

The SYCON Transitional Labour Market Programme

Impacts, Reflections on the process and the Lessons Learned

A model for employer engagement

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SYCON Transitional Labour Market Programme

1.0 Summary

The £19.02million SYCON Transitional Labour Market (TLM) programme has evolved over time, developing initially out of a previous ILM programme. It has developed four different wage subsidy approaches each providing useful elements that have contributed to our understanding of how to deliver targeted TLM activity, both with individuals and with employers. The learning from each has been valuable, as the position is now much clearer on how to deliver a successful programme for TLM activity.

Highlights include effective processes for targeted work with ex-offenders, with lone parents and with women returners. These are available to be deployed as practical models across the sub-region and elsewhere.

The demand led nature of the approach has been one of its strengths. The expertise that has been developed for engaging employers and effective methodologies for doing so are now useful resources for South Yorkshire. This is especially valuable given the current emphasis on engaging with and meeting employers needs.

There have been lessons for funders, methods for managing risks and relationships, and proposals for more collaborative ways of working with organisations that they fund.

The programme can be proud of its successes and the participants feel keenly the lessons that have been learned.

Performance: Overall the SYCON TLM has delivered:

6771 Employment Supports (105% of target)

2471 evidenced Job outcomes were achieved (94% of target)

Lessons: A number of key features of the programme's work have been identified that will be important to the delivery of future activity of this nature. These are:

1) The managing agent role can shield the project from having to negotiate funder's unwieldy financial and project amendment systems. The managing agent's mediation role allows the programme to be operated flexibly and responsively and so effectively deliver the work.

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2) The managing agent role allows funders to manage their suppliers more effectively and with increased confidence that the programme will be delivered effectively. Good data collection and recording systems are important to allow this.

3) Targeted activity works - the impact of delivering focused activity that provides specialist approaches to engaging with, and meeting the identified needs of, particular client groups is emphasised.

4) Engaging private sector employers appropriately can increase the likelihood of job outcomes.

5) When working with ex offenders engagement with the probation service alongside a clear agreed relationship will facilitate matters.

6) When engaging with employers providing them with a clear service to support recruitment will enable them to be more comfortable taking people who are further from the labour market.

7) For some people who are not yet job ready a process is needed that supports people through the pre-recruitment training, through the recruitment process itself and any subsequent work-related training, and then supports them into the time in work itself.

8) Organisational reviews of participation levels throughout the project can work to refocus and drive change in provision to ensure that there is uptake in the expected proportions of different population groups (e.g. lone parents, women, minority ethnic groups, ex-offenders).

9) Large voluntary sector operations offering general TLM employment experience are not as effective as small specific employment focused TLM provision.

'She is helping me with getting a job. I feel as if I am getting somewhere now'

'I feel I am not on my own now'

'They have brought me out of my shell'

'Fantastic service'

'She's given me the push I needed to get something done but through a very positive approach'

2.0 Introduction

As the funding for the SYCON Transitional Labour Market (TLM) has finished it is time for reflection on what has been achieved.

This document sets out some of the successes that have been achieved and the gains that have been made. It also presents examples of the effective practice that has developed, the lessons learned along the way, and hard won knowledge about how to deliver this kind of work.

The new ESF funded programme of activity focuses on intensive support to individuals. The development of this TLM programme began with an approach that provided intensive support to individuals. The lessons learned over the last 7 years led it to take a whole system approach. This involved refocusing some of its activity to include strong efforts to engage with employers to ensure the demand side of the unemployment equation was also met.

It is hoped that lessons from this programme's experience will have an influence on the way the new programme of activity under ESF is delivered.

3.0 Background

In 2005 the £19.02million SYCON Transitional Labour Market (TLM) project emerged as a development from the SYCON ILM project that had been delivered between 2002 and 2005. The TLM was developed and funded mainly from Objective 1 and Yorkshire Forward revenues. A number of other revenue streams supported delivery (see Appendix A).

The SYCON partnership that had developed through the delivery of the earlier ILM initiative continued its operation throughout the TLM period.

The TLM was operated differently by each of the partners. A managing agent was employed as the link and mediating screen between the project partners and the funders.

3.1 How did the TLM deliver its work?

The programme was delivered by four partners in four different ways.

Each partner worked in a different geographical area. The partners were:

- ❖ Barnsley Development Agency (Barnsley)
- ❖ Phoenix Enterprises (Rotherham)
- ❖ Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise (Doncaster)
- ❖ Centre For Full Employment (Sheffield)

The methods they deployed to deliver the TLM in their areas are briefly described below.

Barnsley Development Agency

Barnsley DA's £2.62million programme offered a job brokerage service linked initially to a 9 month placement. As the programme learned and developed the placement time was reduced to 13 weeks. Individual Opportunity Advisors (IOAs) undertook outreach work in target communities. IOAs provided information, advice and signposting to a range of services including to the TLM. They formed a major source for referrals to the TLM programme. There were 514 Employment support starts gaining 355 sustained Job outcomes. IOAs were independently evaluated positively¹. The evaluation highlighted the importance of the community based approach 'Beneficiaries stated that they probably would not have engaged in the project were it not based in the local community'.

Both voluntary sector and private sector employers were engaged. After the development period it became apparent that private sector employers were more likely to generate job outcomes than VC sector employers. Private sector employer engagement became the focus for the latter part of the TLM programme. A job outcome bonus was not offered as part of the TLM.

As part of deliberate work to engage ex-offenders, Barnsley DA built and fostered good referral links with the probation service. This approach was particularly successful in engaging ex offenders leaving prison.

As part of this work Barnsley DA have become accredited through both the Customer First and Matrix Standards

Phoenix Enterprises

Phoenix £2.61million programme offered a job brokerage service linked to a 6 months 100% wage subsidy followed by a negotiated 50% wage subsidy over the following 3 months. Participants were allocated a Learning Tutor who had access to training, information, advice and specialist advice e.g. on housing, drugs and childcare. There were 243 Employment support starts gaining 136 sustained Job outcomes and 186 qualifications. 127 were at NVQ level 2 or higher.

Good links were established with other agencies that support ex-offenders and people with disabilities.

A work placement scheme for Non-Teaching Assistants was developed as a key part of the TLM. Fifty-two of the 243 employment supports were delivered on this element of the work. Of these, 30 gained employment (77%) and 45 gained qualifications. The participants had access to a tutor and to a support worker. This approach was enormously successful both in terms of increasing

¹ Evaluation of the SEB Options Team Individual Opportunity Advisor Project (eNgender, 2008)

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participation of women, and lone parents particularly, and in terms of demand from schools. There was a lot of interest in this element of the programme. At the end of the programme the schools were keen for the programme to continue and Phoenix were approached by the LEA to run another programme. It is also interesting that schools are wanting more male teaching assistants and this may be a useful avenue to explore for future variations of this type of activity.

As part of its business development Phoenix Enterprises has become accredited with a number of major national standards and quality marks. These are: Matrix, IIP, The Disability 2 Ticks Symbol, Customer First, Office of Fair Trading for Debt Advice, Legal Services Commission Quality Mark for Specialist Help (via Community Legal Services).

Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise

Doncaster Chamber's £1.83million programme offered a job brokerage linked to a 26 week wage subsidy programme. Beneficiaries were paid the minimum wage. They received up to £1k in support for training up to NVQ2 and in the later stages of the programme the feedback from employers led to the delivery of packages of customised training to suit the needs of the job in question. There were 290 Employment support starts gaining 117 sustained Job outcomes and 202 qualifications. In the final year, this element of the programme was adapted in line with employer demand and with the needs of other partners. In this way it was refined to a 13 week placement with a £500 training allowance.

Employment support continued throughout the placement. An eight step model was used as follows from referral onto the programme, assessment and development of a training plan, interviews with employers, induction, a period of work placement, training job search and where required an exit interview.

Initially the programme was mainly aimed at areas of identified employer need in the Construction, ICT, Transportation and Logistics and Sport and Fitness sectors. Broadening the range of target sectors saw a greater uptake by private sector employers engaging with TLM.

Of particular importance was the good relationship with Jobcentre Plus who initially promoted TLM places and referred in to the programme. Over time, the programme became less reliant on JC+ alone as referrals came through promotional work and through word of mouth.

The approach was particularly successful in achieving a high ratio of qualification outcomes for its participants.

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As part of its business development Doncaster Chamber has become accredited with a number of major national standards and quality marks. These are: SFEDI, Forum 21, BLU, Customer First, IIP and BCC accreditation.

