28.3	28.7	30.2	30.3
Q3 2009	34.0	30.0	33.4	31.0	32.0	27.8	29.9	29.3	30.1	29.0	29.3	30.9	30.9
Q4 2009	34.2	30.2	33.7	30.9	32.3	28.0	30.4	29.5	30.5	29.4	29.6	31.4	31.2
Q1 2010	34.2	30.3	33.8	30.9	32.3	28.1	30.6	29.6	30.5	29.5	29.9	31.5	31.3
Q2 2010	33.9	30.3	33.6	30.7	32.0	28.0	30.5	29.5	30.4	29.3	29.9	31.5	31.2

Source: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=national_indicators

Focusing on the data from appropriate comparator core cities for Birmingham – namely Liverpool and Manchester (see <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/566881.pdf> for reference to these three cities having the highest number of concentrations outside of London) the table below shows the performance of Birmingham against its regional average as compared to the performance of both Liverpool and Manchester against their regional average.

Evaluation of the BEDP WNF Worklessness and Enterprise Programme: Outcome 4

Table A4.4: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (Comparator data)

	Liverpool	Manchester	NW	NW-Liv Gap	NW-Manc Gap	Birmingham	West Midlands	Difference
Q1 2007	34.5	32.4	33.1	1.4	-0.7	30.3	30.0	+0.3
Q2 2007	34.0	31.9	32.8	1.2	-0.9	30.0	29.8	+0.2
Q3 2007	33.7	31.4	32.6	1.1	-1.2	29.6	29.5	+0.1
Q4 2007	33.3	30.8	32.2	1.1	-1.4	29.2	29.2	0.0
Q1 2008	33.1	30.3	32.0	1.1	-1.7	28.8	28.8	0.0
Q2 2008	32.8	29.8	31.8	1	-2	28.5	28.6	-0.1
Q3 2008	32.7	29.5	31.7	1	-2.2	28.3	28.5	-0.2
Q4 2008	32.8	29.3	31.8	1	-2.5	28.4	28.7	-0.3
Q1 2009	33.1	29.5	32.3	0.8	-2.8	28.8	29.3	-0.5
Q2 2009	33.6	29.7	32.8	0.8	-3.1	29.3	30.0	-0.7
Q3 2009	34.0	30.0	33.4	0.6	-3.4	29.9	30.7	-0.8
Q4 2009	34.2	30.2	33.7	0.5	-3.5	30.3	31.2	-0.9
Q1 2010	34.2	30.3	33.8	0.4	-3.5	30.5	31.4	-0.9
Q2 2010	33.9	30.3	33.6	0.3	-3.3	30.3	31.3	-1.0

