

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi



Analysis for Policy

Ymchwil gymdeithasol
Social research

Number: 33/2012



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

Evaluation of Jobcentre Plus Advisory Services in Integrated Children's Centres in Communities First Areas

Evaluation of Jobcentre Plus Advisory Services in Integrated Children's Centres in Communities First Areas

Beth Foley, Helen Stevens and Becci Newton

Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government.

For further information please contact:

Dr Mike Harmer

Local Government & Communities Analytical Team, Knowledge & Analytical Services, Department of Strategic Planning, Finance & Performance

Welsh Government

Merthyr Tydfil Office

Rhydycar

Merthyr Tydfil

CF48 1UZ

Tel: 0300 0628134

michael.harmer@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Welsh Government Social Research, year

ISBN 978-0-7504-7968-4

© Crown Copyright 2012

Table of contents

Glossary of acronyms	2
1 Introduction	3
2 Pilot set-up and delivery – and perceived impact.....	9
3 Factors and approaches that proved effective	36
4 Conclusions	42
Appendix: Research Instruments	50

Glossary of acronyms

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
BOC	Better Off Calculations
CF	Communities First
CFP	Communities First Partnership(s)
ESA	Employment Support Allowance
ESICC	Employment Services in Integrated Children's Centres
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FJF	Future Jobs Fund
HTR	Hard to reach
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICC	Integrated Children's Centre(s)
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
LMS	Labour Market System
MI	Management information
NCA	National Childminding Association
PEA	Parent Employment Adviser
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WFI	Work-focused interview
WG	Welsh Government
WTC	Working Tax Credit(s)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Welsh Government (WG) commissioned the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) to lead a review of its pilot which introduced Jobcentre Plus-led Advisory services into Integrated Children's Centres in Communities First (CF) areas. The pilot was known as the Employment Services in Integrated Children's Centres (ESICC). The project was co-funded by Communities First and Jobcentre Plus (JCP). IES had experience of evaluating the Work-Focused Services in the Children's Centres Pilot in England.
- 1.2 This report comprises findings from the evaluation to provide information to the Welsh Government (WG) on the progress and achievements of the ESICC pilot.

Policy context and background to pilot

- 1.3 In 2008 the UK Government announced a suite of child poverty pilots in England, which attempted to test the effectiveness of joined-up local approaches to tackling child poverty. One of these was the Work-Focused Services in Children's Centres pilot. This integrated a full-time JCP Adviser into 30 children's centres across England, to test whether children's centres could offer an effective means of engaging parents in labour market activity, moving them closer to work and ultimately into employment.
- 1.4 JCP in Wales approached the WG, and these organisations worked together to identify a way of adapting the English model to fit Welsh policy. The new model was then piloted for two years (between 2010 and 2012) in four local authority areas: Llwynhendy (Carmarthenshire), Penlan (Swansea), Caia Park (Wrexham), and Duffryn (Newport).
- 1.5 The design of the Welsh pilot aimed to embed JCP Personal Advisers (to be known as Parent Employment Advisers, (PEA)) into Welsh Integrated Children's Centres (ICCs), working closely with the local Communities First Partnership (CFP) to reach those furthest from the labour market.

- 1.6 ICCs are designed to provide integrated education, care, family support and health services, based on the belief that the integration of services is a critical factor in achieving positive outcomes for children and their parents, ensuring the best start in life. There is at least one centre located in every local authority in Wales although not all are in areas of relatively high deprivation.
- 1.7 Communities First (CF) is the Welsh Government's flagship programme to improve the living conditions and prospects for people in the most deprived communities across Wales. The programme was launched in 2001 and there are now over 150 CFPs. Each brings together members of the local community with representatives of the public, private and voluntary sectors to develop local Action Plans. Small staff teams support each partnership. CFPs are normally based in the heart of the community, familiar with and accessible to local people, helping to connect them to service providers and support agencies.
- 1.8 Outcome funding is available to CFPs and is intended for the development and delivery of new activities, services and projects for the benefit of CF areas. The funding aims to encourage and enable CFPs to work more closely with key service providers and other funders. Match funding is an essential requirement of outcome funding. The employment services in integrated children's centres (ESICC) pilot was funded through the CF Outcome Fund, with match funding from JCP.