Centre For Full Employment

There were three separate strands to this element of the TLM. Overall £11.81million was spent. A beneficiary would access the system through a jobnet based in their community. An assessment of their readiness for work and their needs would be undertaken. An employer engagement team identified vacancies. Dependent on their job readiness and the employer's willingness to engage with people further from the labour market, they would be allocated to one of three elements for the next stage in the process.

The three elements were:

- ❖ Jobnet
- ❖ Subsidised employment for up to 52 weeks
- ❖ Internships - 13 weeks

Jobnet was and is a community based vacancy identification and Job matching job brokerage activity. The method here was to use an employer engagement team to identify vacancies and to match these to the needs of individuals entering 16 community based Jobnet settings. The community Jobnet settings provided access to employment support services. There were 5,366 beneficiaries starting on this programme. 1,722 sustained job outcomes were achieved. A further 181 job outcomes were achieved but not claimed.

A 52 weeks subsidised TLM employment route provided a placement for individuals in need of work experience. Employers were paid a fee to encourage their participation. Wages were subsidised by the programme. A fund was available into which employers could bid for resources to cover training costs. There were 341 beneficiaries starting on this element of the programme. 126 achieved sustained job outcomes. In the main these were non-teaching classroom assistants.

Internships are the third element of the programme. Internships brought a strong employer engagement philosophy to the implementation of its 13 week employment guarantee scheme. This included identification of employer needs through relationship building and discussion, assessment of issues relating to existing recruitment approaches, development of a tailored employability programme to bring potential recruits up to the basic standards, support to participants through the recruitment process and post-recruitment training. Support was offered both to the employer and to those who passed through the recruitment process to support their successful continued employment. There were 17 beneficiaries of this approach; 15 achieved sustained job outcomes.

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Tom Simpson, Employee Development Manager for First Bus, said “Candidates were supported through the whole process of recruitment” (at the centre of this) “was respect for the individuals involved which has resulted in the retention of staff and aiding our Company to fulfil its wider corporate social responsibility”

As part of its business development CFFE has become accredited with a number of major national standards and quality marks. These are: Matrix, IIP, Customer First, IIP and the Disability Symbol.

4.0 Who participated in the programme?

4.1 Was the programme equitable in who it reached?

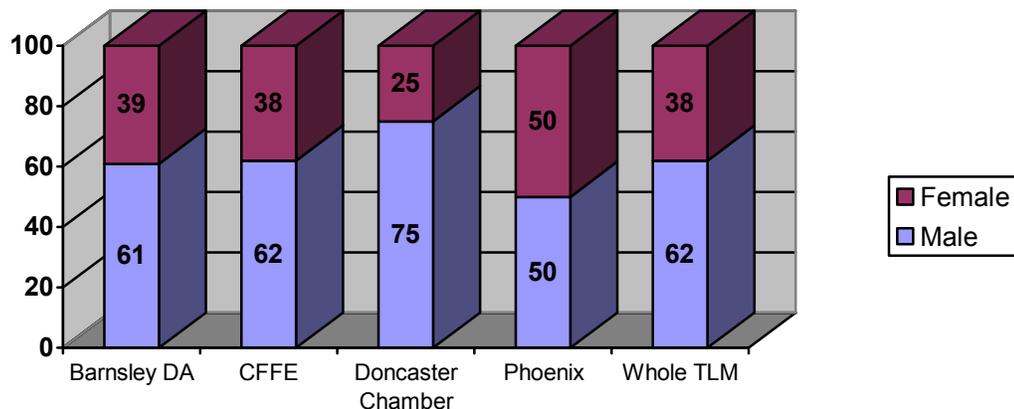
The following charts present data on the programmes reach. Participation levels of the following groups are shown:

- ❖ Gender
- ❖ People with disabilities
- ❖ Ex-Offenders
- ❖ Lone parents
- ❖ Minority ethnic groups

Where appropriate the participation rate is compared with the proportion of that group within the population for each area. A commentary is presented for each chart that explains relevant details about how the different elements of the programme impacted on these variables.

Gender

Chart 2: Percent Male and Female



Commentary:

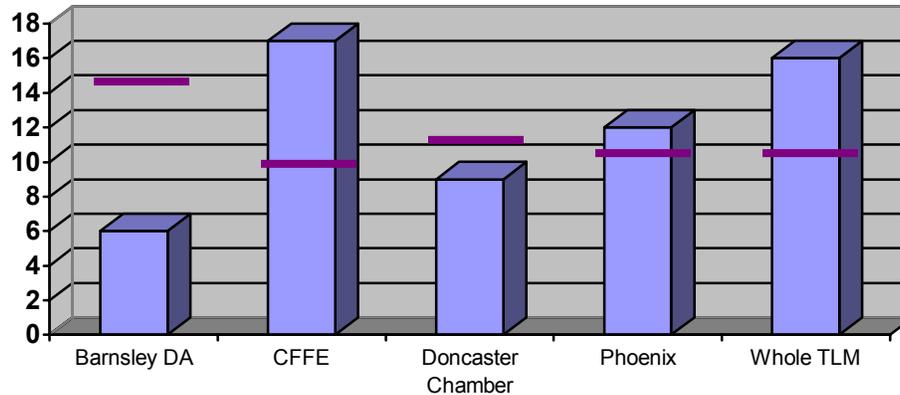
In Doncaster placements were with a wide range of private providers including traditionally male industries.

CFFE engaged BME women that would not otherwise have participated for example through its Teaching Assistants work with schools.

A key motivator for Phoenix was the expectation that inspections would look at participation rates among different groups. Regular Director-led organisational reviews were attributed as the method for ensuring they achieved a balance on the participation of each gender.

Disability

Chart 1: Percent people with a disability



— = proportions of people with disabilities in local working age populations

Commentary:

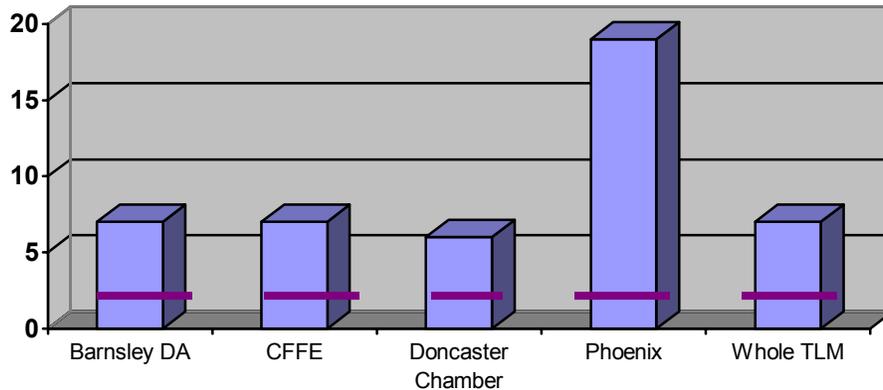
There are 10 major classification groups for disability in use i.e mental health problems; industrial injury; muscular skeletal; industrial disease etc. While those on Incapacity Benefit would be categorised as disabled, that is not to say that all of this group were in receipt of Incapacity Benefit. The CFFE and Phoenix approaches were particularly successful in engaging this group.

One Jobnet had a dedicated advisor to try and attract Incapacity Benefit clients through its links with a Healthy Living Centre and an adjoining Health Practice. While every effort was made to engage with the local GP no significant increase in Incapacity Benefit clients was recorded. If this 'carrot' of advice did not work, a question remains as to how effective a stick approach would be to encouraging participation in the future.

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Lone parents

Chart 3: Percent lone parents



— = proportions of lone parents in working age population

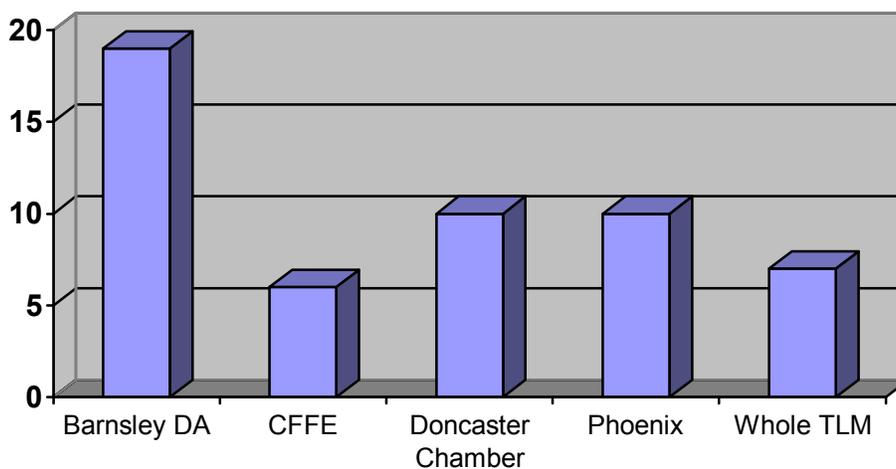
Commentary:

All elements of the programme were very successful at engaging the participation of lone parents. Each element successfully engaged lone parents at higher rates than are found within their areas working age populations.

