
Review of the CJS/Activity Agreement pilot programme

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the review

The purpose of the review was to explore the strengths and weaknesses in design and delivery of the Community Jobs Scotland /Activity Agreement Pilot Programme and to develop recommendations to inform future delivery of the Programme.

In particular, the review aimed to explore:

- the effectiveness of the processes and roles and responsibilities which were developed for the pilot project, and
- whether the work experience element is necessary or whether it would be best for the young person to apply for an existing CJS opportunity.

Method

We have reviewed the monitoring data and reports on project outputs, but the primary source of information was gathered from interviews with stakeholders.

We interviewed:

- National Development Manager for Activity Agreements
- Scottish Government staff with responsibilities for Activity Agreement and for Community Jobs Scotland
- SCVO staff responsible for the Programme
- members of the working group which was established to oversee the development and implementation of the Project
- Opportunities for all Co-ordinators from each area involved in the Pilot Programme (12 of 15 Opportunities for all Co-ordinators contributed)
- a sample of Trusted Professionals
- a sample of employers who engaged in the pilot Programme.

We also collected information from two young people.

We have developed case studies based on information provided by TPs, employers, and young people to demonstrate how the delivery of the model influenced the journey and outcomes for young people.

2. Programme Description

The Community Jobs Scotland Pilot Programme was aimed at improving the transition to employment for young people who are currently on an Activity Agreement. The pilot programme was developed in partnership with SCVO who delivers the Community Jobs Scotland Programme.

Community Jobs Scotland creates job training opportunities through a network of third sector employers. The employers are located throughout Scotland and range from large household name charities to small community groups.

This Pilot Programme initially ringfenced 100 Community Jobs Scotland (CJS) jobs with a view to creating tailored opportunities for young people transitioning from Activity Agreements.

Key elements of the Programme design

- Needs led

The pilot was designed to be 'needs led'. Trusted Professional (TPs) worked with young people to identify their skills and interests and SCVO sought an employer to provide an opportunity to match the young person's interest.

- Non-competitive

The process is non-competitive. The young person is 'matched' to an opportunity rather than the young person competing for a vacancy.

- Work experience placement

Under the Pilot Programme the young person could be placed with the CJS employer for up to 4 weeks, to undertake work experience whilst still on their Activity Agreement. During this time the young person was supported by their Trusted Professional. The aim of the placement was to aid transition to the workplace by providing young people with exposure to work practices and workplace culture.

- Guaranteed opportunity

At the end of the four week period, the young person attended an interview with the employer to secure the CJS opportunity for a period up to 12 months. If successful in securing the employment contract, the Trusted Professional would continue to provide (gradually withdrawing) support to the young person in the first few weeks of their CJS employment until the young person was confident that they could sustain the CJS opportunity without that support.

Implementation

A Working Group was established to develop the Programme processes and oversee the implementation of project. Members of the Working Group included SCVO, Scottish Government, the National Development Manager for Activity Agreements, and five of the Opportunities for All Co-ordinators involved in the implementation of the Pilot.

The Working Group drew up a schedule to identify the roles and responsibilities of each party involved in the pilot (SCVO, Trusted Professionals, Opportunities for All Co-ordinators, the National Development Manager).

The opportunity to participate in the Pilot was offered to all 32 Local authority areas in Scotland. 15 areas offered to participate in the pilot. These were: Angus,

Clackmannanshire, Dumfries & Galloway, Dundee, East Dunbartonshire, East Lothian, Edinburgh City, Glasgow, Inverclyde, Midlothian, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Scottish Borders, South Lanarkshire, and Perth & Kinross.

3. Overview of Performance

The Pilot Programme was initiated in April 2016. It aimed to provide 100 CJS opportunities for young people on Activity Agreements.

There have been challenges in the implementation of the Programme and at January 2017, only 13 young people had started in CJS jobs. Of the 13, 11 have sustained their employment.

Issues in implementation

The number of referrals has been lower than anticipated. In the period April to December 2016 only 60 referrals had been made. Two local authority areas who opted to join the Pilot have made no referrals.

The number of young people who have withdrew or are inactive is very high. At December 2016, of 60 referrals over the period of the Pilot, 37 young people (62%) had withdrawn or were inactive. This number includes:

- a high number of referrals (especially in the early phase of the pilot) of young people with interests which were out with the scope of the CJS to deliver,
- the number who withdrew before a match was achieved due to timescales
 - Some of those who withdrew did so because they found other jobs/opportunities.
 - Some disengaged from the process before or during the matching process.
- the number who participated in the interview/work experience phase but were not offered jobs due to poor performance (predominantly as a result of levels of absenteeism during the work experience placement).