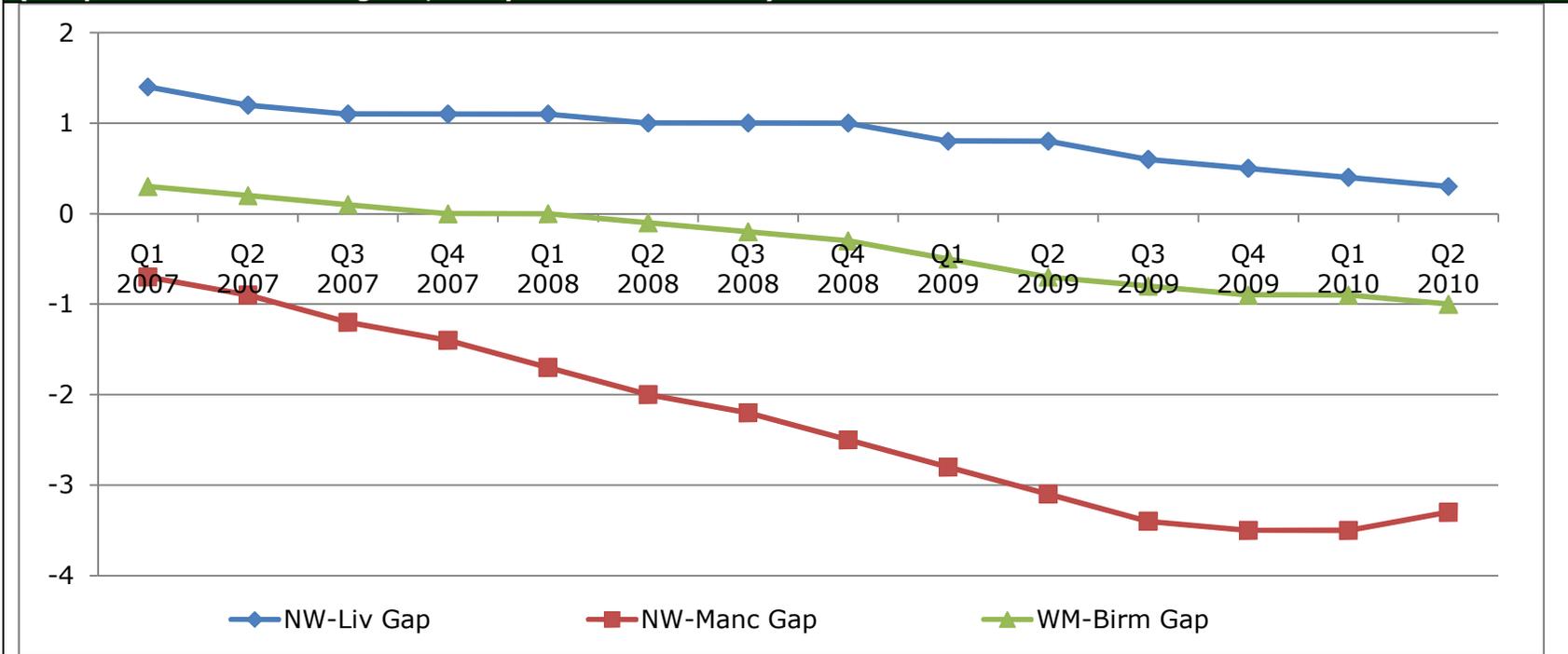
Source: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=national_indicators

The data shows that when compared against Liverpool in absolute terms Birmingham's rate is consistently lower. Similarly, when compared with Manchester in absolute terms, Birmingham's rate is comparable, being of a very similar level, especially during 2009 and 2010.

Looking at the gap between the city average and the regional comparators, the figure below shows the trend over time for each of the three ratios against the regional comparators.

The data shows that Birmingham's performance as a proportion of the regional average compares favourably with Liverpool, but is behind Manchester.

Figure A4.1: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods area (Comparator Data – Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester)



Evaluation of the BEDP WNF Worklessness and Enterprise Programme: Outcome 4

Summary of Birmingham specific data:

Data from NOMIS and ONS, used to calculate LSOA specific rates for the original 187 LSOAs, the additional 48 LSOAs, all 235 target LSOAs, and a Birmingham average are presented in the tables and figures below.

Table A4.5: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods																
	Aug 2006	Nov 2006	Feb 2007	May 2007	Aug 2007	Nov 2007	Feb 2008	May 2008	Aug 2008	Nov 2008	Feb 2009	May 2009	Aug 2009	Nov 2009	Feb 2010	May 2010
Original 187 target LSOAs	30.47	30.21	30.30	29.65	29.09	28.53	28.74	28.50	28.31	28.80	30.29	30.48	30.66	30.54	30.58	29.62
Additional 48 target LSOAs	22.79	22.51	22.79	22.32	22.07	21.85	21.84	21.69	22.10	23.10	24.71	25.25	25.81	25.43	25.34	24.38
All 235 target LSOAs	28.91	28.64	28.77	28.15	27.67	27.18	27.34	27.12	27.06	27.66	29.17	29.43	29.69	29.52	29.53	28.57
Non target LSOAs	12.89	12.73	12.68	12.43	12.40	12.14	12.18	12.16	12.44	12.90	14.00	14.30	14.55	14.38	14.35	13.84
Total for all LSOAs	18.67	18.47	18.49	18.10	17.93	17.58	17.67	17.58	17.76	18.26	19.52	19.80	20.06	19.90	19.88	19.20