The CFFE and particularly the Phoenix Non-Teaching Classroom Assistants work were influences on the proportions of lone parents involved in the programme.

Ex-Offenders

Chart 4: Percent Ex-Offenders



Commentary:

Barnsley Development Agency was particularly effective in their method for involving ex-offenders. They established early links with the probation service

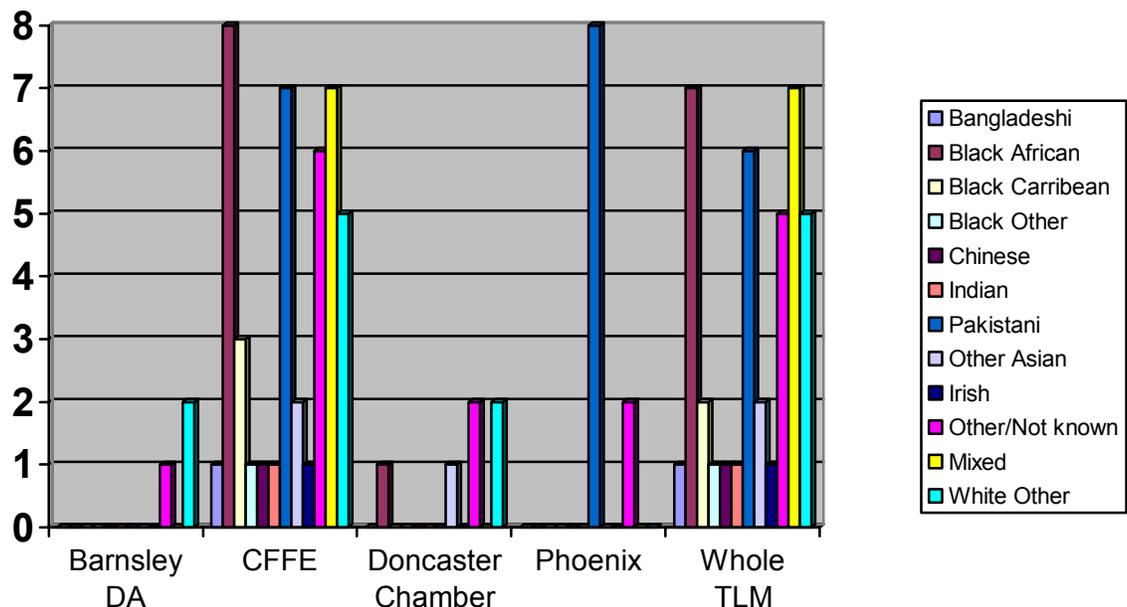
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and developed a clear referral route, maintaining good ongoing relationships through their IOAs.

Whilst proportions may be smaller in Sheffield the actual number of ex-offender participants here is not insignificant at 361 people.

Ethnic Groups

Chart 5: Percent Minority Ethnic Groups



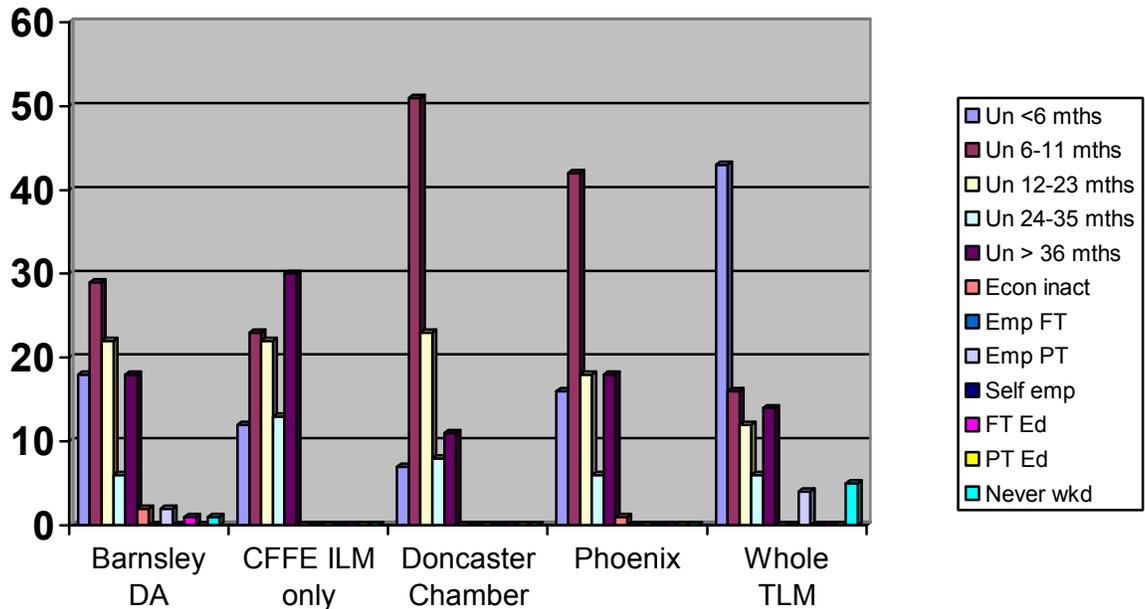
Commentary:

Across the programme the proportion of White British participants was 66%. White British participation rates varied by area: Barnsley DA 95%; Phoenix 90%; Doncaster Chamber 93%; CFFE 61%. In Sheffield participation levels among White British people were lower than the programme average. The Sheffield Jobnets were located in specific communities. Many of these communities included higher than the Sheffield average proportions of minority ethnic groups.

Some minority ethnic groups are more highly represented among the unemployed than in the population as a whole. A recent paper to the Work and Skills Board for the Sheffield City Region highlighted the extent of this over-representation and proposed targets for reducing the gap in employment rates. All the elements of the programme engaged minority ethnic groups at levels above the average for the Working Age Population. CFFE and Phoenix were particularly successful in this respect.

4.2 What was the status of people when they entered the programme?

Chart 6: Status on entry to the programme: percent in each category



Commentary:

The ILM programme eligibility was over 6 months unemployment for 18-24 year olds and 18 months+ for over 25 year olds. The participants showing as below 6 months would have had special circumstances allowing them to participate, e.g. a political prisoner, ex-offenders, people with Mental Health problems, older workers only claiming credits.

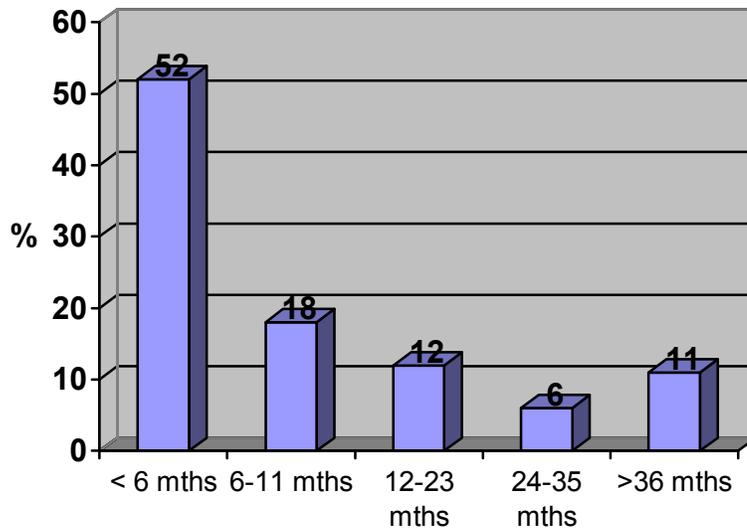
Biases in participation rates come from a number of sources.

Numbers participating from 6-11 months unemployed include a bias from the New Deal for 18-24 year olds. There is match funding available for this group as they come onto the programme with a waged element of funding attached to their participation.

At 36 months unemployed New Deal for 25+ biases the programme's participation figures as this group had a substantial time on New Deal that counted as unemployed before they joined the programme.

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Chart 7: Unemployment status on entry to the programme for CFFE non-ILM
Jobnet: percent in each unemployment category



Commentary

96% of Jobnet users were unemployed on entry. Roughly 6% had never worked.