As at February 2017, there have been 74 referrals to the Programme, and SCVO projects that this could convert to 26 starts by the end of March 2017.

	Number referred	Number in process (matching/interview and work placement)	Number started on CJS	Number withdrawn
Angus	6	1	1	4
Clacks	2		1	1
D and G	1			1
Dundee	8	1	2	5
East Dunbarton	4	1	1	0
East Lothian	9	1	1	7
Edinburgh	5	1	1	3
Glasgow	7	1		6
Inverclyde	2	1		1
Midlothian	7	3	1	3
North Lanarkshire	2			2
Perth and Kinross	3		1	2
Renfrewshire	0			
Scottish Borders	0			
South Lanarkshire	4		2	2
TOTALS	60	12	11	37

4. Issues and challenges in the implementation of the Programme

This section reviews the implementation of the pilot Programme and identifies the issues and challenges which impacted on the performance of the Programme.

Challenges in the implementation of the Pilot

New partnership

This was a pilot project which involved a new partnership between agencies which had no previous experience of working together. Any partnership programme will require time to establish effective working relationships but also to develop understanding and trust in the delivery capacity of the other partners.

Partners had limited knowledge about how the other partner operated and the processes that the other had to carry out to 'deliver' their part of the project. Expectations of the other partners were perhaps unrealistic.

- The Opportunity for All Co-ordinators reported that the time involved to match a young person to an opportunity was a critical weakness in the model. Opportunities for All Co-ordinators had anticipated a greater supply of opportunities and had expected a different process to match young people to opportunities. This resulted in an unrealistic expectation of the time required to carry that out.
- SCVO had limited experience of the Activity Agreement client group so had different expectation of 'job readiness'.
- SCVO had to manage the expectations of employers for 'suitable candidates' against the unknown quality of candidates referred by TPs.
 - SCVO had no previous experience of working with TPs and which meant that they had limited confidence in the capacity of the 'supply chain' to produce candidates who were appropriate for the jobs.

The Pilot project was also new to employers. Although all of the employers involved in the Pilot had previous experience of employing people through the mainstream CJS, the Pilot Programme introduced new processes and introduced new partners (TPs) into the process.

Low level of referrals/inappropriate referrals

The level of referrals has been lower than anticipated, but there were also issues with the appropriateness of the referrals:

Mismatch between the areas of interest and the opportunities available through CJS

Opportunities for All Co-ordinators reported that their initial understanding of the 'needs led' approach was that the Pilot Programme would 'find' an opportunity to match the young person's interests. Based on this principle, many of the initial applications/referrals made to the Pilot Programme reflected young peoples' aspirations, rather than the reality of the opportunities available locally by CJS.

This resulted in referrals, especially in the early phase of the Pilot, of young people who requested work in jobs/sectors which could not be met through CJS employers. The causes of the mismatch appear to be:

- Some areas TPs had little previous experience of the Community Jobs Scotland and little awareness of the opportunities available through the CJS/third sector, so perhaps misunderstood the range of opportunities available through CJS.
- However, most areas reported that they had some experience of CJS. Many also have existing relationships with third sector organisations in their area and already use third sector organisations to provide work experience and volunteering placements. In these cases, Opportunities for All Co-ordinators reported that their expectation of the Programme was that SCVO would market the Pilot to existing CJS employers but also to new organisations, and in so doing, lever 'new and additional opportunities' from the third sector organisations that would meet the aspirations of young people.

After the initial misunderstandings about the scale and scope of the opportunities available, many of the TPs started to use the CJS website to better understand the nature of the opportunities available.

However, this highlights a fundamental divergence in partners' understanding and expectations of the Pilot Programme. This resulted in confusion and a lack of confidence in the capacity of the Programme to deliver opportunities for young people which contributed to the 'disengagement' from the Pilot Programme in some areas (low level of referrals).

Number of the referrals who withdrew or became inactive

The other challenge was the number of young people who were referred to the Pilot and then withdrew or became inactive.

The biggest problem identified by Opportunities for All Co-ordinators was the time taken to achieve a match which in some cases was up to 13 weeks.

Opportunities for All Coordinators reported that the time taken between referral and offer resulted in some young people 'losing interest' in the opportunity and either 'disengaging' or taking up alternative opportunities.

