

# **West Kent Housing Association**

## **Scrutiny panel**

**Employment and training review**

**2 September 2021**

## Overview

The scrutiny panel met online to discuss their first review in April 2021. After reviewing the monthly dashboard of performance information, and 2020's-year end dashboard, the panel concluded that they wanted to investigate the employment and training offer for their first review. Many of the panel hadn't heard of this service and were keen to better understand it and the recorded KPI 'job outcomes'.

Five members of the scrutiny panel contributed to the review

- Brian
- Carolina
- Iain
- Jason
- Linda

The employment and training team, Dawn Grant and Pauline Smith, were involved in the process throughout.

## Methodology

The scrutiny review was conducted over a period of several months.

The panel first met virtually on MS Teams to review and discuss KPIs as well as year and month end performance that is collected and presented to staff to monitor services. This helped to inform their decision making.

The employment and training service has been steadily growing over the past few years and the panel were interested in what the KPI of '28 job outcomes' represented. A lot of the panel were not aware of the service and, considering its importance, especially in the current climate, were keen to better understand it, improve the service and make it more well-known and accessible.

The employment and training team was invited to deliver a presentation to the panel on MS Teams to outline their service including the type of support they offer, what training courses are available and how they monitor their outputs and outcomes. After the presentation the panel was invited to ask Dawn and Pauline questions based on their presentation.

The panel meeting continued after the employment and training team left to discuss the service further. This included identifying what other information and documentation the panel would like to see, what further questions they would like to ask and any other ideas they want to explore for the service. The list of questions and the teams' responses are listed as Appendix 1.

In addition to the responses given in Appendix 1, the panel were sent:

- Case studies of clients that have received support (Appendix 2)

- The registration form (Appendix 3)
- The feedback survey (Appendix 4)
- Links to training courses

## Findings

The panel was more than satisfied with the work the employability and training team do and how they do it. Each member noted how the support provided by the team is essential and potentially life changing for those that engage with it and they wanted to support the team to promote their work.

There were some key areas that the panel identified as areas of improvement:

### 1) Feedback from clients was inadequate

Although there is a feedback survey that is sent to all former clients, the uptake is very low and therefore ongoing feedback to potentially help develop the service wasn't available.

It was considered that the feedback needs to be done in a different way to help measure the service and its impact on the individual to support the development of the service and to identify areas of improvement. It was suggested that this could be carried out over the phone by an impartial staff member.

### 2) The figure reported on is insufficient and lacks clarification

The only key performance indicator reported on is job outcomes which doesn't fully explore or report on the service delivered by this team. Getting a client into work is the ideal outcome, but it doesn't translate to the additional work that has come before it or the work that doesn't contribute to a job outcome such as training or CV support.

### 3) Insufficient information around how the team support and accommodate individuals with additional needs, or language barriers

It was identified that either information about diversity isn't collected, or the service is not easily accessible to people with additional needs.

The panel found that although the service is available to anyone, and accommodations would be made if they were needed, the uptake for people with additional needs was very low and would need to be explored.

### 4) The team consists of two people so their development and support prospects may be limited

The panel have reservations about how well the service could accommodate an increase in demand. West Kent has ambitions to manage 10,000 homes by 2025, will two, or three, people be enough to support all West Kent residents in search of employment, upskilling or training?

## Recommendations

Recommendations	Comments and considerations	Comments from employability and training team
Consider alternative, more proactive methods of marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leaflet campaign promoting service to raise awareness.</li> <li>- Include testimonials</li> <li>- Possibly as part of a wider leaflet promoting community and resident services.</li> <li>- GDPR implications need to be considered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Target boosted Facebook posts to West Kent communities near to hubs or events.</li> <li>- Neighbourhood News plus local press e.g. Town Crier.</li> <li>- Promotional material sent to district council, town councils, refuges, food banks, local schools, DWP,</li> <li>- Need to double check actions against GDPR &amp; liaise with Steven Thomson</li> </ul>
Improve and use the feedback survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It's currently not very user friendly and not many people complete it</li> <li>- Include tick box for clients to agree to be contacted for case studies. Could work with the panel to develop</li> <li>- How would the team use the survey responses to shape their service?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once the customer has achieved their outcomes, we would send the survey asking them to complete and return.</li> <li>- Ask Russ to amend the survey.</li> <li>- Adjust service based on the responses.</li> <li>- Consider using new system Rant and Rave.</li> </ul>
Training and awareness raising for all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with Amie, Internal Communications Officer, to develop a better method of engaging staff. e.g. a week where T&amp;E is the focus? Or a 'did you know?' quiz. To make sure staff across the business including mobile workers such as engineers know about the offer and actively promote it.</li> <li>- Consider doing this through team meetings</li> <li>- Have resources available for staff to hand out e.g. leaflet or business card but also encourage people to email T&amp;E with resident info to make first contact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- T&amp;E team already attend relevant team meetings.</li> <li>- T&amp;E team utilise spotlight presentation via chief executive's monthly briefing to share news.</li> <li>- Our service has recently been promoted through Mark Faithful, Financial Wellbeing Manager and with different teams.</li> <li>- Internal promotion on Bettie via blogs.</li> <li>- Social media promoted via comms.</li> </ul>
Report on more areas, not just job outcomes and		We do record other performance information in lower lever reports and

