

DWP update from Karra Brenchley

During Covid and the lead up until where we are now:

- We doubled the number of frontline Work Coaches by March 2021 to support people looking for work including helping them pivot into new sectors and making sure they access any additional support they need including training and work experience. In Hastings we took on 45 work coaches which was roughly an increase of 115%
- We launched our £2 billion Kickstart Scheme, expanded our Youth offer, expanded our Work and health programme, boosted our flexible support funding, increased our contracted provision with 3 new schemes for newly unemployed JETS and JFS and most recently launched Restart for our longer term unemployed
- Opened six days a week to deliver a good customer service for all our customers, re- opened the Youth Hub in Hastings, and relocated our service centre to the town centre

Kickstart has been our main focus with our 18-24yr olds, we acted quickly and decisively to establish Kickstart at the start of the pandemic when it was feared unemployment levels would more than double.

Nationally the scheme has already delivered over 100,000 new life-changing jobs for young jobseekers on Universal Credit who were at risk of long-term unemployment and will continue to deliver opportunities for young people.

At a local level we have run weekly Kickstart recruitment days within our jobcentres and youth hub. Our young people have had the opportunity to meet real live employers, from all sectors including hospitality, all with opportunities and vacancies, undertake interviews and secure employment.

We have supported over 200 young people into kickstart opportunities locally with employers ranging from charitable organisations through to retail, construction, hospitality and care. These ranged from small independents to larger more nationally known employers with the independent really recognising the impact the scheme has in supporting young people and in turn their communities.

The majority of employers are keeping their Kickstarts at the end of the 6mnths, and for those that aren't we're moving them into apprenticeships and further opportunities with our network of partners. And our teams of youth work coaches have ensured each young person has been able to access prioritised targeted support, helping them to find and stay in sustainable work.

Although Kickstart closes for employers on the 17th of December, young people can still access and apply for the roles until March and the partnerships made with between jobcentres and employers can hopefully continue long afterwards

As the economy has opened up, our Plan for Jobs has delivered with unemployment falling – including youth unemployment now below pre-pandemic levels and the number of young employees on payrolls back above pre-pandemic levels.

SWAPS:

The Sector-Based Work Academy Programme sees people moving into work and it is innovative. This is for all ages. Partnerships between jobcentres and employers can allow candidates without relevant experience or training to develop the skills before applying for the positions.

We have been working with a variety of employers to make sure we get people into growing sectors, such as hospitality. We had a skills challenge coming into the pandemic and our Plan for Jobs aims to get the right skills for those vacancies.

During the summer we designed and delivered a hospitality campaign in conjunction with our partners, employers and providers. This was marketed as Hospitality Rocks initially starting within our cluster with an initial focus on our coastal towns and now being rolled out nationally; and the model is now being used to support various other sectors with their recruitment needs.

We ran a SWAP programme which incorporated classroom learning alongside practical training in anything from interview techniques, dealing with customers, bed making and even mixology!

The Sector-Based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) has been fantastic during the pandemic. It provides up to six weeks training, working with an employer, and there is a guaranteed interview for employers with positions at the end of that training. We ran four courses over the summer and we are looking to expand the offer for SWAP's for varying sectors in the new year

Youth hub:

Mon Weds Fri- Work Coaches are in the HUB running their diaries and the HUB then functions as an extension of the Jobcentre – linking in with college, their courses and accessing their support has been beneficial – sign posting if customers need additional support.

More active engagement in the hub over the jobcentre, employers and customers prefer it- better attendance rate – and although we are appointment based - we're getting drop ins

Every Tues and Thurs –different employers come into the HUB, they have been interviewing and offering jobs on the spot, mainly in regard to kickstart and there's been a bit of healthy competition for our candidatesand we're hoping to continue this level of support from our employers and partners once Kickstart ends

Temporary Jobcentres (rapid estates expansion programme)

DWP is setting up temporary jobcentres during 2021 to deal with increased demand.

The new jobcentres will provide services across the country where they are needed. They will increase capacity to provide tailored face-to-face support in a COVID-secure environment and help support more people back into work and progress into new roles.

Site due to open in early January to deliver a F2F (face to face) Service with approx 25 UC work coaches, 3 teams, initially 1 team delivering F2F, moving to 3 Teams in the near future

What we could with some support with:

Sourcing Disability confident employers, government had a target of 1million companies by 2022

Our contracted Self employment support goes next year so any links into companies/providers that could help us to support our customers with business plans, provide mentors