"with this client group, timing is everything"

In some cases, young people also found other jobs during the 'matching process' and so took up these opportunities.

TPs reported that the time required to find appropriate matches for young people affected their confidence in the capacity of the Pilot to deliver opportunities for young

people and affected their motivation to refer young people. This contributed to the low level of referrals to the Programme.

“There were a lot of disappointment at the beginning”

However, Opportunities for All Coordinators reflected that they had not fully understood the process that SCVO had to undertake to achieve a match. Their understanding had been that SCVO already had a range of vacancies – they had not understood that the process involved going out to employers to create a new job. This misunderstanding of the process had resulted in unrealistic expectations.

“We were expecting to see some opportunities”

Challenges in engaging young people in the ‘needs led’ approach

Some TPs reported challenges in engaging young people in the approach which was the ‘opposite’ to the normal job application. It was difficult to engage young people in the discussion about a job when they could not tell them what sort of work they would be doing, for whom or where.

“It’s easier to motivate a young person around an opportunity”

Young people’s attitude to ‘work experience placement’

In some areas, Opportunities for all Coordinators said that it was difficult to persuade young people of the benefit of the work experience placement. Young people associated a period of employment without wages with ‘work trials’ which have a poor reputation (some had had experiences of work trials with employers who seemed to have little interest in employing in longer term). However, in other areas, Opportunities for All Coordinators and TPs had no problems in integrating the work experience period into the young person’s AA.

Additionality of the opportunities

While Opportunities for All co-ordinators had joined the CJS Pilot to provide access to additional opportunities for AA young people, the challenges in the implementation of the Programme meant that in some cases, the opportunities were not ‘additional’ or locally available opportunities were more appropriate.

- Some areas had access to local opportunities which were more appropriate for young people at the time. For example, during the period of the pilot, Dundee and South Lanarkshire had a wage subsidy scheme, and Renfrewshire had opportunities through an EU funded traineeships.
- Where Opportunities for All Coordinators are already well linked into the ‘third sector players’ and already use third sector employers to provide volunteering and work experience placements, the Pilot has not offered much additionality in terms of the type of opportunities available in the area.

Challenges in the matching process

As previously reported, Opportunities for All Co-ordinators identified the time taken to achieve the match as the critical failure in the implementation of the Pilot.

Issues which impacted on the time required to achieve the match included:

Quality of information on referrals

The time taken to find an appropriate match was in some cases extended due to inadequate or incomplete information on referrals or poor quality CVs which meant that

SCVO had to return referrals to TPs for more information. SCVO suspended the matching process until the information was supplied which further delayed the process of securing an opportunity.

Decision making capacity of local employers

Local employers did not always have the power to make the decision to participate in the Pilot Programme. Where the local employer was a branch of a national or regional organisation, the employer did not always have the power to make decisions at the local level, and required decisions from a head office before they could confirm their participation. This again added more time to the 'matching process'.

However, while there were clearly practical/procedural issues which impacted the effectiveness of the matching process, the key weakness is in the design of the approach which centralises the matching process.

Centralised matching process

The key challenges in the matching process was that it was carried out centrally. SCVO had very little information on which to make a match and was charged with the challenging task of matching young people that they had not met, and for whom they had very limited information. SCVO also had no previous experience of working with TPs so had no basis for confidence in the capacity of the referral body to make appropriate referrals.

A further challenge for SCVO was the national scope of the project, and the requirement to match in areas where they had little knowledge of the geography, local public transports routes or localised issues of territorialism. This occasionally produced offers of opportunities which were impractical (A young person living in Stranraer offered an opportunity in Dumfries, which is in the same local authority area but 75 miles away).

TPs reported that the level of information that SCVO/employers received on the referral form was not detailed enough to enable appropriate matches (e.g. there was nowhere to identify specific health or learning challenges). This resulted in some inappropriate offers/missed opportunities.

- Young person who had suffered extensive bullying from peers was offered an opportunity in a youth work setting.
- Young person on autistic spectrum who went for interview. The employers feedback was that 'she didn't engage very well in the interview'.

Employers understanding of the Pilot Programme

Although all of the employers who participated in the Pilot had previous experience of the CJS Programme, the Pilot Programme introduced new processes and new partners into the delivery model. This clearly created some confusion for employers.

Confusion between mainstream CJS and the Pilot Programme

It would appear that there was some uncertainty among employers about the differences between the mainstream CJS Programme and the AA Pilot Programme. Sometimes this resulted in erroneous offers and inaccurate information on offers of opportunities.

