



TEES VALLEY WORKS

SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

February 2006 to February 2008



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Introduction

Welcome to the TVW Service Delivery Plan. This document will highlight how TVW intends to deliver Tees Valley Works for Women, Tees Valley for Works and Tees Valley Make it Happen projects.

TVW will ensure it meets the needs of the learner, employers and the wider community using the strategy identified within this document.

Should you wish to clarify any area within the document or you require additional information then please contact a member of the TVW team on 01642 608316 ext 461.

Background

In 2005, representatives from the Economic Development Departments of the five Tees Valley Local Authorities developed training and employment projects that secured funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The projects, under the 'umbrella' of TVW, represented an opportunity for these five Local Authorities to develop a track record in sub-regional partnership delivery which aligns resources to each area's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy objectives and build on the introduction of Building Futures, a single funded construction based project operating across the sub-region.

For the first phase of TVW it was decided that the projects would be delivered by a network of sub-contracted providers with the majority of the providers being from the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).

TVW has now been operational since February 2006 with HBC being the Accountable Body for all three TVW projects.

Context

On average, women in the workforce are less highly qualified than men. In the North East in 1999, 43% of women were qualified to NVQ2 or higher, compared with 60% for men. Of women working part-time, only 36% were qualified to NVQ2 or higher (Source: LFS). The relatively low level of qualifications among women is likely to be reflected in constrained opportunities for advancement and in limited adaptability.

The proportion of women in the workforce receiving job-related training is 14.7% in the North East compared with 16.1% at GB level (Source: LFS, May 2001). The regional figure for men is 13.5%. It is not clear whether women are undertaking training that is qualitatively different than men.

Female earnings continue to lag behind those for males, including full time average earnings for those employed in similar sectors. However, the gap is relatively less in the North East than for GB as a whole, to some extent reflecting the fact that male earnings in the region are also low. The gender gap should not be seen as prima facie evidence of discrimination, although discrimination may exist. Contributing factors are the greater predisposition of men to work overtime, the more continuous involvement in the labour market by men and the higher levels of qualification among men.

In terms of enterprise, only 4.7% of women in the North East's work force are self-employed, compared with 7.1% nationally. While there is no data on the role of women in new business starts in the North East, nationally women now account for some 40% of new business starts. Research (IBM, 2001) reveals significant characteristics of businesses owned by women, including:

- they are more likely to use informal sources of capital and to be under-capitalised;
- on average, women-owned businesses are smaller and less growth oriented;
- there is a similar orientation towards local / regional markets
self employment is often chosen as a route to greater independence and flexibility in lifestyle.

Also, the Government White Paper, '21st Century Skills – Realising Our Potential', discusses the strategy's aims to help people develop the skills they need for employment and personal fulfilment. People can face barriers and obstacles to learning that are not just financial and we therefore need to support learners in different ways to enhance their employment opportunities.

TVW will make learning more inclusive, widen participation, eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for all learners.

TVW Strategic Overview

The partnership agreement between the five Local Authorities has been designed to pro-actively develop sub-regional approaches to employment and training initiatives. Within each of the five Local Authority Community Strategies there are crosscutting themes identified which clearly show that there are similar objectives aimed at improving the quality of life for all citizen's within the Tees Valley area.

One of the key objectives highlighted in each of the Community Strategies is Employment and Skills. This objective is pertinent to the overall aims of TVW as it compliments our vision of reducing worklessness, increasing access to lifelong learning, targeting priority groups, maximising employment opportunities for local

people where major regeneration work is evolving through public procurement charters.

A key factor in TVW becoming a sustainable entity will be the links forged between the five Local Authority Economic Development Departments who are the gateway to employers, providers, learners and external funding opportunities.

The strength of TVW will be measured on it's ability to not only meet the contractual requirements of it's funding body but also how assisting individuals to become economically active contributes to the targets set by the five partner organisations.

Tees Valley Works (TVW) Mission Statement is:

TVW will offer a unique, quality learning experience which will assist all learners to identify their aspirational goals and develop the necessary skills and knowledge in which to successfully progress into sustained employment or further education/other training opportunities.

TVW is committed to the following core values:

- We believe in equality of access, respect for diversity and elimination of discrimination;
- We recognise the diversity of our communities and will respect each person irrespective of their personal, social or cultural circumstances;
- We are committed to integrated service delivery and partnership working to benefit service users;
- We will ensure personal information and data is managed in accordance to legislation;
- We will ensure that information about its services is communicated in the widest variety of formats;
- We will work with service users to explore their emerging needs and develop individual action plans;
- We will use monitoring and evaluation to ensure continuous service improvement.

TVW Quality Statement

TVW and the five local authorities that make up the partnership recognise the need to continuously improve the provision it provides. As the lead partner, Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) has already implemented the Common Inspection Framework into its service delivery plan of Hartlepool Working Solutions (HWS), which is funded by the European Social Funds (ESF). A self-assessment report (SAR) has already been published for HWS and a development plan underpins service improvement. To ensure quality standards are met across all TVW funded projects, a SAR unique to TVW will be produced.

TVW have employed a Contracts Officer whose role includes is to ensure that the delivery of quality provision by the subcontractors is in line with the Common Inspection Framework (CIF). The Contracts Officer will also develop common quality specifications for the project that will be adopted by all of the subcontractors to ensure that a high quality service meets the changing needs of all learners and will also lead on the accreditation of the Matrix standard.