Table A4.6: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods																
	Aug 2006	Nov 2006	Feb 2007	May 2007	Aug 2007	Nov 2007	Feb 2008	May 2008	Aug 2008	Nov 2008	Feb 2009	May 2009	Aug 2009	Nov 2009	Feb 2010	May 2010
Gap - original 187 LSOAs and all LSOAs	11.8	11.74	11.81	11.55	11.16	10.95	11.07	10.92	10.55	10.54	10.77	10.68	10.6	10.64	10.7	10.42
Gap - extra 48 LSOAs and all LSOAs	4.12	4.04	4.3	4.22	4.14	4.27	4.17	4.11	4.34	4.84	5.19	5.45	5.75	5.53	5.46	5.18
Gap - all 235 LSOAs and all LSOAs	10.24	10.17	10.28	10.05	9.74	9.6	9.67	9.54	9.3	9.4	9.65	9.63	9.63	9.62	9.65	9.37

Figure A4.2: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (actual rates)

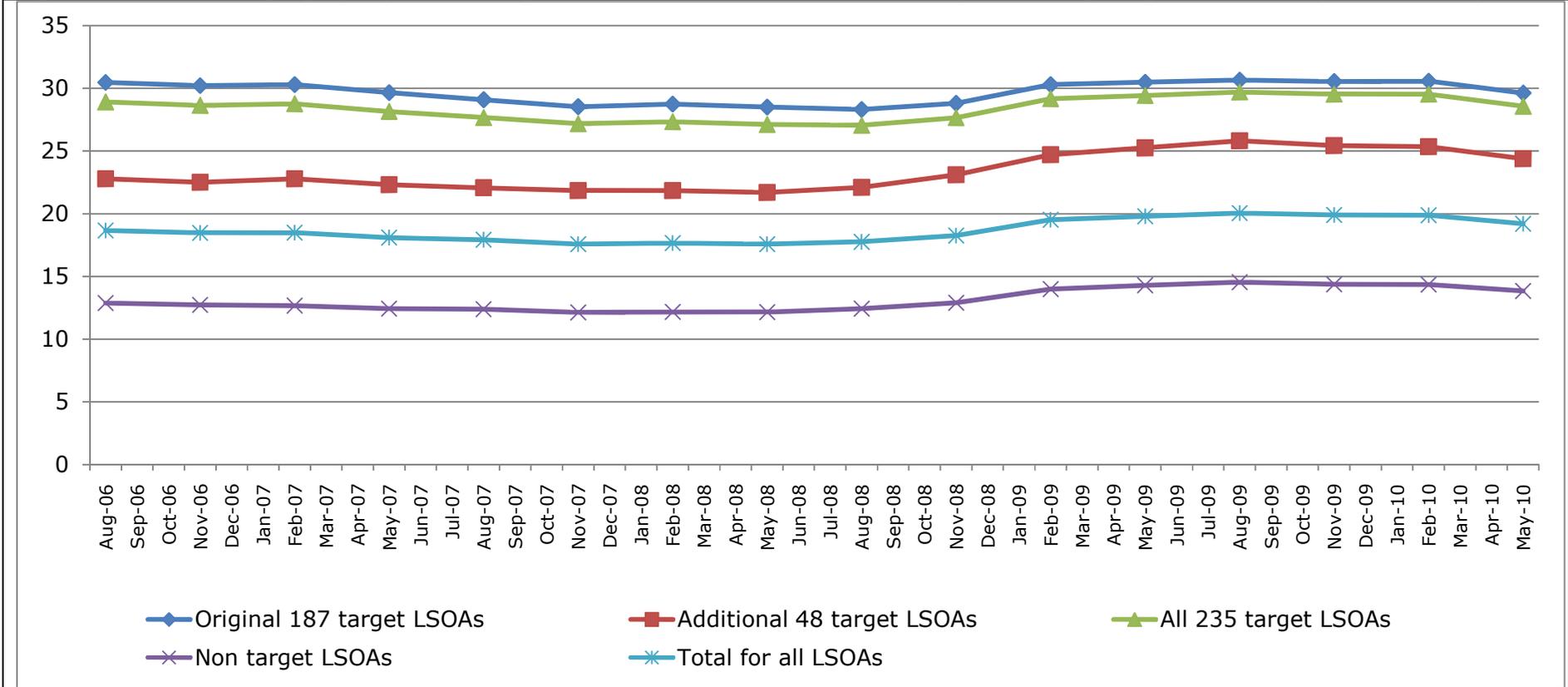
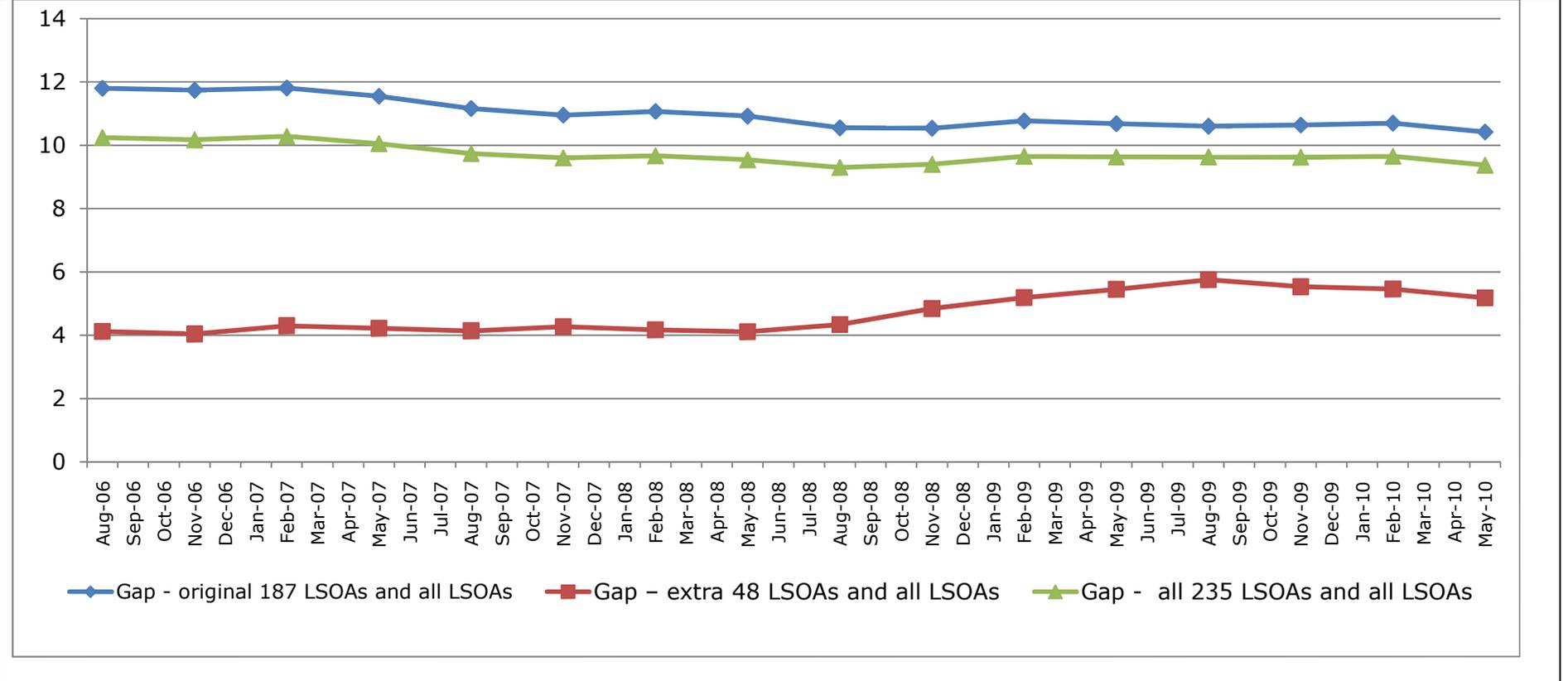


Figure A4.3: Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods (gap between targets and Birmingham average)



NI 116

Baseline position: The baseline for NI 116 Proportion of children in poverty was 31.5% (2007).