- On occasions, TPs were informed of a potential opportunity but then employers dropped out, or decided to offer the vacancy through another programme (or mainstream CJS). See case study 3.
- On occasions, TPs/young people were given incomplete /incorrect information about opportunities (for example, incorrect information about rates of pay was provided to young person causing confusion and disappointment when correct rate of pay was identified).

Work experience placement

The purpose of the work placement was to allow the young person to gain experience of the workplace and become familiar with the expectations the employer. It was designed as a flexible period (up to four weeks) but also flexible in terms of the hours worked, so that the young people could gradually work up to full time hours. While the documentation provided by SCVO for employers explains the work experience placement there is evidence that employers did not always understand the purpose or intention of the placement .

- In one case the employer thought the young person was applying for a volunteering placement (See case study 3)
- There are several examples in which employers expected the young people to work 'full time' during the work experience placement period. (See case study 1 and 3)

"I was under the impression that it would be a 4 week trial period based on similar hours to what they would be working if offered the role for the 6 month CJS post." (Employer)

Duration of the CJS contracts

There was some confusion over the duration of the CJS posts. The information on the Pilot Programme says that young people would be offered a job of up to 12 months duration. However, it appears that this is not standard practice within CJS (SCVO gives employers agreement to funding a 6 month contract which is reviewed and renewed if appropriate).

Role of the TP/relationship with employer

The 'Roles and Responsibilities' document identifies that, during the work experience placement, employers should 'Provide ongoing (weekly) feedback to the young person and Trusted Professional' . However, in practice the employers provided feed back to SCVO (as the CJS contract manager), who then passed the information on to the TP. As a result, there was no formal relationship between the employer and the TP during the work experience placement.

As a result, some employers were not clear about the role of the TPs in relation to supporting the young person during the work experience (and beyond) and there are examples of employers seeking assistance from SCVO over issues relating the young person which should have been dealt with by TP.

Opportunities for All coordinators and TPs reported that, on occasions they felt 'out of the loop' with employers. They recognised the importance of SCVO's relationship with employers as the CJS contract manager, but this left the role of the TP somewhat unclear with employers.

Any future Programme must include a more effective procedure for introducing the TP into the process with employers and clarifying roles and responsibilities of the contract manager (SCVO) and the TP role in supporting the young person.

Programme processes

The Programme processes were complicated due to the number of people and number of stages in the pathway of activities . A 'flow diagram' and document outlining 'roles and responsibilities' of TPs, Opportunity for All Co-ordinators, the National Development Manager and SCVO were developed as a guide to the processes.

- The referral pathway was lengthy, with referrals from TPs passing through Opportunities for all Co-ordinators and the National Development Manager before being forwarded to SCVO.
- The number people and stages in the process have increased the time taken to process referrals and has made the process cumbersome.
- The referral process was established to provide quality control of referrals during the Pilot programme. However, the number of referrals which were considered inappropriate (i.e. interests which could not be met through the CJS) suggest that Opportunities for All Co-ordinators and the NDM had similar expectations of the Programme as TPs.
- The role of SDS in the process continued to cause confusion among TPs.
 - TPs were not clear about the purpose of SDS in the process and point in the process when SDS signoff was required.
 - In some areas SDS staff had not heard of the pilot and did not understand their role in 'signing off' on the referral.
 - In other areas, achieving sign-off was not problematic, but felt like another 'hoop to jump through' for young people in an already lengthy process.
- The roles and responsibilities of partners (SCVO and TPs) in relation to employers is not clearly articulated in the 'roles and responsibilities' document.

What has worked well

As with any new programme, it has taken time for all partners to get to grips with the new programme and processes. Over the period of the Pilot, the Working Group has met to review the performance and address the challenges in implementation. This has resulted in a number of improvements to the processes.

- To address the mismatch between referrals and opportunities (early referrals were based on the interests of young person rather than opportunities in the local area), the Working Group asked SCVO to send out information on the types of employers and types of opportunities in each area to provide a guide to the scope of opportunities available through CJS.
- SCVO also produced a 'Questions and Answers' document to try to improve partners' understanding of the CJS Programme and the Pilot.
- Many of the TPs started to use the CJS website to better understand the nature of the opportunities available.

Although this has helped to focus referrals on the opportunities available, the number of referrals is still low (reflecting lack of confidence in the capacity of the Pilot to deliver opportunities), and a significant percentage of those referred continued to withdraw from of the process.