Also, all of the subcontractors delivering any element of service provision on behalf of TVW will have already implemented quality standards and procedures that meet the highest standards as required by the CIF.

TVW Equality & Diversity Statement

TVW are committed to ensuring that no learner is given less favourable treatment because of their racial or ethnic background, gender, religion or belief, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation unless the practice can be justified legitimately.

All TVW projects will adopt the key aspects of HBC's Equal Opportunities/Diversity Policies and all subcontractors who deliver any services on behalf of TVW will ensure that they have clearly defined statements which reflect the following legislation:

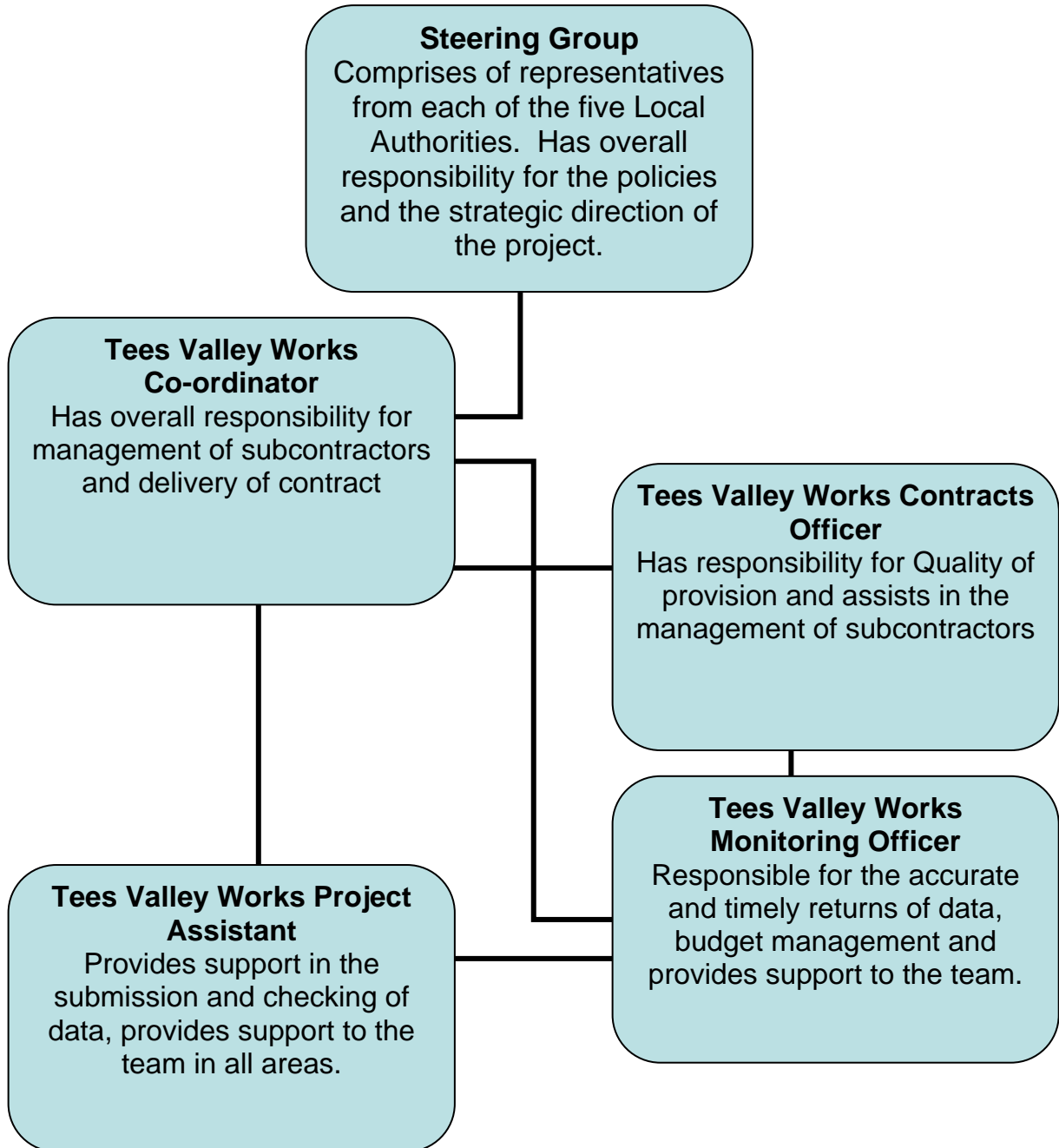
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA);
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001 (SENDA);
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRA);
- The Equal Pay Act 1970 (EPA);
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA);
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief or Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003;
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

TVW will ensure that all subcontractors regularly review their Equality Opportunities/Diversity Policies so that they can be updated on new legislation being introduced or best practice being identified.

TVW will also monitor all subcontractors to ensure that they have procedures in place which can deal with any complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment from members of staff or learners.

All subcontractors Equality Opportunities/Diversity Policies will be published and communicated to all learners during induction so that they are fully aware of the Complaints/Grievance procedure.

TVW Management Structure



Staff Development

TVW is committed to the professional development of all staff. All staff within TVW are currently employed by HBC (as the lead partner) and therefore they adhere to the Local Authorities staff training policies as outlined in the 'Staff Information and Personal Development Pack' (As highlighted below).