Original target: The original target for NI 116 was to improve this position against the baseline as follows:

2008-09 – reduce to 31%

2009-10 – reduce to 30%

2010-11 – reduce to 28.5%

Revised target: The targets were revised following discussions and negotiations with GOWM, and the agreed revised target for NI 116 for 2010-11 is to maintain the gap with the West Midlands average at the 2008 level – i.e. a target of a gap of 10.2 percentage points.

Data sources used: There is data available for NI 116 (Proportion of children in poverty) via <http://data.gov.uk/dataset/ni-116-proportion-of-children-in-poverty>. However, data is available for 2006, 2007 and 2008 from HMRC (http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/child_poverty.htm) and this data seems to be provided in a more consistent and comparable manner. It is this (HMRC) data source that is used below.

This data is only available up until 31st August 2008, and therefore the data presented is a snapshot of the proportion of children in poverty as at 31st August 2006, 2007 and 2008. Therefore, whilst the data is presented below, there is no data for 2009 or 2010 to assess the targets for these years.

Summary of Birmingham and West Midlands regional data:

Table A4.7: Proportion of children in poverty			
	Birmingham	West Midlands	Difference
2006	35.8%	22.9%	12.9
2007	37.9%	24%	13.9
2008	35.9%	23.3%	12.6

Source: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/child_poverty.htm

Summary position for NI 116: Based on HMRC data, this indicator is not on target (31st August 2008).

Summary of other comparators (national and core cities data):

Table A4.8: Proportion of children in poverty (Comparator Data)													
	L'pool	Manc	NW	N'ew castle	NE	Nottin gham	EM	Bristol	SW	Leeds	Sheffi eld	YH	Engla nd
2006	34.7 %	41.8 %	22.6 %	30.6 %	23.4 %	35.4 %	17.9 %	25.6 %	15.7 %	21.4 %	23.6 %	21.2 %	20.8 %
2007	35.7 %	43.6 %	23.6 %	32.3 %	24.3 %	37.2 %	18.7 %	27.0 %	16.1 %	22.5 %	25.0 %	22.2 %	21.6 %
2008	34.6 %	41.4 %	22.8 %	32.1 %	24.0 %	36.3 %	18.4 %	26.7 %	15.8 %	22.1 %	24.3 %	21.4 %	20.9 %

Source: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/child_poverty.htm

Focusing on the data from appropriate comparator core cities for Birmingham – namely Liverpool and Manchester (see <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/566881.pdf> for reference to these three cities having the highest number of concentrations outside of London) the table below shows the performance of Birmingham against its regional average as compared to the performance of both Liverpool and Manchester against their regional average.

Table A4.9: Proportion of children in poverty (Comparator Data –Liverpool and Manchester)								
	L'pool	Manc	NW	NW-Liv Gap	NW-Manc Gap	Birm	WM	WM-Birm Gap
2006	34.7%	41.8%	22.6%	12.1%	19.2%	35.8%	22.9%	12.9%
2007	35.7%	43.6%	23.6%	12.1%	20.0%	37.9%	24%	13.9%
2008	34.6%	41.4%	22.8%	11.8%	18.6%	35.9%	23.3%	12.6%

Source: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/child_poverty.htm

The data shows that Birmingham’s performance compares favourably with Manchester (with Birmingham showing a lower absolute level, as well as a smaller gap than Manchester against their respective regional averages). Whilst Birmingham is comparable with Liverpool in absolute terms, Liverpool’s gap with its regional average is smaller than that for Birmingham, showing that Liverpool compares more favourably with its regional average than Birmingham does.

ANNEX 5: INNOVATIONS FUND GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

A **Good Practice Guide for Practitioners** has been developed through the evaluation of the Fund. The Guide provides funders, commissioners and service providers with steps and considerations in project design and delivery, learning from Innovation Projects.

This help sheet summarises the good practice identified in the Guide to help you find the information you need.