However, it would appear that as the pilot has progressed, SCVO has on occasions, trialled a different approach to matching (an 'opportunity led' approach). SCVO has identified CJS opportunities in an area and sent these out so that TPs can identify suitable young person for the opportunity.

Although the number of matches made through this process is small, the approach seems to have met with some success and has reduced the time between referral and start for the young people involved. (See case study 2)

Case studies

The case studies have been prepared with information provided by TP's, from young people and from employers.

They highlight some of the successes of the CJS/AA Pilot but also demonstrate some of the challenges in the implementation of the Programme which we have highlighted in the report.

C is a care leaver who lives in supported accommodation. He has multiple barriers to employment. C has previously engaged in training, but his TP recognised that his barriers meant that he would struggle to find mainstream employment.

C was referred to the Pilot Programme by his TP because she identified that a CJS job would provide C with an opportunity to gain work with a supportive employer who had experience of employing people with additional support needs.

C can be hard to engage and motivate - he has not had many experiences of success, and does not expect success. The CJS pilot seemed like an ideal option for C as it offered a guaranteed job opportunity (on completion of the 4 work placement).

Following referral, C was matched to an opportunity with a local third sector organisation that carries out furniture recycling. It was challenging to sustain C's engagement in the process during the time taken to find the match, but the TP continued to support and motivate him through this period .

Following his initial meeting with the employer, he started his work placement. C struggled with some practical barriers and the TP supported him to address those which she could - purchasing safety boots which were required during the work experience placement and providing C with food for lunch (as he didn't have money to buy lunches). She also accompanied him to the workplace for the first few days.

His employer did not seem to be aware of the underlying concept of the 4 work placement (flexible hours and the option to build up to towards a full time commitment). C was expected to work 'fulltime' (25 hours per week) during his work experience placement.

C's shift started at 9am every morning. Although he did make a huge effort to get to work on time, the transition from his previous lifestyle to 9am starts was difficult, and he struggled to get there on time. His TP approached the employer to see if his start time could be flexible for a couple of weeks, but from the employers perspective, flexible

hours did not fit with the nature of the work (C was working on the collection team and the van left the depot at 9am every morning to start its collection). On days when he turned up late, the employer did not offer an alternative role but sent him back home.

Although he struggled with time-keeping and failed to attend on four days, C completed his 4 week placement. However, at the end of the placement period, the employer did not feel that C had achieved the standard of work practice required, and he was not offered the CJS post.

The TP had recognised that C has a somewhat chaotic lifestyle (due to his housing situation) but had referred C because she felt that the flexible 4 week placement would give him a 'soft-launch' into a more structured lifestyle and to build up to full time hours.

The misunderstanding about the purpose of the 4 week period has had poor consequences for C, who feels 'let down' and is less likely to take up a work trial in future.

S is 16 years old.

She dropped out of school at 15 and does not have any formal qualifications.

After completing two stage 1 interventions (Connect 2 and Youth Unlimited) she then progressed onto a stage 2/3 programme with Street League. Through the Programme at Street League she carried a work placement in the hospitality industry, but did not enjoy the placement.

Although she completed her programme with Street League Programme, she did not find a job or other progression route and returned to 'doing nothing'.

After a period of doing nothing, she re-engaged with the aftercare team who started to work with her on job searches.

She did not have a clear idea of what she wanted to do.

Her AA worker told her about CJS and showed her a list of opportunities in the local area. There were 'quite a few opportunities' : she chose one which best met her and interests, which was as a café assistant. She had some reservations about the post because of the area (Easterhouse) but decided to give it a try.

She already had a CV so her aftercare worker referred her to CJS.

After a period of only two weeks, she was invited for an interview with the employer. She attended alone.

During the interview she became a bit concerned as the employer was talking about 'volunteering' and asked her to sign a volunteer recruitment form.

After leaving the interview she immediately contacted her after-care worker and explained what had happened. The aftercare worker contacted the employer to explain that the 'unpaid' period was a work placement as part of the CJS /AA Pilot Programme and not a volunteering position.

The employer then contacted S and invited her to start work on the following Monday. Given that she had previous experience in the hospitality industry, she started immediately, with no work experience period.

The time between the initial referral and S starting the job was just under 3 weeks. She is now in her third week of employment.

NB: Her Manager told her that the period of the contract was 6 months but that after 6 months they could request a further 6 months.

K is a young person who has been in the care system.