'Training is a high priority at Hartlepool, and all employees are encouraged to undertake training as part of their development. We run a comprehensive training programme, and there are opportunities to undertake post entry training qualifications to obtain basic and professional qualifications. In addition, a wide range of specific professional updating training is available through departments. All vacancies in the council are advertised and existing employees are encouraged to apply for promotion opportunities'.

Key Aims and Targets for TVW Projects

Aims of TVW in the Community

TVW Works in the Community operates across the Tees Valley and utilises the extensive expertise of voluntary groups and facilities which will provide local people with a holistic range of personal development, customised training relating to existing and emerging skills needs and access to services including Further Education. The target audience for this project are unemployed people aged 16 to 65. For learners registering onto this project the following support is available:

- Information, Advice and Guidance;
- Assistance to complete an accredited training course;
- Support in moving the learner into employment opportunities, Further Education or other training.

Beneficiaries will have access to a range of support that enables them to overcome barriers that stop them from taking part in training and therefore excludes them from employment opportunities. This support will include childcare and dependent care support, training in local venues and transport for those who need it.

The project will be delivered by the following subcontractors:

- Abu Bakr (Referral Agent)
- Breckon Hill Community Group (Referral Agent)
- Darlington YMCA
- The Five Lamps Organisation
- The Hope Foundation
- Manor Residents Association
- Positive People Development

- Routes to Employment (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)

Targets for TVW in the Community

STARTS/OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES	OVERALL TARGET
Beneficiary Starting the Project	485
Beneficiaries achieving a nationally recognised qualification	155
Beneficiaries achieving part of a nationally recognised qualification	68
Beneficiaries progressing into further education/training on leaving the project	189
Beneficiaries progressing into paid employment or self employment upon leaving the project	116
Beneficiaries working towards a nationally recognised qualification	214
Beneficiaries completing the course	166
Beneficiaries achieving a positive outcome	343

Aims of TVW for Women

TVW for Women will use the extensive network of community groups and facilities across the Tees Valley to deliver a range of customised training provision related to the needs of excluded groups such as those with disabilities and lone parents. The project will also meet the needs of the employers in the sub-region by providing a range of training programmes linked to job creation and expansion. Each of the five local authorities will engage with employers through business support services, such as grants schemes that assist in job creation.

The target audience for this project are employed and unemployed women aged 16 to 65 years. For learners registering onto this project the following support is available:

- Information, Advice and Guidance is available during school hours;
- Assistance to complete an accredited training course;
- Support in moving the learner into employment opportunities, Further Education or other training;
- Training which allows women to use the service on a drop in basis thereby increasing flexibility;
- Advice on becoming self-employed.

The following subcontractors will deliver this project:

- Darlington YMCA
- The Five Lamps Organisation
- The Hope Foundation
- Manor Residents Association
- Positive People Development
- Routes to Employment (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)
- Women's Support Network (Referral Agent)

Targets for TVW for Women

STARTS/OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES	OVERALL TARGET
Unemployed Beneficiary starting the Project	180
Employed Beneficiary starting the Project	70
Beneficiaries achieving a nationally recognised qualification	162
Beneficiaries achieving part of a nationally recognised qualification	40
Beneficiaries progressing into further education/training on leaving the project	123
Beneficiaries progressing into paid employment or self employment upon leaving the project	65
Beneficiaries progressing into paid employment in a non-traditional sector on leaving the project	18
Beneficiaries trained as trainers	3
Beneficiaries receiving self employment support	20
Beneficiaries working towards a nationally recognised qualification	205
Beneficiaries completing the course	174
Beneficiaries still in employment on leaving the project	62
Beneficiaries achieving a positive outcome	213

Aims of TVW Make it Happen

The Make it Happen project will provide a people centred, cohesive and tailored programme which will offer unemployed people aged 25 to 60 the opportunity to develop the skills, attitudes and attributes that are valued by local employers, enabling beneficiaries to move seamlessly into employment.

The aim of this project is to deliver innovative employability courses in each of the local authority areas of the Tees Valley, thereby improving the employment chances of local residents. Each employability course will last a minimum of six weeks and will incorporate a series of soft skills modules including Team Building, Communication Skills, IT, Confidence Building, Health and Safety and Interview Skills. Underpinning this training will be job search sessions, mentoring and counselling support to enable beneficiaries to increase confidence and improve motivation in order to secure employment. In addition, the six-week programme will also provide in-work benefit advice, work experience and employer visits to reinforce the skills and competence that businesses demand.

Targets for TVW Make It Happen

STARTS/OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES	OVERALL TARGET
Beneficiary Starting the Project	150
Beneficiaries progressing into paid employment or self employment upon leaving the project	101
Beneficiaries taking part in an employability programme	150
Beneficiaries completing the course	110
Beneficiaries achieving a positive outcome	110

Widening Participation

Across each of the local authorities there are differing priorities and needs in relation to economic development activity. TVW will need to be responsive to these differing needs, particularly the engagement of priority groups, therefore the project team will work with each local authority to identify potential customer groups and incorporate this into a Marketing Action Plan. The range of targeted communities is extensive and geographically is not restricted to area-based initiatives. Provision offered through TVW will be people centred, recognising the individual needs of the target audience, particularly in relation to the failure of previous interventions to fully engage with some of the 'hardest to reach' communities. The role of individual community organisations in the delivery of this provision is key to the potential success of the programme, and the development of 'specialists' is favoured, whereby an organisation with a track record of working with a particular client group can develop this into a sub-

regional offer. Equally more general providers can use their influence as community leaders to engage with a broad range of potential customers. Reputation and Quality will be the key driver of success and the project team will implement robust quality systems to support this approach.