<p>promote in all the usual ways</p>		<p>scorecards, such as the number of people undertaking training, and the number of people given advice. We use these numbers within our department to help to guide the work we do. But it was decided that we would report on job outcomes by the executive team as unemployment and underemployment can negatively impact mental and physical health.</p> <p>We also share some of our figures with national bodies such as CECI (Centre for Excellence in Community Investment). CECI works with a range of social housing providers to collect data about a lot of different areas of community investment to understand the influence that housing providers have on local communities. They use this information to share best practice. They use their research to try to influence government policy to support community investment.</p> <p>We share the following employability information with CECI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number supported into part time employment</li> <li>- Number supported into full time employment</li> <li>- Number of people supported with employment, education and training advice, guidance and support.</li> <li>- Number given digital support (also includes digital support given by other departments)</li> </ul>
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<p>Add line to registration form about how prospective clients that aren't residents can still receive help and get referred</p>		<p>We ask if they are a West Kent tenant on the registration form and if they aren't, we can still work with them and refer them on to other services as needed. We have a number of partners in other housing providers that are able to provide services to the wider community.</p>
<p>Engage with young people about the T&amp;E services available to help them prepare for the workplace</p>	<p>The youth team run youth groups for residents aged 8-19.</p>	<p>DWP are setting up youth hubs. They have dedicated work coaches for young people who are in receipt of universal credit. and will be set up at our job hubs in Sevenoaks and</p>

		Swanley so we can also offer employability support.
Consider the resource implication if there is an increase in demand.		Requesting that the additional support of Russ on 3 days a week until October to be made a permanent resource can then extend support hubs to Edenbridge and develop training programme further.

## Review appraisal

This review was the first for the scrutiny panel and did not come without its challenges. The learnings from this review will be discussed in a panel meeting to identify what went well, what could be improved and an action plan for future reviews.

### 1) Recruitment and retention

During the review we lost a number of panel members and had to recruit for the second time. This was due to personal circumstances or a lack of time.

### 2) Conflicting schedules and other commitments

Coordinating a large number of people, both residents and staff, can be difficult and clashes or last-minute cancellations do happen. This can impact online learning and training sessions as well as meetings and can cause delays to the completion of a review as organising regular meetings with the full panel has not been possible and some meetings have had to be delayed as a result.

### 3) Ongoing learning

There is no one size fits all. Every organisation conducts scrutiny differently, and no review is the same in its methodology or process. The panel and the communications and engagement team are constantly learning to identify areas of improvement in the scrutiny process to identify the best way forward for West Kent.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

Panel's questions	Employment and training team's responses
<p>What information do you record?</p>	<p>Our registration form records, name, address, phone, email, employment status, disability, economic status, work ready checklist, training needs. See registration form <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>Then we record engagements with the individual and capture a brief summary of our interactions with them, for example, "resident has requested a training course", "resident having an interview next Tuesday"</p> <p>We record everyone who starts training and the outcomes.</p> <p>We record details on our tablet loan scheme. Who and why someone has requested a tablet.</p> <p>Finally, we record job outcomes and record evidence of the job outcome.</p>
<p>How does the information you record inform the approach you take?</p>	<p>We tailor the service to the individual. We start with an in-depth conversation with the resident and then establish an action plan with them</p> <p>All depends on the individual. It could be that the person just wants to register for an SIA course or it could be a person is a long way from the job market who needs more support, such as a CV, careers advice, job search, confidence building.</p>
<p>Aside from the information about each person that is deleted in terms of GDPR:</p> <p>What information is retained?</p> <p>Is any information anonymised?</p>	<p>We maintain registration forms – access secure</p> <p>Spreadsheet information- once case closed it is made access secure</p> <p>TP Tracker -access secure and password protected</p> <p>Case studies are anonymised unless client happy to have name on document</p>
<p>Do you request to retain information in order to follow up or for future feedback, follow up or communication under GDPR?</p>	<p>Once the client no longer wishes or needs our support, we ask for feedback but then close case. Very often feedback is not given but we would still close the case.</p>