Pilot aims and objectives

- 1.9 The overall aim of the pilot was to increase the number of parents in employment through providing services and support to enable them to move closer to the labour market and into work. The target group was workless families, lone parents and parents with children under five¹ since at this point, parents are expected to re-engage with work.
- 1.10 The pilot aimed to achieve this aim by:
 - strengthening partnership working to provide a joined-up service

¹ Until 2012, parents would be expected to engage with looking for work when their youngest child was seven.

- raising parents' awareness of support networks, provision available to support them, and their entitlement to claim in-work benefits
- increasing the numbers of JCP customers referred to relevant training, parents who are job-ready, and parents finding employment
- increasing job applications from local people to local employers, and the amount of UK and devolved government funding reaching local employers through channels such as job subsidies and ReAct funds.

1.11 The ESICC deployed dedicated JCP Personal Adviser support in each of the four ICCs. In addition, CF provided a core worker in each area to act as a link to support the engagement and retention of parents.

1.12 A core set of services was provided, supplemented by additional services or delivery mechanisms designed to meet local needs. The core services included *outreach* to those not using the centre and those using the centre but not using JCP services, providing *Lone Parent Adviser Services* such as Work-Focused Support for Lone Parents (previously New Deal for Lone Parents), and offering *services to those outside the traditional JCP contact group*, eg potential second earners.

1.13 ICCs and CFPs were tasked to support the pilot through activities and collaborative working with the PEAs. It was anticipated that they would add value by sharing local knowledge and networks to identify those in the community who were hardest to reach and break down barriers to parents accessing the service. The intention was for the PEAs to build on existing networks to reach parents reluctant to access JCP services through the normal route and establish trust and rapport with parents.

PEA time would be spent:

- working with ICC and CF staff to promote understanding of employment policy and its interaction with the child poverty agenda
- engaging in outreach activities, alongside CF staff, in the ICC and the local community
- undertaking a range of typical JCP Lone Parent Adviser functions for JCP clients (eg work-focused interviews (WFI), making appointments and caseload activity) and supporting partners of low income earners
- arranging and running group seminars and employer events

- making appropriate referrals to key partners and stakeholders in line with the core aims to support parents and reduce child poverty.

About the evaluation approach

1.14 The evaluation aimed to assess the extent to which the pilot had been successful in moving parents in the target groups closer to employment. Through work to explore process and implementation issues as well as perceived impacts; it was tasked to answer the following key questions:

- Did the pilot achieve its targets?
- Did those who engaged with PEAs via the ICCs move into training or employment and, if so, what factors were instrumental?
- Did the pilot succeed in reaching its target group of parents, ie those furthest from the labour market?
- Was there any additional impact, beyond the existing work of JCP, in the pilot areas?

1.15 The research included all four of the ICCs involved in the pilot.

- Initial scoping, desk research was undertaken, which examined pilot documentation including the management information that reported on key outputs. As part of this phase, guidance was received from the steering group, and interviews were undertaken with national stakeholders, specifically officials from the CF Unit.
- On the basis of information gained through the scoping review, two of the four ICCs were selected to take part in two- to three-day research visits while the remaining two were involved through a series of telephone interviews.

1.16 In all pilot areas, interviews were conducted with key staff and stakeholders. Respondents varied by area, but included PEAs, JCP Partnership Managers and project officers; CF Coordinators and development workers; CFP members; ICC Managers and staff; and providers of other services integrated in the ICCs and/or with CF.

1.17 As part of the research, four parent focus groups were held (two groups as part of each visit). These aimed to contrast different groups of parents, for example parents who had been fully involved, and those who had not, in the ESICC pilot.

1.18 As part of the evaluation, 23 interviews were completed with national and local stakeholders, and four parent focus groups were held.

About the selected ICCs

1.19 Given the aims of the pilot, the ICCs used to deliver the pilot are located in disadvantaged areas and deprived communities.