TVW will integrate across the existing network of intermediaries operating within the sub-region, which each local authority is a pro-active member. This approach brings together neighbourhood based providers with larger sub-regional delivery organisations, which will assist in the sharing of market intelligence.

To reach priority groups TVW have developed a framework whereby there are referral agencies that are contracted to link their clients onto TVW provision. This should be successful in widening participation amongst groups such as the BME communities. The other Local Authorities have also identified providers who have a track record of working with priority groups that are unique to their local area. For example Darlington Council has teamed up with Darlington YMCA who supports young people at risk of becoming homeless.

TVW will also review their widening participation strategy throughout the lifetime of the project and will look to engage with other key stakeholders so that we can promote our training programmes to other client groups. For example, TVW are working closely with Children's Services to develop innovative employability programmes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

Beneficiary Target Groups

Beneficiary engagement will be determined by each local authority within the eligibility criteria outlined by the LSC, these include:

- Young people who have never become established in the world of work;
- Adult long-term unemployed who have redundant skills;
- Men and women (possibly with motivational problems) who have been economically inactive for a long period;
- Older people (over age 50);
- Disabled people;
- Members of ethnic minority groups;
- Lone parents;
- Refugees;
- Asylum seekers (limited to pre-vocational activities);
- People living in rural communities;
- Those with caring responsibilities;
- Those with mental health difficulties;
- People with severe literacy and numeracy problems;
- Teenagers with children;
- The homeless and rough sleepers;
- People in the last 6 months who have completed a custodial sentence;

- People for who English is a second language;
- Young people with learning difficulties;
- Women who are jobless and need help to get back into work;
- Women facing profound labour market disadvantage and at risk of exclusion;
- Women wishing to engage in Lifelong Learning;
- Training for women in employment, with or without employer support;
- Women who are interested in starting their own business;
- Lone parents;
- Women returners;
- Women from disadvantaged groups and communities;
- Women employers, managers and trainers.

One approach will be to align the provision with existing strategies and interventions where common objectives exist, particularly around specific target groups.

Performance Monitoring and Management Information (MI)

As per contractual requirements representatives from TVW will regularly meet with each provider to;

- Review their delivery to date against the profiled targets;
- Discuss issues relating to the contractual requirements;
- Review their quality policies, procedures and practices;
- Complete an audit check of paperwork;
- Advise on good practices relating to the CIF;
- Offer support on Quality Improvement.

TVW will also produce MI, which will give clear indications of overall performance to date for each project and also for each provider. This MI will be available on a monthly basis and will be forwarded to representatives of the Steering Group for review.

Also, once there are sufficient beneficiaries registered onto the TVW projects and achievements/progressions are made then regular MI will be made available to the Steering Group that will show overall:

- Achievement Rates %
- Retention Rates %
- Progression into employment rates %
- Progression into Further Education/Other training rates %
- Review of Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIM's)

This MI will be made available to each provider and will be regular reviewed in contract meetings to review their performance to date.

Internal Beneficiary Spreadsheet

As a secondary auditable check of information submitted to the LSCs on-line provider data capture system TVW will devise an internal beneficiary spreadsheet. This spreadsheet will hold the following information:

- Comprehensive personal details
- Course details
- Projected start and end dates
- Actual start and end dates
- Qualification achievement details
- Into Employment progression details
- Into Further Education progression details

Priority Actions - Overview

TVW are responsible for contract compliance with the LSC, which predominantly means that TVW must ensure that sub-contractors are delivering training to learners to a high standard as set out in the CIF. A key priority will also be to ensure that all subcontractors have robust auditable systems in place in which to capture accurate data and evidence.

To support this each Local Authority area has a TVW Monitoring and Support Officer who is trained to audit paperwork prior to it being submitted and ensuring that TVW's and the LSCs stringent standards are met.

In terms of the quality of training being delivered by the TVW sub-contractors it is TVW who would be in scope for an inspection by ALI. Therefore, TVW will be challenged with preparing subcontractors for an inspection which in the first instance will mean understanding and monitoring the standard of service that is being offered.

TVW responds to the key questions within the CIF in assessing the learner's journey. As there will be differing policies and practices relating to quality standards within each sub-contractor TVW will identify good practice to share amongst the network of providers. TVW will encourage a culture of partnership working amongst the subcontractors and this has been welcomed by the network that recognises the challenges they face due to demographic changes which brings with it a shrinking labour market.

It is accepted that some subcontractors may require substantial support from TVW in assisting them to understand and meet the bureaucratic, intensive contract management requirements involved in the ESF co-financing programme. This on-going capacity building will provide the knowledge and guidance for

subcontractors to confidently bid in their own right for other such funds and will provide a positive track record to support the bids.

TVW employs a Quality Officer who has set up Quality Focus Groups within each provider's premises to enable lesson observations to take place on the provision being delivered. Providers teaching and training and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) practices are observed and the Quality Officer will also work with the provider to review policies and procedures particularly relating to Quality systems.