The Jobnet eligibility did not have the same limits on entry as the ILM activity. Its method of operation reflected both the “preventative” approach favoured by the European Union as well as the “curative” interventions favoured by the Government and its agencies.

5.0 Key success measures

5.1 Key output measures

Overall the SYCON TLM produced the following key outcomes:

6771 Employment Supports (105% of target)

2471 evidenced Job outcomes were achieved (94% of target)

823 Qualifications were achieved (60% of target)

In terms of gross numbers CFFE has delivered the vast bulk of these outcomes accounting for 85% of the Employment Supports and 75% of the Job Outcomes.

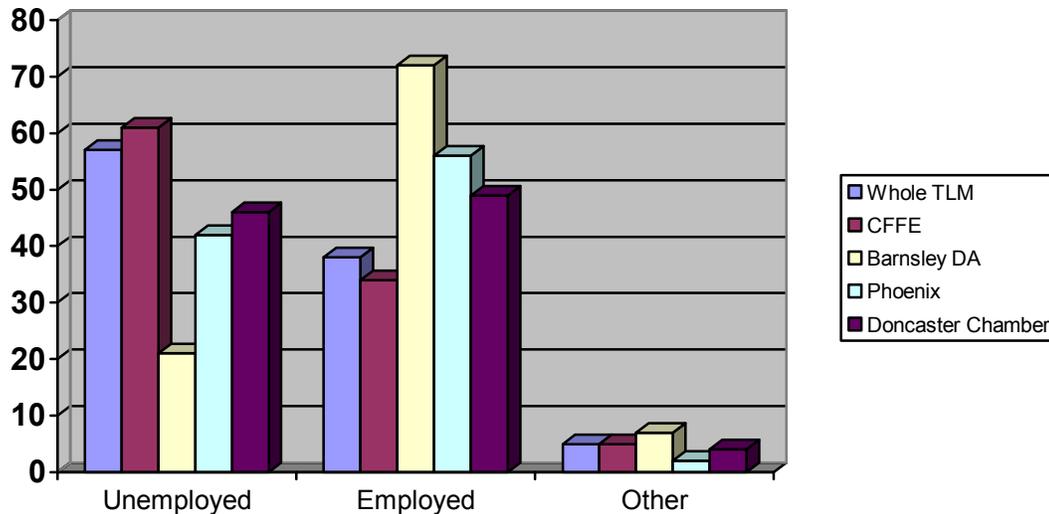
Compared with targeted figures Barnsley DA has vastly exceeded its targeted Employment start (171%) and Job Outcomes (215%). Phoenix (105%) slightly exceeded its Job outcomes target and CFFE (85%) underperformed on Job Outcomes compared to its target. Doncaster Chamber (139%) and Phoenix Enterprises (112%) have well exceeded their Qualifications target. CFFE (36%) and Barnsley DA (44%) greatly underperformed against target on Qualifications.

This lower performance on qualification outcomes is partly due to the refocusing of the programme's efforts away from qualification outcomes and towards employment support outcomes. In particular for CFFE, many Jobnet clients seek 'employment now' rather than training first.

These figures reflect the very different natures of the four elements of this programme. This will be discussed in the sections below.

5.2 What were the destinations of people who entered the programme?

Chart 8: Destinations of those who participated. Percent.



Commentary:

Across the whole TLM, 38% were employed on leaving. 57% were unemployed on leaving. 5% were either still on a programme, in voluntary work or not known.

Jobnet heavily skews the job outcome figures downwards. The job outcome ratios are highest where a supported wage subsidy transitional programme has been offered.

Note: It is estimated that around 250 (~7%) of those counted above as unemployed went into some other form of employment that did not meet the evidence criteria. Reasons for this included that for one reason or another either the employer did not fill in a form at 13 weeks to provide the evidence of sustained employment or the person left that employment before 13 weeks.

Overall the TLM programme’s 38% sustained job rate is lower than might be expected from an ILM. Why is this? It is clear that the Jobnet effect dramatically skews the picture. Jobnet’s job outcome rates were 32%. The job outcome rate for most of the wage subsidy elements of the programme were at or well above the rates that would be expected of an ILM. Jobnet does not provide the same sort of support as that provided by the other elements of the TLM. It is a job brokerage scheme providing employment support activity but without a wage subsidy or payment support to employers. The other elements of the programme provided a range of targeted support including payments to employers over a period of time.

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The Jobnets, a major element of the whole programme, are not similar to an ILM. However, while the SYCON TLM has not set out to be an ILM the other non-Jobnet elements of its work bear many of an ILM's characteristics:

(Marshal and McFarlane, 2000

www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859353258.pdf)

- Providing a bridge into the labour market for those furthest from it
- Paid work on a temporary contract, with training, personal support and jobsearch activities
- Relying on a package of funding from various sources.

It is useful to compare the non-Jobnet elements of the TLM to the outcomes that might be expected from an ILM.

One characteristic of an ILM that is not displayed by these elements of the TLM is that the TLM provides work inside the economy and so presents an increased possibility of job displacement.

The average 'sustained job' rate for an ILM is 49 to 57% (*ibid*). A good, established ILM might be expected to achieve at the top end of this range.

The TLM achieved varying 'sustained job' rates among the elements of its programme that provided participants and employers with greater levels of support (Barnsley DA 79%; Phoenix 56% and Doncaster Chamber 49%). Doncaster Chamber and Phoenix rates are within the range that might be expected from an ILM. Barnsley DA's sustained job rate is clearly well above the expected levels. CFFE's non-Jobnet element produced a lower than hoped for job outcome rates (37%) for its wage subsidy programme (see below for the reasoning for this) and higher job outcome rates (88%) for its very small Internship programme.

5.3 Cost per output and how this compares with other programmes of a similar nature

While there is not a good comparator literature on Transitional Labour Market programmes there is good data on ILM programmes both within South Yorkshire and elsewhere.

We would expect a good established ILM to deliver at a cost varying between £10,000 and £14,000 per beneficiary (Marshal and McFarlane, 2000, Parker 2007).

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Table 1: Cost per beneficiary and cost per job outcome for each element of the TLM programme.

Agency	Cost per beneficiary £	Cost per Job outcome £
Whole TLM	2,809	7,697
Barnsley DA	5,097	7,380
Phoenix Enterprises	10,740	19,191
Doncaster Chamber	6,310	15,641
CFFE (all)	2,063	5778

The TLM shows an overall cost per beneficiary rate of £2,809 across the whole programme.

The overall cost per job outcome rate is £7,697 across the programme.

There are widely varying costs per beneficiary and costs per Job outcome for the different elements of the programme. There are also two distinct types of activity being considered here. These are:

- ❖ Jobnet - a job brokerage service with lower level employment support, and;
- ❖ TLM approaches with work placement activity alongside more indepth support to both employer and individual.

In Sheffield the ILM programme was overall much more expensive. The Jobnet “hireability” approach proved to be much more cost effective.

However, Jobnet is different from the other elements of the programme as it is a drop in service open to any members of the community. It is designed to be an entry point that overcomes geographical barriers to employment by being located within communities, as well as being a method to engage and include those who are further from the labour market. It is not a TLM in remotely the same way as the others are.

Beyond the Jobnets, the element of the TLM that was the most cost efficient and cost effective was the Barnsley DA scheme with its IOAs. This scheme was like Jobnets in that the IOAs also worked in communities but more akin to the key worker model that has been picked up by the DWP.

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Both the Phoenix Enterprises and the Doncaster Chamber were more cost efficient than typical ILMs whilst generating comparable Job outcome rates. They were thus more cost effective than typical ILMs.

The CFFE non-Jobnet approach proved about as cost efficient in terms of cost per beneficiary as a typical ILM but did not deliver the level of Job outcomes that might be expected. Therefore it was not judged on the face of it to be cost effective. However, it is noteworthy that an element of the programme focussed on a particular sector - namely non-teaching classroom assistants. Employment in this sector is cyclical and dependent on school terms. It may be that real job outcomes would be higher for this group if data were recorded over a longer period (Tabberer and Chrisp 2008²). The approach was regarded as useful for engaging lone parents and women in particular.

The CFFE Internships method proved very successful whilst only run on a small scale. Of the 17 receiving Employment Support, 15 achieved sustained Job outcomes. The approach developed has since been used as an employer engagement model.

² Tabberer, S. and Chrisp, T. (2008). Report: 'Evaluation of Burngreave NDC Employment and Skills theme'. Sheffield: Arc Research and Consultancy Ltd.