<p>How do you determine your KPIs? Are there any others?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do you measure anything else?</li> <li>○ Why only report on that one figure?</li> </ul>	<p>Our executive team have chosen to look at job outcomes (i.e. number of people helped into work or into improved employment) as one of our headline KPIs, because unemployment and underemployment can have such a big impact on our local communities. Unemployment or underemployment (working less hours than desired or working in a job that does not reflect full skills) can affect people’s physical and mental health and wellbeing, as well as meaning that they may struggle to pay their rent and take care of their families. We do a lot of work to support people in training, and improving their skills, and all of this work is designed to help people to change their employment situation, and this is why the Executive Team choose to focus on job outcomes. However, we do record other performance information in lower level reports and scorecards, such as the number of people undertaking training, and the number of people given advice. We use these numbers within our department to help to guide the work we do.</p> <p>We also share some of our figures with national bodies such as CECI (Centre for Excellence in Community Investment). CECI works with a range of social housing providers to collect data about a lot of different areas of community investment, from the number of food parcels given out through to the number of residents given digital advice. They use this information to try to understand the influence that housing providers have on local communities, outside of the “bricks and mortar” side of housing. They can then use this information to share best practice with all providers and inspire providers to think of new ideas that might work in their area. In addition to this, CECI also use their research to try to influence government policy to support community investment.</p> <p>We share the following employability information with CECI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number supported into part time employment</li> <li>- Number supported into full time employment</li> <li>- Number of people supported with Employment, education and training advice, guidance and support</li> <li>- Number given digital support (also includes digital support given by other departments)</li> </ul> <p>We also report to our Director the monthly figures on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of engagements</li> <li>- Number of new people registered</li> <li>- Number of events</li> </ul>
<p>Are the 686 engagements individual people?</p>	<p>No. We worked with 203 people last year and there were 686 engagements. So, people may have engaged with us 3 or 4 times whereas there are other people who engaged once and got the outcome which they wanted.</p>
<p>How many engagements do you have before you get someone into work? Is there a limit?</p>	<p>No, there is no limit. It all depends on the individual person and what support they need. We are there to support them however long they need us.</p>
<p>How does it go from an engagement to an</p>	<p>To give a couple of examples, a person who wants to do a training course will be registered and the information sent to the trainer. The</p>



<p>outcome? What is the process?</p>	<p>person will then attend the course and if successful, will pass and that is a training outcome. Another person may have been furloughed for 12 months and once registered will need confidence building, CV support, job search support and interview support, when that person gets a job it becomes a job outcome.</p>
<p>Do you ask for feedback? If so, what do you ask? Can you provide us with the feedback form?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can you send feedback given?</li> <li>○ How do you use tools such as the WK SMS (TP Tracker)?</li> </ul>	<p>We ask our residents after they complete training or have a job outcome if they would consider filling out a case study form. Alternatively, we complete an interview with them or Comms where we complete the form on their behalf. We find that people will often send us an email and thank us for what we have done. Survey example attached Case study example attached TP Tracker, we use it to monitor how many are tenants and non - tenants.</p>
<p>Do you record demographic information?</p>	<p>Age, gender, ethnicity, disability, employability status, economic status</p>
<p>Do you have a specific equality /diversity impact policy?</p>	<p>We have a West Kent policy – Currently under review with residents.</p>
<p>How does the service meet the needs of the diverse community? How do you accommodate individuals with disabilities, or language barriers?</p>	<p>We ensure that all our job hub venues have full disability access. We work closely with other organisations who are experts in their field and would refer on. Such as the Kent Supported Employment Service . <a href="https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs/support-for-young-people/employment-for-send-young-people/supported-employment">https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs/support-for-young-people/employment-for-send-young-people/supported-employment</a></p>
<p>What is your plan over the next few months as restrictions ease?</p>	<p>Open the job hubs to offer individual support. Classroom style training courses, face to face IT support. Alongside this we will continue to run virtual and online pop up job events and training.</p>
<p>Do you have a current service improvement plan/delivery plan</p>	<p>Yes we have a delivery plan for Employment &amp; Enterprise but currently under review</p>

## Appendix 2

### Case study 1

*“I didn’t think I would be able to do this but I did.”*

How one resident turned things around with the help of a Facebook post and the West Kent training and employment team.

Karl had been in the same job for almost a decade and needed a change. He bravely left his job in garden maintenance with a commitment to retraining or finding an alternative career. But then the Covid pandemic changed everything, his job hunt had to be put on hold and Karl had no idea how he was going to cope. He told us;

*“I’d found my job had been affecting me mentally; I was doing the same thing day in, day out and I just couldn’t cope with it. I left, but then Covid hit and I couldn’t get a job anywhere. It’s been really tough.”*

The West Kent training and employment team can help residents find employment and training opportunities as well as working with them to improve CVs and prepare for interviews. They post regularly on social media to promote the service and it was here, on Facebook, that Karl saw a post that caught his eye. It was a free SIA security course for West Kent residents that would result in a security guard licence and included a module on Covid marshalling.