The Quality Focus Groups will be used as a tool to assist each provider to identify the strengths and areas for development within their organisation. Each provider will develop their own Quality Action Plan which will identify the quality of performance and ultimately feed into the over-arching TVW Self Assessment Report (SAR) and Development Plan.

Provider Support Network Group meetings are held on a regular basis and will be a conduit whereby the subcontractors can meet to discuss ways of increasing quality standards and sharing good practice.

TVW will encourage subcontractors to work together to enable clear progression routes for learners from one funded project to another. This does not mean that TVW will encourage a 'revolving door' policy where learners continue to move from one programme to the next but instead provide a service which adds value to the learner's journey so that they move closer to the labour market.

TVW will provide a service which encapsulates a sustainable future amongst those learners seeking employment and this can be achieved by offering provision at NVQ Levels 2, 3 and above. Therefore, subcontractors will be encouraged to design appropriate programmes to provide opportunities at this level and beyond.

Subcontractors must ensure that the beneficiaries recruited onto the programme understand the needs of employers in that a skilled workforce is required and clear routes from training to sustainable employment can be made. TVW Steering Group works closely with employers and the Sector Skill Agencies and therefore has a clear understanding of the skills and attitudes that are required to gain employment. This knowledge has been a key driver in shaping TVW's policy.

Actions:

Risk Assessment

TVW will undertake a risk assessment that will consider the main risks to the overall delivery of the project and will identify actions that will be taken to address or reduce the risk. The assessment will also consider what systems are required to enable the project to continue in the event of an incident /major incident that could put the systems, evidence and data at risk.

Financial Systems

TVW will introduce robust financial systems which will ensure that all funding received from the LSC can be accounted for. Each project will have a budget designed which will show the profiled funding received from the LSC on a monthly basis and the actual outgoing expenditure is spent within the same timescale.

Each budget will be allocated a unique element code which will show where funding has been spent against a particular budget code.

Auditable systems will be introduced so that auditors have access to financial documentation such as requisition forms and invoices. By developing this system the LSC will be able to identify that the European Social Funding (ESF) money is being spent.

There will also be a clear link from each budget line to other internal spreadsheets so that auditors will be able to identify how much funding has been paid out to each provider for individual beneficiaries. This system will prevent duplication in funding as it will ensure that a provider cannot claim for a start or output payment twice for the same beneficiary.

Internal and External Audit Systems

TVW will develop internal and external audit systems that are transparent and can be easily followed by providers.

Training on Completing TVW paperwork

As well as the TVW quality manual, each provider will receive training on how to complete TVW paperwork to a satisfactory standard. This training will be ongoing and providers will be given the opportunity to seek further guidance from members of TVW if required.

Employer Engagement

A key aspect of TVW projects is to engage with employers to ensure that beneficiaries progress seamlessly into employment. TVW will work closely with each Local Authority to ensure that we capitalise on existing links to employers so that if there are major regeneration projects, job creation schemes or inward investment in companies then TVW are able to react to the needs of the relevant partner.

Also, the TVW Contracts Officer will consult with each subcontractor on how they engage with employers and progress beneficiaries into employment.

TVW E-bulletins

TVW will ensure that on a bi-monthly basis providers will receive updates of information relevant to the ongoing performance of each project.

It is envisaged that the e-bulletin will evolve into a document where providers can share good practice or issues relating to 'quality' standards and procedures as outlined in the CIF.

Contract Monitoring Reviews

Regular meetings will be carried out between each provider and the TVW Project Co-ordinator/Contracts Officer where performance will be reviewed and quality standards/procedures discussed.

Quality Focus Groups

Quality Focus Groups will be arranged between all providers so that in depth consultation may occur with the TVW Contracts Officer. Also, the Contracts Officer will arrange feedback sessions with learners so that they can report on the standard of training received.

Teaching and Learning and IAG Observations

Providers will have their teachers/trainers and IAG Officers observed on an annual basis, as a minimum to review the quality of the training/IAG service being offered.

Quality Questionnaire

Each provider will complete a questionnaire which will give each organisation an opportunity to grade the quality of the service they provide. The grading system will encourage providers to consider the standard of service they currently offer and the TVW Contracts Officer will review the comments they make. Each

provider will need to show evidence on how they have reached a verdict on the grade they have allocated themselves. For instance, if the provider states that they have an exemplar (Grade 1) induction programme they will have to show evidence of this. When reviewing the grades a provider has allocated themselves the Contracts Officer will liaise with them to identify whether the grades are realistic.

Quality Action Plan Meetings

By reviewing the 'quality questionnaire' the TVW Contracts Officer will be able to work with the provider to identify strengths and areas for development. This meeting will give providers an opportunity to debate the systems/policies/procedures they have in place to enable a unique learning experience to be offered.

Quality Action Plan

From the Quality Focus Groups, Observations undertaken, the sharing of information relating and data gathering (including a review of a providers Self Assessment Report (SAR) a quality action plan will be produced which will show an organisations strengths, actions and timescales for areas for development.

TVW SAR

Following the completion of a TVW Quality Action Plan there will be sufficient evidence to produce an overall TVW SAR. From the SAR a development plan will be produced which will give TVW an overall indication of strengths and areas for development. This information will be input on the LSC's portal system by no later than 31 December 2006 so that the LSC and ALI can access it after this date.

Preparing Providers for an ALI Inspection

Please see page 26 for a brief on how TVW will assist in preparing providers for an ALI inspection.