She disengaged from mainstream education at a young age and was latterly re-engaged in education through an alternative curriculum programme. Through this Programme she was involved in some employability training and carried out a work experience placement. At the end of the Programme she progressed onto stage 2 training. She completed stage 2 and progressed into a stage 3 provision, but was had to leave her placement as a result of poor health.

Following a period of ill health, her Social Worker referred her to Activity Agreement. She started work with her TP who found her a to volunteer placement in a charity shop to build her skills and experience. She also worked with her TP on job search .

Following her referral to the pilot programme, a potential match was found with the local organisation. However, SCVO had no details of the possible match, so the TP approached the employer to try to get more information on the job. However, when the TP spoke to the employer, the employer had already posted the job on the CJS website as a 'mainstream' CJS post, but said that the young person could still apply through the mainstream programme (but would have to go through the competitive interview process). K applied post through SDS and was interviewed but unfortunately she was not successful. The post was given to someone who had more experience.

The TP sought another 'match' for the young person, but unfortunately, a similar situation occurred again. The TP was advised of another potential opportunity, but when she approached the employer for details of the job, she was told that the post had been advertised as a mainstream CJS opportunity. By that time, it was too late for the young person to apply. This was another disappointment for a vulnerable young person.

However, SCVO was successful in identifying another employer in the area who could offer an opportunity, and an informal interview for the post was set up.

Unfortunately, when the young person turned up for the interview, the manager was out of the office on other business. It appears that there was an internal communication problem and the manager had not been told about the interview. However, given her previous experiences of CJS posts, the young person somewhat distressed when the manager seemed to know nothing about the interview. However, the TP was able to make contact with the manager who agreed to return to carry out the interview.

The young person was offered a work experience placement. However, the employer had not been informed of the 'flexible' nature of the work placement, and the young person was offered a four week work placement on 'full-time' hours (25 hours per week).

The employer reported that he did not know about the intended flexibility in the hours during the work placement and believed that the trial was based on the same hours that the young person would be working if offered the role for the 6 month CJS post.

The young person was successful in sustaining the work placement, and has since taken up her CJS job with this employer.

She has acknowledged the role of the TP in building her confidence and motivating her to continue to try to get a job despite numerous setbacks.

5. Employers experience of the pilot programme

We asked employers about the effectiveness of the processes (which elements had worked well/or hadn't worked for them) and in particular asked for their feedback on the value of the four-week work placement. Four employers provided input to the study.

All four employers had experience of the mainstream CJS Programme.

In response to questions about the effectiveness of the processes, the only comments related to the need for better communication between SCVO/TPs and employer. These comments mirror those of the TPs who reported that was a lack of clarity around role of SCVO as the 'contract manager' and the TP as the support provider.

All four employers reported that the 4 week work placement was a positive addition to the mainstream programme. Employers considered that the 4-week placement was an ideal testing ground for the employee (to 'test out' whether the young person could travel to the place of work, and if the type of work was suitable) and for the employer to see if the young person fitted into the workplace. The work experience period also allowed the employer to address any issues with the employee before they started work.

"I believe the 4 week placement period was a massive help – it gave the young person a chance to see what their roles and responsibilities were going to be going forward as well as giving me, the employer, a window to evaluate what roles within the department would be best suited to the young person's strengths and weaknesses." (Employer involved in the pilot)

Two employers also identified a strong business case for the 4 week work placement:

- One employer explained that within the mainstream CJS Programme, if a person takes up a post and drops out, the employer is not always guaranteed a replacement. This affects the capacity of the employer to deliver services. The 4 week trial gave the employer and employee a chance to see if the job was a good fit.
- Another employer explained that, as a small employer, the recruitment process for CJS was quite onerous (shortlisting candidates and carrying out interviews). She was attracted to the Pilot Programme because it provided her with a person who had been 'matched' to the post, and minimised the time/resource that she had to expend on recruitment.

Two of the four employers were aware of the intention that the hours worked during the work experience period could be flexible (to allow the young person to work towards full time hours) and two were not aware.

6. Options for the future of the CJS/AA pilot Programme

This chapter summarises the findings of the review, considers the options for the roll-out of the CJS Activity Agreement Programme and makes recommendations for a new model.

Conclusions

The implementation of the Pilot Programme was challenging and did not succeed in maximising the opportunities for young people.

The review concludes that there were limitations in the design of the model but also very and different expectations of the model which have been the at the root of the underperformance of the Pilot Programme.