6.0 Key processes for delivery

Each provider in the programme delivered the TLM using different arrangements. These different approaches highlight several clear messages about effective working practice. These are outlined below:

6.1 Employer engagement

Three key processes for employer engagement emerged that have the potential to be applied together. These are:

A) *First find any gaps in the market* where employer have skill needs due to shortages (Doncaster Chamber). Target employers in these sectors and offer them a package including recruitment, wage subsidy and training. The Employer Liaison Team (ELT) at CFFE was established over 3 years ago as a way of finding recruitment solutions for the Jobnet Network. The Employer Liaison Team target employers based on the registrations that the network receive, this ensures that the employers employ the staff that match the skills they require and the clients have the opportunities that they want.

In a six month period the ELT have added 625 vacancies to the CFFE Skills Register through 2014 contacts with employers, 43% being from high growth sectors.

This is regarded as being a successful approach and the ELT have evolved to such a standard that the team and services that they offer has expanded to include all aspects of business support relating to recruitment, gaining good feedback from employers and repeat business. The team also obtained Customer First Accreditation in December 2007 the first time they were assessed. This is a positive achievement when generally only 20% of companies obtain the assessment first time.

The Team is headed up by CFFE's External Services Manager who has extensive recruitment experience in the not for profit and commercial arena, with the Team Leader bringing her experience from a high Street Recruitment agency. They are complemented by two Employer Liaison Officers who both have experience from a variety of sectors ensuring that the team has a diverse knowledge and experience that enhances the employers experience.

B) *Identifying the needs of specific large employers.* They may have gaps in skills or in the profile of applicants for example in terms of recruitment from minority ethnic groups, gender or people with disabilities, or perhaps in terms of from particular geographical areas of the city (CFFE Internships). While Corporate Social Responsibility may be a driver for a number of such employers, discrimination issues may be a more powerful lever.

The offer to such generally large employers is to improve success rates through the recruitment process of the groups that the company wishes to target. This includes filtering and assessment of candidates, development of a tailored employability programme to bring potential recruits up to the basic standards, support to participants through the recruitment process and post-recruitment training. Support was offered both to the employer and to those who passed through the recruitment process to encourage their successful continued employment. There was a wage subsidy for the first 13 week period of employment.

C) *No job means no placement* (Phoenix). Some employers proved to have no intention of providing employment at the end of the wage subsidy period. They would ask for another wage subsidised individual. Taking a stronger negotiating line with such employers and refusing them was effective. Asking for either a guarantee of a job or of repayment of the subsidy if no job was offered improved the likelihood of job outcomes from work placements as a number of such employers dropped from the scheme.

6.2 Voluntary sector engagement

In a similar way to C) above some voluntary sector organisations saw the wage subsidy scheme as a way of gaining a labour resource without any intention to employ. Moving away from voluntary sector and focusing on the private sector was an effective strategy for increasing job outcomes (Barnsley DA). On the other hand much social good could be achieved by those on wage subsidy placements to voluntary sector organisations. An example of this, the ‘social animateurs’ from the fore-runner SYCON ILM programme, highlighted the continuing positive impact for the community of training and developing people through voluntary sector placements who then go on to find work and continue in similar roles (Phoenix).

6.3 Ex offenders

As part of deliberate work to engage ex-offenders, Barnsley DA built and fostered good referral links with the probation service. This approach was particularly successful in engaging ex offenders leaving prison.

6.4 Women, lone parents

A work placement scheme for Non-Teaching Assistants was developed as a key part of the TLM (Phoenix). The participants had access to a tutor and to a support worker. This approach was enormously successful both in terms of increasing participation of women, and lone parents particularly, and in terms of demand from schools. At the end of the programme the schools were keen

for the programme to continue. A high proportion of these participants achieved NVQs.

6.5 Black and Minority Ethnic groups

Some minority ethnic groups are more highly represented among the unemployed than in the population as a whole. A recent paper to the Work and Skills Board for the Sheffield City Region highlighted the extent of this over-representation and proposed targets for reducing the gap in employment rates. All the elements of the programme engaged minority ethnic groups at levels above the average for the Working Age Population. CFFE and Phoenix were particularly successful in this respect.

The locations of Jobnets, based as they are within communities, have proved to be an effective approach for engaging with this group.

6.6 Community engagement

Located within particular communities Jobnets have a local focus. The emphasis has been for employer engagement teams to find vacancies and then having assessed people who enter the Jobnet environment, to match them to those vacancies or to offer employability support as required.

IOAs have a community engagement focus following a model similar to that adopted by DWP key workers. Their outreach work into communities forms a referral route into this and into other forms of provision. The IOAs as a form of key worker role were not limited to the TLM as a referral route, dependent on the needs of the individual concerned.

Phoenix's Learning Tutors acted in a signposting role to other services that met participants need. Meeting these needs can be crucial in preventing drop out, overcoming barriers to entry and to sustaining meaningful participation.

6.7 A transparent tracking and monitoring process: the Hanlon Skills Register

A clear, transparent tracking and monitoring process is important for funders and programme teams alike to assure them that the process is on track and that activity is occurring at the required levels. The Centre for Full Employment used the Hanlon Skills Register to register all clients engaged either as Jobnet clients or on the TLM scheme.

The details of what information is collected are important. This database system was particularly well regarded as a model for future use. In this case an integrated database was developed linking clients, vacancies and employers. When a client is registered on to the Skills Register, the system has the ability to record all their barriers to work such as below Level 2 qualifications, English

as a second language, child care requirements, drug, alcohol problems etc. Each client will have several desirable professions listed using SOC codes (Standard Occupation Classification). In addition the database can also record a client's skills and attributes whether gained through work experience or softer skills gained, for example, through household management.

The jobs and employment opportunities emerging through CFFE's ELT team (see 6.1A above) were recorded on the Skills Register using SOC codes and the skills required to do the job. A match of jobs to clients may then be undertaken. The matching process can be either client led or vacancy led. The greater the number of skills matched suggests greater suitability for a job.

Tracking clients is of increasing importance to agencies working in a number of policy areas. The Skills Register can be used to record and track the progress made by an individual. This is done by taking a snap shot of a client when they first engage with the service and then taking subsequent snapshots to record progress such as qualifications obtained or increases in confidence. These snapshots can be compared and a distanced travelled graph produced.

The Skills Register also allows activities / interactions to be recorded against a client. Each interaction has a status; successful means the activity has been completed, unsuccessful means that the activity did not take place and incomplete means that the activity has not yet taken place. Incomplete activities show up as alerts on the data base. Successful tracking is linked to automatic letter generation when the system recognizes particular time points have passed e.g. 13 weeks into a job. As the time point is passed a report is generated and tracking letters can be sent out. Other activities can also be used to track progress.

The Skills Register is well structured and could be much more effectively utilized by client advisors. Work is being undertaken with the software company to develop the system further and attempt to link it to the South Yorkshire Region Strategy.

7.0 Specific Lessons for future delivery

7.1 Specific lessons

A number of key features of the TLM's work have been identified that will be important to the delivery of future activity of this nature. These are:

- 1) The managing agent role can shield the project from having to negotiate funder's unwieldy financial and project amendment systems. The managing agent's mediation role allows the programme to be operated flexibly and responsively and so effectively deliver the work.
- 2) The managing agent role allows funders to manage their suppliers more effectively and with increased confidence that the programme will be delivered effectively. Good data collection and recording systems are important to allow this.
- 3) Targeted activity works - the impact of delivering focused activity that provides specialist approaches to engaging with and meeting the identified needs of particular client groups is emphasised.
- 4) Engaging private sector employers appropriately can increase the likelihood of job outcomes.
- 5) When working with ex offenders engagement with the probation service alongside a clear agreed relationship will facilitate matters.
- 6) When engaging with employers providing them with a clear service to support recruitment will enable them to be more comfortable taking people who are further from the labour market.
- 7) For some people who are not yet job ready a process is needed that supports people through the pre-recruitment training, through the recruitment process itself and any subsequent work-related training, and then supports them into the time in work itself.
- 8) Organisational reviews of participation levels throughout the project can work to refocus and drive change in provision to ensure that there is uptake in the expected proportions of different population groups (e.g. lone parents, women, minority ethnic groups, ex-offenders).
- 9) Large voluntary sector operations offering general TLM employment experience are not as effective as small specific employment focused TLM provision.

7.2 Some issues and questions for funders

A question for funders emerges: what is the relationship that funders require with organisations that they fund?