Provider Support Network Group Meetings

Quarterly Provider Support Network Group meetings will be arranged so providers can meet to debate the delivery of the project and to share good practice on all aspects of quality improvement/assurance.

These meetings will be used as a vehicle for subcontractors to share good practice in delivery and to debate how their own marketing strategies have effectively engaged with hard to reach target groups.

Partnerships

The key for the success of TVW is to build collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders so that opportunities to engage with Beneficiaries are maximised. It is crucial to the sustainability of TVW that strong partnerships are in place to enable future bidding opportunities to be maximised by demonstrating the strength of the consortia and the robust infrastructure that has been developed.

TVW Charter Mark

Please see page 29 for further details on the TVW Charter Mark.

Initial Assessments of New Providers

An Initial Assessment will be undertaken for all new providers wishing to contract with TVW. Within this initial assessment TVW will review a providers:

- Internal audit systems;
- Quality policies, procedures and practices relating to all aspects of training and IAG;
- Financial Health check of the organisation;
- Track record in delivering training and employment projects;
- Health and Safety policies, procedures and practices.

Where an existing provider wishes to bid for new TVW Contract elements of this initial assessment may be undertaken.

Procurement

TVW will develop a robust, accountable and transparent procurement procedure where providers will be able to bid for TVW contracts under a specified Open and Competitive Tendering (OCT) round process. The process will include an interview with the prospective provider and the above Initial Assessment.

Marketing Strategy and Action Plan

A Marketing strategy and Marketing action plan will be developed and made available to the providers.

Branding

A single brand will be used across the sub-region, making TVW a recognised and respected supplier of training and employment solutions amongst local communities. This will be complemented by each of the Local Authorities corporate logos and integrated with sub-contractors existing marketing materials

to ensure continuity. In addition, all marketing materials and relevant stationery will display both LSC and ESF logo's to reflect the source of funding.

Marketing Techniques

Marketing techniques will be determined by the groups that the project aims to target across the Tees Valley. The network of intermediaries operating across each local authority area will have a key role to play and early engagement with these networks will be essential.

The project will adopt a range of marketing techniques that will target eligible groups including:

- Leaflets and posters designed for support organisations such as Carer Groups, Ex-offender organisations, Networks of Intermediaries, Resident Associations and other support networks;
- Local press articles to raise awareness and promote good news stories;
- A bi-annual newsletter that will target potential beneficiaries, intermediaries and other stakeholders;
- Internet and email based marketing, including the creation of a TVW website;
- Attendance and sponsorship of local career and training exhibitions;
- Networking and awareness raising across a broad range of support organisations to engage with target groups;
- Use of materials in other languages to engage with BME communities.

TVW Website

TVW is creating a website so that there is a direct focal point for individuals and organisations to collect information relating to TVW projects.

The website will be designed so that it is user-friendly and identifies the training provision available by each subcontractor within each Local Authority. Potential beneficiaries wishing to register onto a TVW project will be able to submit their details through a portal system within the website, the information will go to TVW and they will refer the beneficiary to the local provider.

The TVW website will also allow for customer feedback and will be used to develop the service further.

Response to Priority Needs

TVW is aware that there will be differing priority needs for learners dependent on each Local Authority area. For example, in Hartlepool there is a real challenge to support carers to move closer to the labour market whilst in Middlesbrough there is an issue of supporting individuals from ethnic minority groups.

To respond to this need TVW has arranged meetings with relevant subcontractors and each Voluntary Development Agency (VDA) across the sub-region so that community groups can be identified who would benefit from the support TVW projects could offer their clients.

TVW will engage with Community Development Officers across the sub-region so they are aware of the provision available via the project. Following on from these meetings the Community Development Officers will be signposted to the subcontractors to ensure that any relevant beneficiaries identified by these Officers can be referred to the relevant provider.

Networking

TVW staff has attended Resident Association meetings and other Community Group meetings to present the services available from TVW. All subcontractors will be involved with similar meetings to ensure the widest possible audience of organisations are aware of TVW provision. Meetings with VDA and Community Development Officers may be productive in extending the knowledge of TVW and ensuring that potential beneficiaries are aware of the project, the offer of training and the progression opportunities.

Progression for Women in Non Traditional Sectors

There is an issue for subcontractors to meet the target of progressing women into a non-traditional sector. Each subcontractor will be considering the strategies they have in place to meet this target. TVW will provide advice and guidance to subcontractors so that they engage with projects such as The Building Futures project as this is an ideal opportunity to progress women into the construction sector.

Provider Guidance Manual

TVW will produce a Provider Guidance Manual document which will assist providers on how to complete all TVW paperwork and will also highlight issues relating to the CIF.

Internal Quality Assurance Manual

TVW will produce an Internal Quality Assurance Manual which will hold all policies and procedures relevant to internal processes.

Supporting Capacity Building within the VCS

The majority of TVW subcontractors are from the VCS and the requirements of ESF co-financing are new to many of these organisations. Therefore TVW will ensure that support is available to subcontractors so that where necessary quality standards can be improved. For example, there will be a need for each subcontractor to have robust auditable systems in place so that contractual obligations will be met. TVW will guide and support the subcontractors on the necessary systems to overcome this challenge. Regular training will be given to all subcontractors on the completion of ESF paperwork, to develop robust data capture systems and to ensure that evidence is of an acceptable standard.