Partners had different expectations of a 'needs led' Programme

The Pilot Programme was designed to reflect the AA approach which is needs led. This resulted in a model which aimed to find an opportunity to meet the needs of the young person.

While all partners shared the goal of creating opportunities for young people on Activity Agreements, the vision for how that would be delivered through the CJS Programme was different. There were fundamental differences in the expectations of a 'needs led' approach.

Opportunities for All Coordinators had expectations that the CJS Programme would increase the supply and the type of opportunities available to young people through:

- Promoting AA young people to employers to meet existing vacancies, and
- Levering new opportunities to meet needs/interests of AA young people the bank of CJS employers and beyond.

From SCVOs perspective, the matching process required them to find an employer who had the capacity to take on an additional CJS post. In practice, this often meant looking for an employer who had already expressed a need /interest in additional CJS posts (perhaps an employer who had asked for 5 CJS posts under the mainstream programme, but who had only received funding for 4 posts under). So in reality, the limitations on the process of 'finding opportunities' was determined by the business needs and capacity of the employers in the area.

The capacity of CJS to respond to a 'needs led' approach

The capacity of the CJS to deliver on the 'needs led approach' was somewhat oversold.

As reported above, there was a mismatch between the expectations that Opportunities for All Coordinators had of the Pilot Programme (as demonstrated by the referrals for types of jobs which could not be met through CJS) and the capacity of CJS to respond to the 'needs' of the young people.

The capacity of the CJS programme to respond to the 'needs and interests' of individual young people is limited by the by scale of the third sector in each local authority area.

- The pilot was established without scoping the capacity of the third sector in each of the local authority areas. In some areas where the sector is small/underdeveloped and there were limited opportunities available through CJS. For example,
- In areas with a greater number of third sector organisations, the type of opportunities offered through the sector are relatively restricted so the potential to 'find' an opportunity to meet the needs/aspirations of every young person is limited.

In reality, the limiting factor in the 'needs led' approach was the supply of opportunities: CJS could only ever supply a limited number and type of job opportunities.

The capacity of the CJS programme to provide opportunities (i.e. the supply of vacancies) should be the starting point for the development of a more effective model.

The matching process

A fundamental weakness in the model is that the matching process is carried out centrally. SCVO has relationships with CJS employers and is best placed to source opportunities, but has little knowledge of (or control over quality) of the candidate. Proposals for the roll-out of the Pilot need to address the challenges associated with the centralised matching process.

Processes

The Pilot Programme introduced a new model, and introduced new partners and new processes into the established CJS Programme. Regardless of the attempts to 'map the processes' and prescribe roles and responsibilities of partners, the implementation of the Pilot has been characterised by misperceptions of the roles of other partners and therefore by misinterpretations of the processes.

Is there a need for a ringfenced CJS Programme for young people on Activity Agreements?

It is interesting to note that of the 74 referrals received by the Programme (at February 2017) 64 of those would have been eligible to apply for mainstream CJS posts under one of the other eligibility criteria.

Eligibility criteria	Number of young people
AA plus 1 other category	32
AA plus 2 others	21
AA plus 3 others	7
AA plus 4 others	4

While this shows that many young people on Activity Agreements could be eligible under other criteria, and there are examples of young people on Activity Agreements who have secured mainstream CJS posts, Opportunity for All Co-ordinators also provided examples of AA young people who had been unsuccessful through the competitive interview process for mainstream CJS Programme jobs.

Opportunities for All Co-ordinations argued that most young people on Activity Agreements face additional challenges and the non-competitive element of the process meant that the opportunities offered through the Pilot were genuinely 'additional'. This element is therefore considered a key strength in the Programme design by providing

opportunities for those young people who are unlikely to succeed in a competitive interview situation and are therefore unlikely to access employment opportunities through mainstream CJS or any other route.

Therefore, despite challenges in the implementation of the Pilot Programme, the vast majority of Opportunities for All Co-ordinators reported that the Programme increased the range of opportunities for the most vulnerable young people on Activity Agreements, and should be retained with some modifications to the design.

Proposals for the new model

Opportunity led

The key proposal is that the model is redesigned around an 'opportunity led' model rather than a 'needs led' model. This means that the Programme would identify job opportunities and then 'find' young people for the opportunities.

As previously noted, SCVO has in fact trialled this approach with some success, although the numbers are still small.

The evidence to date suggests that this has reduced the time between application and start date for the young person.