There are problems to do with the relationship that funders require with their funded organisations. Clearly on the one hand funders must assure themselves that funds are spent according to the regime and rules that govern that stream of money. On the other hand funders want to see the optimum benefit from the money that is spent. There is an obvious tension here between the role of organising so as to monitor and control the way the resources are spent, and the role of organising to provide support to the delivery organisations so as to be part of the process of optimising the gains that are made. One role is punitive the other is supportive.

Can the two roles be meshed more so as to encourage more effective delivery or will the fear of the punitive always get in the way of the potential for providing support?

If we unpick the candid observations and the experience from this programme we can perhaps get some ideas about methods that will allow both roles to coexist reasonably happily.

One of the messages is that funders often do not trust those that they fund to tell them how things are going. At the same time those that are funded are fearful that if funders hear that things are not going well then they will remove funding first rather than ask 'how could we help?'

The atmosphere and history around funding is at best very mixed. The history includes stories of funders who agree one thing, then when the work is done and paid for by the provider and it comes to audit time the funder refuses to pay out on the thing that was agreed. Other stories include payments that are late, up to 9 months, meaning that if the programme is to continue at all it is at the risk of the provider organisations. At times there is high anxiety mixed with high levels of faith that the funders will come through with the money eventually. At other times trust falls to a very low ebb in some quarters and sometimes on both sides of the funding equation.

It is clear that poor monitoring systems in other projects have caused problems of trust through lack of transparency in the past. In the case of this programme the good monitoring system and excellent tracking system afforded the funder a high level of information about how things were going, and good trust in the process.

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It seems that slow decision processes inside funders may also be a factor that inhibits the flow of information into the organisation. No one wants to raise an issue if it will take an age to resolve it.

The use of SYCON as a managing agent effectively reduced by three the number of suppliers that the funder had to work with. This reduced the monitoring and control effort required of the funder and transferred some of this burden on to the project. The project bore these costs. SYCON became the source for collating this information and for organising its use for the whole of the TLM.

SYCON was trusted by the project partners with sensitive information about project delivery. This was passed on and otherwise would not have reached the funders ears.

That SYCON had the flexibility that the funders did not for moving money around simply between different partners at times of under and over spend meant a great deal to the capacity of the programme to manage the usual variations that programmes of this size encounter.

The managing agent role allowed the project the flexibility to make most use of its resources simply and in a timely manner. It also allowed the fears of the funded to be somewhat ameliorated, whilst at the same time ensuring that the control needs of the funders were met.

The managing agent role is the grease between the axle and the wheel. As such it should not be forgotten it is not an easy role to play. The grease may get worn out if the road is too bumpy.

One message we may take from this process is that employing a managing agent role is a way of avoiding a very real issue of low levels of trust between funder and funded organisations. The cost of the managing agent function in this case including evaluation, events and associated costs was £50k per year for 3 years or 1.7% of the Yorkshire Forward contract. In this programme the managing agent role has worked well to smooth the process.

Is a managing agent role required? There are some excellent examples of how to build trust and cooperate effectively from within the regulated industries (e.g. Water, Rail, Nuclear industry) and in other sectors (e.g. Construction, Oil, Health). In these settings building trust has created substantial returns in terms of effective and efficient delivery without inhibiting the control and monitoring roles of those who are managing the money.

A question for both funders and deliverers is whether there is a will to take up the challenge of working cooperatively together to focus on achieving the goals

and to de-emphasise the process of managing and maintaining the money stream?

7.3 How would it be best re-designed to learn the lessons and to meet current policy concerns?

Let us assume that the economic situation remains roughly the same insofar as the supply of jobs does not fall. Assuming also that a TLM was needed that *engages employers* and that *targets specifically* those who are say:

- ❖ On Incapacity Benefit
- ❖ Ex-offenders
- ❖ Lone parents
- ❖ Without English as a first language.

A model that might now be put forward that learns from the lessons of this one could be as follows:

The key principle is that it is demand side led. This means that the start point is suggested to be the identification of the vacancies that employers have available. The reasons for SYCON's TLM successes are that they have been demand led. The emphasis has been on the employers needs.

A key worker model must still be demand side led in order that it has vacancies for its clients to fill. Without this it will founder.

Once a vacancy has been identified then the first key question to answer is: what is the need for a wage subsidy?

The response to this question is in two parts. On the one hand an assessment must be made of the needs of the individual to enable them to fulfil the vacancy. On the other hand an assessment must be made of the needs that the employer has to allow them to recruit that person to this post. Employer contributions should be considered that may reduce the level of the wage subsidy.

Support to both employer and the individual should be provided within the wage subsidy period.

To optimise sustained Job outcomes the TLM should focus on the private and public sectors and de-emphasise the voluntary sector.

A 13 week wage subsidy period is suggested after which in most cases the employers would take up the full wages.

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Importantly, flexibility to negotiate with employers is needed e.g. where an individual had greater needs then the subsidy could last longer.

Agreements with employers would be, in the first instance, for a fixed period of subsidy. Additional weeks would be added through negotiation as needed. Such negotiations should also use the knowledge of the TLM negotiator regarding the sector and type of work being done e.g. experience might suggest that generally a shorter wage subsidy would be needed in the retail sector.

8.0 Conclusions

The TLM has evolved over time developing initially out of a previous ILM programme. It has developed four different wage subsidy approaches each providing useful elements that have contributed to our understanding of how to deliver targeted TLM activity both with individuals and with employers. The learning from each has been valuable as the position is much clearer on what are the useful methods to deliver a successful programme for TLM activity.

Highlights include effective processes for targeted work with ex-offenders, with lone parents and with women returners. These are available to be deployed as practical models across the sub-region and elsewhere.

The demand led nature of the approach has been one of its strengths. The expertise that has developed for engaging employers and effective methodologies for doing so are now useful resources for South Yorkshire. This is especially valuable given the current emphasis on engaging with and meeting employers needs.

There have been lessons for funders, methods for managing risks and relationships, and proposals for more collaborative ways of working with organisations that they fund.

The programme can be proud of its successes and the participants feel keenly the lessons that have been learned.

9.0 Case Studies of client experiences

Seven case studies are presented to illustrate the experience and benefits expressed by clients of the TLM programme and the businesses where they worked.

Case Study 1

After being unemployed for 16 years, Steve was eager to get back into work, but being in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, and with many barriers to employment, he was unsure how he could get back on track.

Steve, 38, was referred by his local Jobcentre Plus to Sheffield's unique community based recruitment services; Jobnet. He visited Jobnet@Workbase in Wyborn, for help in maximising his jobsearch opportunities and was given an interview with a specialist Jobnet Adviser.

Steve's adviser helped him to see what his barriers to employment were - long term unemployment, which in turn had led to low self-esteem, no work experience, and no CV. Once registered with Jobnet, Steve and his adviser were able to form a plan of action to find positive solutions to overcome these barriers.

Steve was given support in finding and assessing job opportunities in the area, completing job application forms, and producing an up-to-date, professional CV. He was then able to apply for several vacancies, being successfully chosen for a position in a local warehouse.

'Having been out of work, and claiming Incapacity Benefit for several years, I was finding it difficult to know where to start to find a job' said Steve.

'I found it hard to see past the negatives which I felt were stopping me from getting back to work, but my adviser was really positive and gave me the confidence to take action, apply for jobs, and go to interviews'.

'Having a friendly, easy to use service that guided me through the whole process was fantastic, and made it possible for me to achieve my goal, so much so, that I have recommended the service to my daughter, as I'm sure they can do the same for her!'.

Robert, a Jobnet Advice and Guidance Worker said 'People who have been out of work, and claiming Incapacity Benefits for a long period of time often lack the confidence in their potential'.

'At Jobnet, we are here to help people work out their barriers to employment, and find realistic and positive ways tackle them - by supporting them in

searching for jobs, applying for them and boosting their confidence in their interview techniques’.

‘Steve has done incredibly well, and has been able to raise his self-confidence, and achieve his potential by finding a job that suits him, and he is proof that there are many opportunities for people on Incapacity Benefit to get back to work if they want to’.

Case Study 2

After leaving school with no qualifications, and starting a family, Holly had always struggled to find work she enjoyed, and which made the best use of her skills, but after gaining a place on an on-the-job training scheme run by the Centre For Full Employment, the Burngreave mum of two never looked back!

Having tried a number of different courses through local colleges, Holly saw an advert offering paid, on-the-job training as a classroom assistant through the Intermediate Labour Market Programme (ILM) which offers people who have been long term unemployed, the opportunity to get into paid work with local community organisations - and realised that would be perfect opportunity for her!