- *Llwynhendy* is located in Carmarthenshire. The ICC has been operational for around five years and is located close to the local primary school. The parents it supports tend to be young and many left school early in order to have children. Most are unemployed and skills levels tend to be low. Previous to the ESICC, a similar pilot operated, known as the Carmarthenshire Action Plan, which involved JCP staff working in the local community.
- *Penlan* is located around six miles from the centre of Swansea. The area is split into two communities, north and south. The ICC is attached to a local school in south Penlan. It attracts a mixed group of parents, mainly mothers but also some fathers; most parents accessing the ICC are from south Penlan. Their ages range from 14 to mid-40s. Most have low skills but also lack confidence. Similar to Llwynhendy, a previous pilot linking employment services to this community has operated in recent years.
- *Caia Park, Wrexham* is the largest housing estate in North Wales. The area has a history of social problems, including high child poverty levels and low educational attainment. The ICC is part of an established project aimed at tackling juvenile crime in the area. The ICC is used by poorer parents in the local area although some of the more affluent ones also use its services. It is estimated that 85 per cent of parents using the ICC come from Caia Park wards. CF has been critical to this ICC achieving a wider geographic reach.
- *Duffryn* is one of the most disadvantaged communities in Newport. The ICC is also attached to a school. Parents accessing the ICC are, in large part, from the Duffryn community. The area is more ethnically mixed than some others in the pilot, and the ICC has seen an

increase of Polish and Indian mothers attending the centre. Some new housing has been built in the area and this has attracted some more affluent families into the community and the ICC.

Report structure

- 1.20 The second chapter of this report explores the implementation of the pilot, including the process of setting it up, the role played by CF, what delivery has entailed, perceptions of the targets, partnership working, marketing and engagement approaches, and perceived impact.
- 1.21 Chapter 3 identifies critical success factors and explores delivery challenges and how they were overcome.
- 1.22 The report concludes with an assessment of the pilot against the evaluation objectives and our overall assessment of their achievements.
- 1.23 In the main body of the report, the data is reported anonymously, ie not attributed to the relevant area, except where particularly good practice is highlighted.

2 Pilot set-up and delivery – and perceived impact

- 2.1 This chapter reviews the wide-ranging information gathered as part of the documentary review and the qualitative research and provides a narrative of the set-up and delivery issues associated with the pilot, along with perceptions of the impacts achieved.

Pilot set-up

Selecting the Integrated Children's Centres

- 2.2 The pilot ICCs were selected on the basis of their location in deprived communities and effective partnership working arrangements with CFPs. Some respondents noted that the ICC and CF Managers had often been supportive of taking the employment agenda further within their communities but needed specialist support to do this. However, the process for selecting and brokering the engagement of local staff from the three key agencies may have had implications for delivery.
- 2.3 While the selection process in Wales minimised the burden on staff of writing proposals or expressions of interest to join the pilot, some tensions had arisen when key staff felt they had not been sufficiently involved during the design phase of work. This led to a view that the pilot had been imposed, rather than negotiated with them. The extent of involvement frequently depended on relationships between the three key agencies (CF, ICC and JCP) and it was apparent that it was beneficial for all to be involved in early discussions about how the pilot should operate. This had not happened in all instances.
- 2.4 In contrast to the Welsh selection process, in England the ICCs wrote proposals to join the pilot and were selected on this basis. This may have meant that they had a greater sense of ownership and control from the start. However, the selection process in Wales appeared to have benefits over the bidding process used in England such that it ensured that each selected ICC, and the respective CFP, had strong community links, facilities and approaches that could support the pilot.
- 2.5 If there was criticism of the pilot set-up, it concerned the management structures locally and the district/national set-up. Locally, the key

agencies would have appreciated more time to meet and exchange information and learning that could help them improve the pilot's offer to better meet local needs. Greater emphasis on this would be beneficial, although diverting resources to this activity might be challenging.

- 2.6 There was some concern that the management structure for the pilot was confusing for non-JCP staff. District level JCP Managers might not have autonomy to make decisions without consultation at national level and hence were an intermediate stage between the local staff (from all key agencies) and those at the national level. A simplified structure, particularly given the small scale of the pilot, may have been beneficial.

Selecting Parent Employment Advisers

- 2.7 In most cases, the PEAs were selected on the basis of prior experience of leading outreach in communities and/or of working with different groups, including different customer groups and employers, or in non-customer-facing roles, including marketing approaches. Similar to the English pilot, this experience appeared highly beneficial.
- 2.8 In addition, to this skill set, the English pilot demonstrated that knowledge of JCP procedures and processes was valuable. This held true in the Welsh pilot since one PEA that had limited experience of working within JCP had struggled at times to provide the detailed information that ICC, CF staff and parents had sometimes required.
- 2.9 It was apparent that certain attributes were desirable among PEAs, and changing PEAs could lead to an enhanced skill/attribute set being available to the pilot. The skills and attributes that appeared instrumental to progress included a proactive approach, a willingness to take themselves and their work to the community, flexibility in how they perceived their role, and knowledge of the workings of JCP.
- 2.10 The PEAs assigned to the pilot had changed in some areas as a result of personal circumstances (eg sickness absence and maternity leave) and while this could have an impact on delivery, it was understandably beyond the control of pilot.
- 2.11 A change of PEA could impact on pilot delivery since it was necessary for new relationships and ways of working to be established with key