Good Practice Guide: A Summary

Page 1

Project Design

Key factors to consider in the design phase to ensure successful delivery

- How to identify genuine unmet need
- Ways to avoid duplicating other services

Experience of Innovation projects shows that spending more time at the scoping stage will pay dividends in delivery. Where Innovation projects under-invested in scoping work the approach often had to be changed or didn't work as well.

Pathways to success:

- Scoping work
Look for evidence and advice; Talk to your target group
- Mapping existing services
Contact other service providers and strategic bodies with an overview of local need and existing services
- Testing your approach
- Being honest about and planning for potential risk
Have a 'Plan B'; Make room for review during delivery
- Devoting time to scoping and design phase
- Identifying partners
Who could refer clients to you? Are there partners who can deliver part of the service?

Good Practice: Responsive to need

The Future Melting Pot used young people's focus groups during their scoping phase. This revealed an unmet need for young people wanting to become self-employed, which led to the development of the *Youth Employment & Enterprise Rehearsal* project.

Good Practice: What's already out there?

Crisis Skylight actively liaised with other services working with homeless people. This avoided duplication when developing *SmartSkills* and resulted in useful partnership links for referrals into the project.

Engagement

Ensuring services reach their target audience

- Developing your beneficiary engagement approach
- Potential engagement methods
- Maximising participation in your project

Finding effective ways to reach out to vulnerable or socially isolated clients is often critical to success.

Some Innovation projects established formal referral partnerships that worked effectively. Others met clients where they were: in 'Places of Trust'.

Pathways to success:

- Thinking about what your target group need
How can the people you want to help be best engaged?
- Formal/Informal referral agreements?
Consider the right approach for your project
- Outreaching in ways your clients will respond to
- Devoting time and resources to recruiting clients
It often takes longer than you think
- Identifying partners
Promote your service to agencies already in contact with your client group
- Avoiding untargeted outreach approaches
Leafleting/door knocking can be resource intensive yet yield limited results

Good Practice: Find your clients where they are

Improving Chances and *Building Successful Families* targeted vulnerable families. They created partnerships with schools through parent liaison workers to engage parents in a place they already used and trusted.

Good Practice: What's a "Place of Trust"?

Familiarity: a place/service they, or someone they know already use

Community profile: in their community or has a positive profile

Safety: a place you can ensure confidentiality

For them: a place they can meet like minded people, or is perceived to be used by 'people like them'

The Innovation Fund Programme Evaluation and Good Practice Guide for Practitioners was conducted by **ekosgen** in conjunction with the Centre for Regional, Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University.

Good Practice Guide: A Summary

Page 2

Meeting Beneficiary Needs

Meeting needs to make delivery effective:

- Addressing barriers
- Motivating and supporting clients
- Easing concerns and support with health conditions
- Methods of communication

Innovation projects trialled a wide variety of activities to meet the needs of clients. The most successful approaches were consistently those which tailored their work to individuals they engaged.

Pathways to success:

- Identifying and planning for barriers from the outset
- Being realistic about what you can't do
Can you partner with others to meet these needs?
- Revising delivery to accommodate emerging issues
- Keeping in touch with clients
Texting and social network sites may work well for some
- Persevering
Prepare an approach for re-engaging those who drop out



Nurture vs Challenge: Where is the balance?

Challenge to work can be a strong driver for some clients, for others it can be counter-productive if other issues need to be addressed first. There is always a need for nurture and challenge, but a continuum exists between the two.

Timing: Challenge should be introduced at an appropriate time based client need and how work ready they are.

Balance: Balance can depend on work-readiness and work opportunities. Balance should shift towards challenge for individuals as they progress towards work.

Towards nurture: Crisis SmartSkills Supports homeless people in achieving more independence and gaining confidence. Skills like handling money, managing time, self-presentation and healthy food: foundations for moving into the world of work, allowing challenge to be introduced as independence increases.

Towards challenge: Innovative Jobs Academy Focus Enterprises, uses motivational mapping to identify strengths and job aspirations encouraging clients to take responsibility for goals, balanced with a supportive coaching relationship.