As TVW will be in scope for an ALI inspection there will be support measures implemented so that each provider is working within and has a clear understanding of the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) and what can be expected during an inspection.

TVW will ensure that as part of the subcontractor's quality assurance cycle they are all supported to complete a SAR and DP, which will assist them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Subcontractors who have not produced a SAR or DP will be given one to one support to assist in the compilation of these documents (As shown on page 26 – Review of the SAR process).

We will support subcontractors to identify where other external funded training provision is available so that clear progression links are formulated between organisations. For example, TVW will ensure that all of the subcontractors are aware of other projects such as Tees Valley Working Together (TVWT) and HBC's Building Futures and Workroute.

As stated previously in this report, each subcontractor will be encouraged to work in partnership with each Local Authority area so that existing links with employers can lead to progression into sustainable employment opportunities.

As part of TVW Employer Engagement Strategy subcontractors will be advised on the skills needs of employers through the Local Authority links to the Sector Skills Council. These links will help subcontractors to identify what training provision will be required in the future so that they can meet the demands of employers. Some subcontractors will have to develop sector specific programmes of learning that meet the needs of both the employer and the beneficiary so that individuals become job ready.

TVW will apply for funding via the LSCs Support for Success programme to provide 13 days of quality assurance/improvement consultative support, which is aimed at preparing subcontractors for ALI inspection and ensuring that an ethos

of continuous improvement is embedded within the strategic cycle of subcontractors.

Also, within the Contract Monitoring reviews, subcontractors will be advised not only on performance to date, but on how their organisation will adhere to quality standards. Where it is identified that a subcontractor is not meeting the required standards then support will be given and an action plan developed with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, target) areas for improvement.

One of the elements of capacity building is to ensure that the VCS workforce is fit for purpose for the 21st Century. TVW will work with TVWT who have a responsibility to the sector to meet the needs of VCS employees. However, to complement this TVW, under the umbrella of the Works for Women project will fund courses that update the trainer's qualifications (City and Guilds (C&G) 7302 Certificate in Delivering Learning or the C&G 7307 Teaching Adult Learners).

TVW and Tees Valley Working Together (TVWT) Joint Working Protocol

TVW are committed to capacity building within the Voluntary and Community sector and will therefore further develop a Joint Working Protocol with TVWT (As shown overleaf).

TVWT is a consortium which was formed in late 2004 to take forward the LSC 'Working Together Strategy' which was designed to engage and to work effectively with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). A key part of the strategy was to encourage the VCS and funding bodies to work together to simplify the process of procuring mainstream provision. The strategy also highlights the need for the VCS to be transparent, fit for purpose and accountable so that they are in a position to bid directly and compete with other mainstream providers such as Further Education institutions. The strategy encourages VCS organisations to establish or join delivery consortia's that will allow the development of a track record of their own.

The VCS bring more than widening participation to the client group. They are able to bid for funds that are not accessible to the public or private sector organisations and are therefore able to add significant value in the delivery and design of future projects or proposals.

The VCS has been recognised as a large employer but it has also been identified that to maximise the impact of the sector, Workforce Development opportunities must be freely available to ensure that the workforce has the skills to meet the emerging needs of the community.

TVW is providing assistance to the sector and the wider community by providing funding to allow the trainers to be trained and ensure that delivery staff within these organisations holds up to date qualifications.

Tees Valley Working Together & Tees Valley Works

Tees Valley Working Together

Tees Valley WORKS

Quality Joint Working Protocol

Purpose:

This joint working protocol will provide the Tees Valley Working Together (TVWT) & Tees Valley Works (TVW) direction on how both consortiums will work in partnership to develop their quality assurance systems, share good practice, expertise and improve the delivery of the learning experience for all beneficiaries.

Objectives for joint working:

1. To produce a one year action plan which will identify shared key areas for development of both consortiums in relation to all aspects of quality improvement.
2. To develop a one year training plan that focuses on all aspects of quality improvement including the Adult Learning Inspectorates (ALI) Common Inspection Framework (CIF) 'Learner's Journey'.
3. For each consortium to act as a 'critical friend' to the other when Self-Assessment Reports (SAR) and Development Plans are produced.
4. Co-operate together in developing quality systems, procedures and policies using agreed common standards.
5. To design an Initial Assessment template which both consortiums will adopt and use prior to contracting with a new provider.
6. To undertake work together to improve quality assurance at the provider level including shared audit and support to training providers.
7. To share information relating to quality standards from external bodies such as the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA), ALI and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).
8. To meet on a monthly basis to review the above and confirm if activities have been achieved within stated deadlines

Preparing TVW subcontractors for an ALI Inspection

As the Accountable Body (and contract holder), a major part of HBC's responsibilities will be to assist in leading and managing all TVW sub-contractors so that they are prepared for an ALI inspection.

To prepare for this TVW will secure the services of a consultant who will carry out a training needs analysis with each provider and provide workshops focusing on the CIF and 'Preparing for Inspection'.

A SAR and DP will be developed which will have stretching but achievable targets held within. Close monitoring of these documents will take place and will continue over the duration of the projects.

TVW will meet with its network of subcontractors to develop these documents and a robust process is in place.

A number of subcontractors will be offered one to one support which will focus on areas agreed with them. The support will conclude with the compilation of a unique action plan for each supported subcontractor and close monitoring of this document and the milestones held within the Action Plan will take place. If the identified actions are met standards will be improved and continuous improvement embedded into the ethos of these subcontractors.