‘I had gone through my working life never really finding my vocation, I had given a few courses a go, to try and gain some recognised qualifications, but had always found that I had started to struggle, or just wasn’t cut out for that particular type of work’ said Holly.

‘But then I saw an advert for a paid, full time position as a classroom assistant, which offered the opportunity to gain some recognised qualification, as well as training within a school, working with children, which is something I have always loved doing, and so I applied for a place on the course, and that has been the best decision I have ever made’.

‘Since my NCFE level 2 course began in January, I have been working at St Catherine’s Primary school in Burngreave, and have gained so much valuable experience, such as providing support to class teachers, preparing classroom displays, and supervising on school trips and in the playground’.

‘The scheme had made such a difference to me, and has really boosted my confidence. For the first time I have found a role which suits me, and I look forward to developing my career as a classroom assistant once I have completed my course’.

Having shown great enthusiasm and determination to succeed throughout her course, Holly has been nominated by her tutor for the NCFE national awarding body Student of the Year award, which recognises outstanding achievement

amongst those studying for NCFE qualifications. Holly said ‘im delighted to be nominated for the student of the year award, I feel proud of everything I have achieved through the ILM, and I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience’.

Doug Low, Director of the Centre For Full Employment said ‘Congratulations to Holly on her success through the ILM programme. We wish her the best of luck in her chosen career and in her award nomination’.

Case Study 3

Sheffield born, Ian had always enjoyed working with children, from time with Barnardos in London he knew that was the career he wanted to follow, but like many people he didn’t know how to get his foot on the ladder, and begin on the path to his dream job.

After moving back to Sheffield in search of work Ian, 35, spoke to a learning mentor at Firth Park College, who recommended the Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) scheme to him. The scheme offers people who have been long term unemployed the opportunity to get back into paid work with local community organisations. The scheme also offers support and advice for the employer, and pays the employee’s wages.

‘When I was told about the ILM scheme, and how it could help me train for the career I had always wanted, I couldn’t wait to get started. I saw it as an opportunity to get my life back on track, and build a positive future for myself’, says Ian.

‘When I joined the scheme, I had a choice of which age group I wanted to work with, I chose juniors, and began a placement as a teaching assistant at Whiteways Junior School in Burngreave which would allow me to gain real experience of supporting children in the classroom for four days a week. The ILM also provided training one day per week and by the end of the year I had achieved a recognised NCFE level 2 qualification’.

A major part of Ian’s role involved helping with EAL programmes, English Assisted Learning, helping to improve the speaking, listening, and writing skills of children for whom English is a second language.

Once Ian successfully completed his ILM programme, in February, he was offered full time employment at Whiteways Junior School, and now works as a teaching assistant.

‘The ILM scheme had helped me to become a much more positive, confident, and open person, Every day had been challenging but rewarding, and I never dreamt I would finally end up doing what I had always hoped to do. I feel I have much more to offer the children I work with, as I can draw upon my own

experiences of growing up, and can encourage them to stick at whatever they are struggling with, because I did, and I've never looked back'.

Case Study 4

Fearing for her safety Mrs K fled Burma's brutal military regime in 1984 aged 17. Since 1996 alone, over 2,800 villages in eastern Burma have been destroyed and over a million people made refugees.

For 22 years Mrs K lived with her family in a Refugee Camp in Thailand while waiting for news regarding resettlement. During this time Mrs K organised and taught refugee children in a makeshift school. Eventually, after two failed resettlement applications, in July 2006 they were offered resettlement here in the UK.

Now aged 40, Mrs K is at last safe and living in Sheffield. She was absolutely delighted when South Yorkshire Housing Association offered her accommodation. Her next step was to find employment to help her support her family. Mrs K said 'I was desperate for work'. Unfortunately it proved difficult 12 months - searching newspaper ads, registering with recruitment agencies and checking internet vacancy sites all proved fruitless. 'because I didn't have any work experience and English was my second language, I think employers were afraid to recruit me. It was also difficult to gain regular access to a computer' said Mrs K.

Mrs K heard about Jobnet and registered in August 2007. She was allocated an Advisor to support her with jobsearch. 'The advisor was friendly, understanding and helpful. She produced a CV for me, would help me complete application forms and they had a database with lots of jobs on'

Mrs K is now working as a Care Assistant and enjoys her role. Her confidence has grown and her skills have improved. 'I can afford Christmas presents for my family now, I can't wait to see their faces on Christmas morning'.

Case Study 5

Arthur said 'During my time at my first placement with the TLM scheme I have learned many different skills using several electric tools and different materials for different jobs'.

'Due to the TLM I believe that I will have the skills to get a job in the future as I have been on courses such as First Aid at Work, Basic Plumbing and Health and Safety, which are all essential for my CV, through the TLM. Through my training and work experience and the opportunities I have been given, I have found out that I would like to pursue a career in plumbing'.

'I have worked on numerous properties with the Doncaster area; these include, Edlington, Warmsworth, Rossington, Stainforth, Conisbrough and Sheffield'.

'I have really enjoyed my time at Agar Building Services and have enjoyed my time on the TLM programme'.

Agar Comments:

'Agar is a family business and is currently transforming homes and helping to regenerate an area of Doncaster that has been deprived of investment for many years. Agar Property Developments have purchased several derelict homes on the Edlington Royal Estate and in conjunction with its sister company Agar Building Services, they have transformed what was public eyesores into attractive high standard family homes'.

'For the past twenty years, homes in this area have gradually deteriorated due to absentee negligent landlords. Acting upon a council initiative to help rectify the situation Agar Property Developments have gone through a process of stripping these properties to the bare bricks and rebuilding them to a high standard. All homes have been re-wired, re-plastered, re-plumbed and re-designed to suit modern living. As part of the initiative all properties renovated in this area have been sold to owner/occupiers therefore eliminating the risk of the properties becoming derelict again. The direct impact of this project has become immediately apparent in the local community for two reasons. Firstly the local streets no longer have the run down appearance they once had and secondly there is a finally an opportunity for people that want to live in this area to purchase homes at reasonable prices with all the benefits of a new build property'.

'A major part of this project has been recruiting the right individuals that would make this happen. As part of the recruitment process Agar Developments wanted to hire unemployed people from Edlington and so made contact with Doncaster Chamber of Commerce who had been running the TLM scheme. The TLM provided Arthur with the opportunity to work in the building

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trade, learning new skills for future development and give back to this local community, all at the same time. In particular Arthur was heavily involved in the regeneration of 44 St Johns Road, Edlington, during which he learnt how to fit kitchens, make internal alternations, build walls, plumb bathroom appliances as well as painting and decorating’.

In all, this project gave Arthur the opportunity to learn and practice new skills that will hopefully see him evolve into his chosen profession. John Agar, Arthur’s supervisor said ‘Arthur has been a keen and enthusiastic worker that shows great promise for the future, schemes like the TLM programme provide companies with the great opportunity to increase your manpower at key times in your business and opportunity to train entry level employees to the desired standard, all with appropriate financial support’.

[Case study 6](#)

Comments From Mr T

Mr T is a 40 year old Ukrainian born man and was looking for employment in Doncaster. (unemployed 24-36 months). He gained employment with LJ Monks Mechanical and Electrical Services through sponsorship with Doncaster Chamber (Transitional Labour Market Programme).

‘After initial induction I was assigned to work on the Doncaster Lakeside Construction project as a Trainee Electrician. It was a huge project but I was excited about learning a trade within a reputable company. At the beginning of the project I was coupled with an approved electrician with over 20 years experience in the industry. My daily routine comprised of working under supervision constructing and installing trunking and conduit systems throughout the ground floor of the Doncaster Community Stadium. It was a good insight into the industry of electrical systems. It wasn’t long before I had the confidence and quite a good knowledge to undertake certain tasks on my own.’

‘It has been a very rewarding and enjoyable career change for me and I have just been offered a permanent contract with LJ monks Ltd. This will enable me to undertake a college course for 2 years and gain more valuable experience on the road to being an electrician’.

Comments from LJ Monks:

‘When LJ Monks Building Services Limited was awarded the contract for the design and installation of the Mechanical and Electrical services associated with the Doncaster sports Stadium, they were delighted for several reasons. The parent company resides in Doncaster and has its roots firmly based in the town. The project presented an excellent opportunity to recruit both skilled and non-

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skilled people from the community. This idea brought us into contact with the TLM programme, who had excellent incentives to both us and any participant’.