Delivery

Factors that contribute to successful delivery of services

- What to think about when choosing venues
- The 'package' of services to offer
- Importance and characteristics of good quality staff
- How to set up effective partnerships

Having a good project idea that addresses a genuine need is not enough to ensure success. Effective delivery depends on all the right ingredients being in place. Innovation projects that have been responsive to delivery needs have been successful. There are also examples of building excellent delivery partnerships.

Pathways to success:

- Choosing the right venue
Appropriate for your activity; Place of trust; Consistent
- Reviewing performance and adapting delivery
Regular internal evaluation and review; Flexibility
- The right staff in the right place
Capacity to build trust and rapport; Able to identify with clients; Flexible and responsive
- The right partnerships
Referral or delivery? Different but complementary expertise; Consider formalising partnership structures

Good Practice: Benefits of embedding staff

The co-location of staff from the Citizens' Advice Bureau with the Working Age Dementia Service provided an integrated and coordinated package of support for patients with early onset dementia and their carers.

Good Practice: Social housing provider partnership

Trident Housing Association provided an empty shop unit as a partner in the *Art Work Gallery & Café* project. Their motivation for involvement was a shared objective to support clients with mental health and learning difficulties and to revitalise a largely vacant row of shops.

Good Practice Guide: A Summary

Page 3

Further information

For more information on the WNF Innovation Fund or a copy of the full Good Practice Guide and Innovation Fund Programme Evaluation please contact:
Megan.Haskell@Birmingham.gov.uk
0121 675 9277

Employer Engagement

Key steps to engaging employers to provide work experience, apprenticeships, employment opportunities.

- Incentivising employers to participate
- Making links with the private sector
- Benefits of working with a single sector
- Communicating clearly and effectively

Innovation projects involving employers have found working closely with them increases the success of placements and the quality of the employer experience.

Pathways to success:

- Making links with employers
Could they provide a route into work for clients who might struggle in the 'open market'?
- Considering how to find and approach employers
Representative bodies, employer networks
- Identifying the benefits you can 'sell' to employers
Supporting recruitment; contributing to CSR;
- Considering work with a specific industry sector

Good Practice: Understanding employer needs

Take time to understand the **needs and requirements** of employers. **Provide incentives:** easier recruitment, candidate screening and cost saving are attractive
Communicate clearly and respond quickly

Good Practice: Getting Ready for Work step by step

Business in the Community combined introductory 'Behind the Scenes' days, where clients got a taste of how a company works, with two week placements, clearly defining a role for workplace 'buddies'.

Good Practice: Boosting sector skills

The *Jewellery Quarter Pre-Apprenticeship Scheme* identified a skills gap in the jewellery manufacturing trade. They developed an on-the-job training initiative that responded directly to the needs of those employers.

Achieving Sustainability

How projects can sustain themselves:

- Using evaluation to support funding bids
- Mainstreaming services
- Ways to generate income
- Developing sustainable 'products'

Innovation pilots are now considering options for future sustainability of successful approaches. A number of projects have developed options for sustainability through delivery of their pilot.

Changes in funding landscape show a shift towards negotiating subcontracting and partnership arrangements.

Pathways to success:

- Considering how to factor sustainability into project design
- Exploring potential future funding through subcontracting and partnerships
European Social Fund, Work Programme; Consider a consortium approach
- Capturing learning and success in evaluations
Strengthens funding bids and develops your approach
- Promoting approaches with 'mainstream' potential
- Reducing dependency on short term funding
Generating income by selling a 'product' or service

Good Practice: Generating income

UK Asian Women's Centre's *Sprouting Hidden Talent*:
 Makes and sells lunches to local schools and community centres through fledgling social enterprise 'Mama Tiffin'.

The *Art Work Gallery & Café*:
 Generates income with a public café service, sale of artwork and venue hire.

The *Jewellery Quarter Pre-Apprenticeship Scheme*:
 Developing a 'product': a work-based NVQ with potential to be incorporated into a future industry apprenticeship.