To assist under-delivering subcontractors fortnightly Contract Reviews will be held where necessary to ensure that delivery is progressing and assistance is provided to halt under-delivery of outputs and to assure the quality of provision.

Review of TVW SAR Process

One of TVW key priorities will be to agree and develop a process with the subcontractors and partners, so that TVW is thoroughly prepared for an ALI inspection and more importantly ensure that quality is central to everything TVW stands for.

TVW has been operational since February 2006 and a decision was taken to submit the first SAR and DP within the following timescales:

- SAR Plan 05/06 – From February 2006 to November 2006;
- DP from February 2006 to July 2007.

However, to align the TVW SAR to the requirements of the LSC the next SAR and DP will include the following dates:

- SAR 06/07 – From November 2006 to July 2007;
- DP – July 2007 to December 2007.

To enable this TVW had to make a realistic assessment of performance against the questions held within the CIF, in particular:

- Make a realistic assessment/judgement of each subcontractor against the CIF;
- Be able to demonstrate and validate the quality systems each subcontractor has in place;
- Identify the strengths and areas for development for TVW and for each of the subcontractors.

TVW involved all of the subcontractors funded via any TVW project, including the referral agencies.

TVW focused on all aspects of the CIF including:

- How is widening participation implemented?
- The quality and processes of initial assessment and induction;
- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) practices;
- Quality of Teaching and Learning;
- The Learners journey.

TVW recognised that the SAR process is something that everyone within an organisation needs to be involved in, including the learner, trainers and the Chief Executive. The SAR cannot be carried out in isolation and no overall grade can be made unless there are robust systems and procedures in place so that all parties have been involved in the consultation process.

The outcome of the SAR document and grades forms the starting point for an inspection and provides a comprehensive evaluation of the quality of the provision and address/show the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of provision.

TVW will demonstrate that the whole process is about assessing the success of the learner and the capacity to improve performance and also show how we are meeting the needs of employers and the community.

The TVW SAR must therefore be able to demonstrate:

- The relevance of provision in relation to needs and priorities;
- The effectiveness of provision in terms of outcomes for learners, employers and the community;
- The efficiency of provision in the use of resources.

An ALL inspector will use the CIF as a measuring tool and make an overall judgement on the five key questions:

- How well do learners achieve?
- How effective are teaching, training and learning?
- How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of the learner?
- How well are learners guided and supported?
- How effective is Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting learners?

During an inspection all judgements made will be gained by observing and interviewing learners and staff. Learner's portfolio of work and other documents relating to training, assessment, verification and qualifications will also be viewed although as more ESF only providers and Train to Gain (T2G) providers are inspected the process may change slightly.

The CIF states that the learner must be at the centre of all judgements and ensure that any strengths identified are not just examples of normal practice but over and above what one could normally expect and survive the 'so what test'.

Overall grading depends not on the number of strengths and weaknesses but on the impact on the learner.

As a lead provider TVW is responsible for the quality of subcontracted provision. Therefore TVW needs to be able to demonstrate that there are arrangements in place to assure quality and support its improvement. TVW needs to be able to validate subcontractors' arrangements and incorporate their SAR into an overall one for TVW.

It has been accepted that subcontractors may have different quality procedures in place and TVW needs to ensure duplication of effort is avoided by utilising existing arrangements. TVW needs to be able to identify what procedures subcontractors have in place and how they meet the needs of the organisation.

There is no set format for a SAR as long as it is fit for purpose. TVW will need to build on the good work that has already been undertaken by subcontractors to identify their strengths and areas for improvement and visited them individually to clarify their findings.

The main purpose of the SAR is to improve quality and once subcontractors are consulted an agreed version of the SAR was produced and a Development Plan was designed which formed the basis of TVW Quality Action Plan which is currently being used to improve quality standards.

This process has culminated in a suite of documents and TVW is currently undergoing an evaluation exercise as to how effective the process and overall document are.

TVW Quality Charter Mark

TVW aims to ensure that the best quality training experience is available for all learners. For every subcontractor delivering a service on behalf of TVW a contract will be produced which will identify what minimum quality service provision is required.

By working within the remits of this contract the subcontractors will understand what service is expected to be delivered. In essence, this contract is the basis for the introduction of a 'TVW Quality Charter Mark'. However, to ensure that all prospective and existing subcontractors are aware of the quality standards expected by TVW, the benefits of devising and implementing a 'Quality Charter Mark' will be reviewed.

A decision will be made on the benefits on applying for a patented Quality Charter Mark.

Working Towards Matrix Accreditation

TVW will support subcontractors wishing to become Matrix Accredited as all providers bidding directly for co-financing from the LSC and Jobcentre Plus will need to have achieved this standard to be considered as a contractor.

TVW will offer direct support by procuring the services of professional consultants who can advise subcontractors on how to achieve Matrix Accreditation status.

TVW will review applying for Matrix Accreditation through a joint bid with Hartlepool Working Solutions.

Conclusion

This document has identified how TVW will pro-actively work with its network of providers to ensure that current contracts are fully delivered to a standard that is continually improving. TVW will ensure that the learner's journey is a worthwhile experience that meets the needs of the learner in assisting them to progress onto a beneficial progression of employment or training.

TVW is keen to ensure it becomes a sustainable entity and this will need to be developed by maximising all opportunities for additional funding.

END.