Karl felt a bit uncertain about making contact, as he wasn’t sure what he would get from the service, and felt underconfident about applying for the course, but decided to give it a shot. Dawn and Pauline, on the training and employment team, supported Karl all the way through the course and he passed with flying colours. The team can also help with practical issues that can be barriers to employment, so they funded his new passport which he needed to gain his full qualification. It wasn’t long after completing the course that Karl found himself a job, despite all the odds.

*“Dawn and Pauline were fantastic, they even said they could help with travel and uniform costs if I needed it. I’ve gained a qualification and a whole new job market has opened up for me. I am currently working in a Covid testing centre, but when that ends, I feel confident now I have a new qualification and feel positive about looking for other work”*

### Case study 2

Being made redundant in the middle of a pandemic was a huge blow for West Kent resident Sophie, but thanks to the support of the Training and Employment team, she was able to spend some time building her skills and achieving a qualification in the area she wanted to work in.

Sophie told us,

*“After being made redundant, I knew I needed to build my confidence, refresh my CV and look for new opportunities, but I was lacking the incentive to do this.*

Places to live. Space to grow.

*Finding out about the digital marketing course the West Kent Employment and training team were offering to residents was just the boost I needed to get myself back out there. The team could also offer career advice and help me explore options for the future.*

*I had been working in PR, but hadn't done any qualifications in this area as they were just so expensive. But I had found that my role crossed over with a lot of marketing so finding an affordable way of gaining a qualification in a related area was great.*

*The course improved my skills, helped me improve my CV, and understand the power of using platforms such as LinkedIn to network. Since completing the course, I have secured a new PR role with a production company- I plan to continue my career development by gaining further qualifications in both PR and digital marketing.”*

### **Case study 3**

Lauren knew that finding a job after her maternity leave was over might be tough, especially as her daughter had health issues, meaning frequent trips to the hospital, but with help from the West Kent employment and training team, Lauren's prospects are now looking bright.

Lauren's journey started when she contacted Pauline from the Employment and Training team to have a chat about her situation- wanting to better her career prospects while also caring for her daughter. Pauline talked over a range of options and suggested she think about completing a course to work in schools. The course would be free and Lauren would get all the support she needed to complete it. In the long term, this would mean that Lauren would be able to have a job that fit in with family life and the needs of her daughter.

Despite feeling under-confident initially, Lauren was keen to find out more and with Pauline's support, signed up for the 10 week accredited "preparing to work in schools" course. She hoped she would find out more about school procedures and processes so she would feel better equipped to seek work in an educational setting.

The course delivered this and so much more, as Lauren explains,

*“This experience has allowed me to find confidence and strength in everything I do. It's improved my mental health meant I can move forward with life.”*

*Since completing the course, Lauren has been seeking work in schools and things are going well so far,*

*“Getting this qualification has allowed me to seek employment feeling confident in myself that I can do more.”*

Appendix 3

## Registration Form

**Please complete in block capitals**

Personal details	
Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	

Are you a West Kent Housing Association tenant?

Yes  No  x

**If No please tell us who your landlord is?**

### Current employment status

Full-time  Part-time  *hours per week if part-time*  
 Self-employed  Unemployed  *length of time unemployed*  
 Zero hours

### Type of work

What type of work are you looking for?

How many hours do you want to work?

Full-time

Part-time  *please specify how many hours per week:*

### Work readiness checklist

	Yes	No

Do you have an up to date CV?		
Do you have access to a computer and the internet?		
Do you need support with computer skills? Uploading CV's, job search, email, using Word		
Do you have a driving licence?		
Do you have your own vehicle?		
Do you have two work references?		
Do you have suitable clothes for an interview?		
Will you need interview practice?		
Are you interested in any further training or work experience? <i>-If yes, please tell us what below</i>		

Age	
Gender	
Ethnicity	
Do you have a disability	
Economic status	
What benefits (UC, Income support or JSA)	

**Data protection**

We collect your personal data when you register and throughout your time on the programme. We will use this information to support you and manage your journey towards training and employment. More information about how we use your personal data can be found on our privacy notice, which can be found on our website.

By signing this form, you consent to your personal data being used in this way.

**Additional advice and support**

We would like to use the contact details you have provided to send you information about our products and services, and those of other reputable companies we may work with, which may be of interest to you. This includes information about financial guidance, digital support and energy efficiency.



Signed Customer .....Date

## Appendix 4

### Survey Form

Your Name

Why did you contact West Kent Works team?

Why did you hope to achieve by getting help from us?

What barriers did you have or obstacles to get over when you contacted us?

How confident were you in achieving your goals before you contacted us?

How confident are you now in the future?

What have you achieved through getting help from West Kent Works?

What difference did we make to you?

Scanned with