‘So it was through the initiative that the TLM introduced Mr T to LJ Monks. He has proved to be a remarkable character who has been rewarded with permanent employment. He took full advantage of the six month placement as a Labourer to demonstrate his worthiness for consideration to be taken on full time. In truth, we did not ask him to do anything special; only to work hard and be diligent. When you consider the possible difficulties on language and understanding, then he has taken full advantage of the opportunity presented to him and we now look forward to a long, happy and mutually beneficial association’.

Case Study 7

What the TLM did for me.

When I was first approached for the TLM I had 3 full time employees and worked around 75 hours of care. So I looked at how I could take full advantage of the money offered towards paying staff wages and supervision fee and how I could best use this to forward my business. My six months goal was to input 3 new members of staff that would work 34 hour per week and so double my business enabling me to finish the paid employment which I’d had to maintain whilst building my business.

I looked at where I gained to most of my referrals, which was social services and was able to offer them free 8 hrs a week of carer for 9 clients. As the hardest part of our service is to get clients to accept that they could use some help and support with day to day living, especially when they have to pay for this service, the free trial worked fantastic. The first person we worked with had a visible improvement and the social worker was able to get funding to continue the support as it was proven to have a positive input on the clients life. The next was a couple that only need four hours session to give the family a break and again the people went on to continue to use us after the trail period. This has had a knock on effect as the social workers have made other referrals due to our success with the clients who used our trail.

The business now employs 6 staff at 34 hours per week and has 6 part time staff that also go to full time to cover holidays and sickness and the business has nearly tripled in its hours of support and this is all due to the TLM scheme.

The TLM was an excellent way to give people the opportunity to try the job and gain the training and support without draining the company’s finances.

The greatest thing to come from this scheme is that on the 30.12.06 I was no longer employed by an employer and have become just the business manager

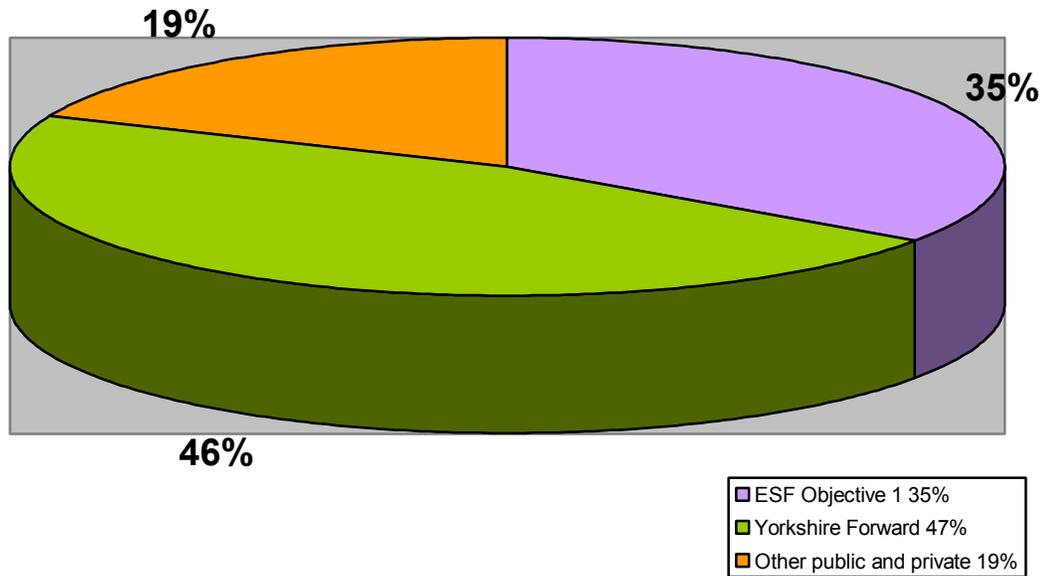
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of Orchids. And I am loving it!. The staff I have are working as a good team and are promoting the excellence of our business and all this has been achieved in the six months goal.

I would recommend to anyone to use the TLM; the paper work's a pain to begin with, but soon becomes easy and quick to do. I would use the TLM scheme again if it were available. The support from the Doncaster Chamber Staff was excellent and they always returned my calls within 2 hours.

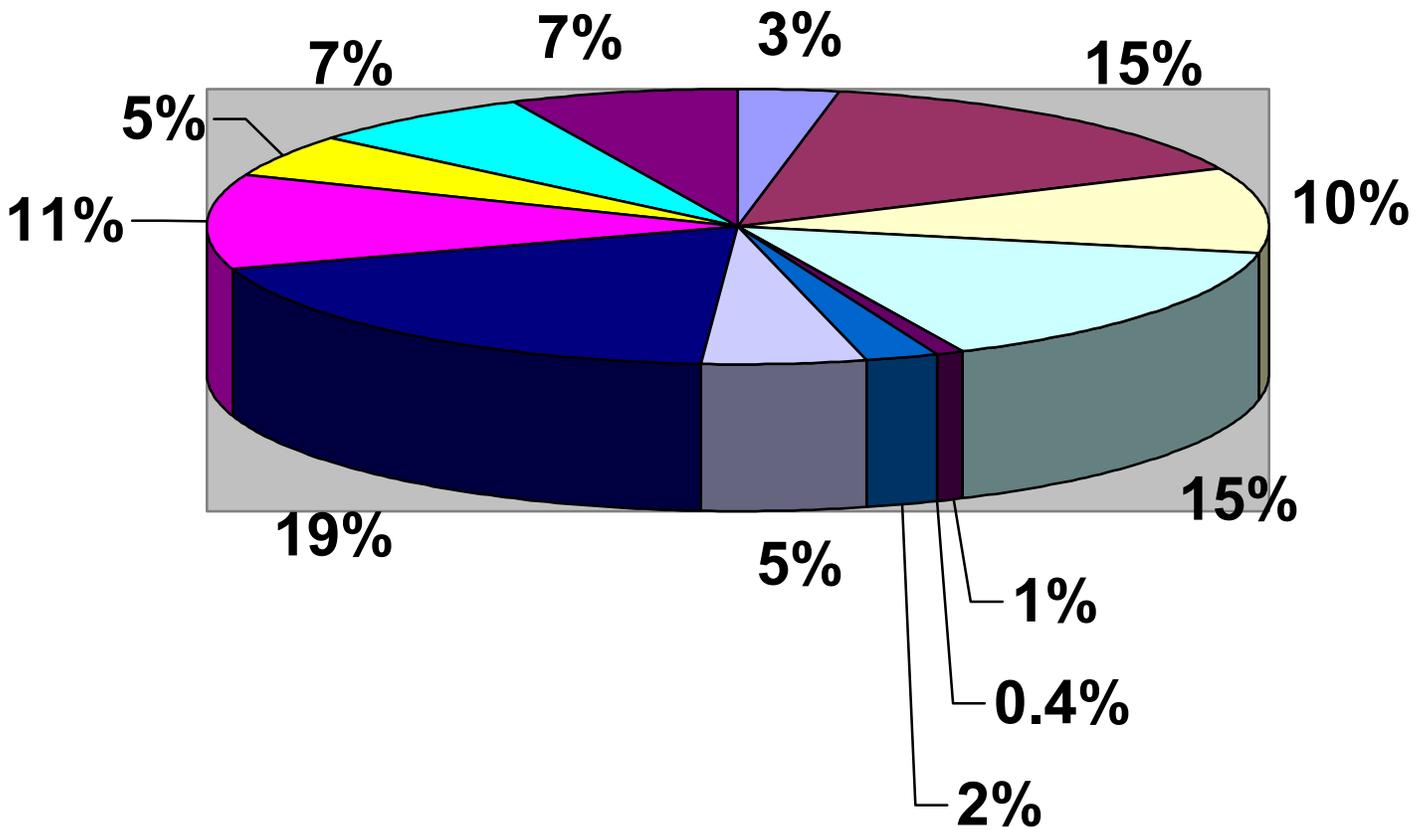
Appendix A Funding Sources

Funding Sources



Of the £19.02million 35% was sourced from ESF Objective 1, 46% from Yorkshire Forward and 19% from a range of other private, public and voluntary sector sources (See chart below)

Non ESF/YF Funding Streams



Private Cash 3%	In Kind 15%
Public 10%	NRF 15%
JC+ 1%	PCT Pathfinder 0.4%
CFFE 2%	Sheffield Wildlife Trust 5%
Burngreave ND4C 19%	Bridge Employment 11%
Sheffield City Council 5%	Sheffield University 7%
Other Voluntary Sector Contributions 7%	

The £3.6million that was sourced from outside Yorkshire Forward and ESF Objective 1 was provided by a range of private, public and voluntary sector organisations.