The key strength in this approach is that it eliminates the 'centralised matching process' which was the key weakness in the original model. The weakness or risks in this approach are:

- Managing supply and demand

A key challenge in the proposal will be in the matching of supply (of opportunities) in each area with the demand (i.e. number of young people who are job interested in the opportunity). The risk for SCVO is that TPs do not have young people who are ready/interested in the opportunities. This represents a potential risk to SCVO /the CJS Programme in terms of managing employer expectations and relationships.

- Trust in the supply chain

This approach gives TPs responsibility for identifying a suitable young person for the opportunity and in effect the onus of matching is passed to the TPs. There is again a reputational risk for SCVO/the CJS Programme if employers' needs are not met.

Work experience placement

The work experience placement was 'new and additional' in the context of the CJS Programme. Not all employers involved in the Pilot used the work experience opportunity, and there was some misunderstanding about the purpose the work placement as a transition to full-time hours.

However, all of the employers interviewed for the study (sample of four) and the Opportunity for All Co-ordinators reported that a work placement 'added value' to the CJS programme.

The work placement element should be retained, but with a clearer message to employers about purpose, flexibility and role of TP during the period of transition.

Processes

The proposed approach also simplifies the processes for partners, and creates a process for young people which mirrors a normal job application process.

- Young people would be applying for a 'known' opportunity through a process which mirrors a traditional recruitment process
- TPs would work with young people to develop CVs and interview skills.
- Young people would submit application/CV to employer (via SCVO).
- The TP, who is the person who knows the young person, can inform the employer of any health/learning or other challenges which would impact on their performance and put in place support to address these challenges.

The review also highlighted that there was some uncertainty among employers around the differences between the mainstream CJS Programme and the AA Pilot Programme (which occasionally resulted in confusion of offers) and that employers were unclear about the roles/responsibilities of the TPs. Critical success factors for a future model would include:

- Establish a distinct and differentiated strand of CJS for AA, with a clearly defined project model.
- Establish clear roles/responsibilities of SCVO as the CJS contract manager and the TPs role in supporting the young person.
- Establish new processes which reflect the agreed roles (for example, should the employers report on young person during the placement period go directly to the TP who can intervene if the employer identifies issues?)
- Ensure that there is clarity for employers (and young people) on:
 - The terms and purpose of the work experience placement
 - Duration of CJS contract

Recommendations

The key recommendation is to retain 'ringfenced' CJS opportunities for young people on Activity Agreements but to address the weaknesses in the Pilot Programme design.

Design of the model

Recommendations for the key changes to the **design** of the model include:

- **The model should be redesigned around an 'opportunity led' model rather than a 'needs led' model.**

The Programme would identify CJS opportunities and then 'find' young people for the opportunities. The capacity of the CJS programme to provide opportunities (i.e. the supply of vacancies) should be the starting point for the development of a more effective model.

- **Partners should jointly explore the scale/scope of opportunities for young people on Activity Agreements in each area**

SCVO and Opportunity for All Co-ordinators should work together to scope out the potential supply (of opportunities) and demand (potential number and profile of young people) in each area to assess the potential and scope for the operation of the Pilot in each area.

- **Within the ringfenced programme, the non-competitive element of the Programme design should be retained.**

The non-competitive element of the Programme enabled the Programme to target young people who would not be able to compete at interviews. This is the element of the Programme design is central to the 'additionality' of the Programme.

- **Retain the work experience element**

The work experience element is considered to have added value for young people on Activity Agreements and for employers. It will be important to improve communication with employers to ensure that they understand the role/function and flexibility of the work experience placement.

- **Clarify the length of CJS contract**

SCVO needs to clarify the message about the length of contract which is available under CJS. The information given during the pilot was that young people would be offered a contract of up to 12 months. There is a confusion in the message as it appears that current practice under the mainstream CJS is that contracts are typically for 6 months with the possibility of a 6 month extension.

Development of new processes

The 'opportunity led' approach removes the need for the complicated referral processes, so new processes can be streamlined. However, the development of new processes must address the following:

- **Clarify the role of SDS in the process**

Scottish Government should consider removing entirely the role of SDS in the roll out of this Pilot. If TPs are charged with the responsibility for checking eligibility for CJS there is no need to complicate the process.

- **Develop clear roles and responsibilities between TP and SCVO (in relation to negotiations with employer)**

Any future Programme must include a more effective process for introducing the TP to the employers and clarifying roles and responsibilities of SVO as the contract manager and the TP role in supporting the young person through their placement and beyond.