

Performance Development Team Consultants Report

Local Authority: Denbighshire County Council

Consultant: Anne-Marie Read –DWP

Enclosed is a summary of the report Produced by DWP and edited by DCC with permission.

Purpose of Assignment/visit/contact:

The LA asked PDT to undertake an evaluation of their current HB service to identify any further improvements they could make.

Consultant findings and recommendations

The LA work in partnership with Civica who deliver HB and LCTR services on their behalf. PDT visited the LAs service centre in Rhyl on 22 February 2018 to undertake a walkthrough of their HB processes. This was to understand if there were any changes that could be made to further improve performance. The findings have been grouped into a number of areas and if appropriate recommendations for change made.

Checking

The KPI for checks is 98.3% and this is always achieved.

The checking regime is robust and in line with expectations PDT would recommend this remaining at the level it is currently unless there is an increase in errors being found.

Performance

Current performance for Feb is:

- 10.22 days for New Claims.
- 3.38 days for Changes.

YTD is:

- 15.3 days for New Claims
- 6.5 days for Changes.

This is against the current national average of 22 days for New Claims and 7 days for Changes.

All KPIs being exceeded.

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Process

Subsidy is run every month so they know how they are doing throughout the year and there are no shocks.

Reports are run daily/weekly/monthly to enable careful monitoring for both Civica and the LA.

Staff are very fraud aware and consciously seek to detect any fraud in the caseload. There is also a dedicated fraud SPOC who deals directly with DWP FES.

DHP

The LA have an anti-poverty strategy for all customers. For DHP they focus on the holistic issue, they refer customers for help with debt, offer to look at expenses and outgoings and help customers to get out of the position they have found themselves in. They use DHP for deposits, to help customers move out of Temporary Accommodation etc. The use of DHP is well focussed and not used as a sticking plaster therefore would recommend continuing with this approach.

Staff

All have monthly one to ones at which current performance is discussed and any issues raised and resolved. All are aware of the KPIs and why they are set as they are.

Team meetings are held regularly however staff also know they can raise issues as and when they arise and they don't need to wait until a full team meeting.

Strong team – They are experienced and enthusiastic, there is an evident strong work ethic and staff told me they enjoy their jobs. I also saw a commitment to help and support colleagues at all times.

Conclusion

Given all of the evidence above I would find it hard to make many recommendations for improvement at the LA. The only area that could possibly benefit from an improved focus would be the use of phone and email for evidence gather in all cases which would further improve New Claims performance.