agencies and for trust and rapport to be built up again with parents. More positively, a different PEA could bring a new perspective and different set of skills. Whether there was any significant impact of staff changes on delivery in practice depended greatly on the enthusiasm of the key agencies to start over again with new staffing, which might be informed by their relationship with outgoing staff and perceptions of newly appointed staff.

Location of Parent Employment Advisers

- 2.12 In most instances, the PEAs were primarily located within the ICC, although the main base of one was with CF. None of the PEAs spent all their time at the ICC. In each area, time was dedicated to outreach activities within the community and at CF premises. This aligns well with the pilot's objectives. At least one day, and more often two days, per week of PEA time was spent in the community.
- 2.13 Most of the PEAs had private space or an office in the ICC or CF venue in which to conduct work-focused interviews (WFIs) and other private discussions with parents. However, private space had not been available from the outset of the pilot. In some cases, significant negotiation had been necessary in order that ICC or CF staff understood why privacy was required and how it could be resourced. This was because ICCs were frequently at, or near, capacity in terms of the integrated services that they could accommodate. It should be noted that in one area, there remained no dedicated private space for the pilot.
- 2.14 The set-up of private spaces (where available) was variable, with some offering more child-friendly facilities (soft seats, toys etc.) than others. The same was found in the evaluation of the English pilot and office set-up most likely reflects resources available within each ICC. One recommendation from the English pilot was that employment services should be based in ICCs that have capacity to provide meeting space, and arguably the Welsh pilot could have placed a greater emphasis on this. Other recommendations from England about selecting ICCs included their location in deprived communities and an established high

footfall of parents – these two recommendations appeared to have been addressed in the Welsh pilot.

- 2.15 The ICC and CF venues themselves offered a range of facilities from which parents could benefit. These included computer stations, book and toy libraries, and café spaces. PEAs often made use of these to either reach out to parents and/or to offer support – such as IT skills support or to help with formatting letters and CVs. They also highlighted these facilities to parents who were not regular users of the ICC or CF.

Level of employment support pre-pilot

- 2.16 In three of the four pilot areas, there had been prior (often short-term) initiatives to deliver employment support within the local communities. This meant that in these areas, there was an established understanding of how the delivery employment support via JCP (or other sources) could benefit parents. In one, the employment project was ending at the same time as the ESICC commenced. This meant there could be a handover period and no gap in support for parents.
- 2.17 Moreover, CF has objectives that relate to the employability of individuals in its communities; hence in most areas provision such as job clubs or work clubs, CV support and training which involved employability skills already existed. It was apparent that PEAs had assisted to re-invigorate some of this provision.
- 2.18 In one area there was evidence that the PEAs had assisted CF to hone its objectives further towards employment and increasing the employability of people in the local community. This was achieved through placing greater emphasis on developing understanding of transferable skills.
- 2.19 This prior emphasis on employment support appeared beneficial and suggested a difference with the English pilot. In England, in some cases, PEAs had to spend time persuading ICC staff and other local stakeholders of the benefits of locating employment services in the community, and the links between these services and the Child Poverty agenda. In Wales, there appeared to be a more established understanding of the role of employment in alleviating poverty more

generally, if not specifically child poverty. This understanding meant that PEAs in Wales could readily focus their effort on parents rather than on engaging local stakeholders with the pilot.

Challenges to set-up

- 2.20 The degree to which key agencies felt involved in the pilot set-up (or whether they felt the pilot was imposed upon them) could be a challenge. However, greater involvement could be brokered over time; hence there appeared to be no lasting impact. In addition, tensions surrounded the approach to introducing the pilot and the extent to which it was seen as a negotiation between the three key agencies, or an agenda imposed by one; on the ground, key agencies had welcomed and supported the operational staff and the ESICC.
- 2.21 Other challenges, which were found across all pilot areas, surrounded resourcing and facilities such as finding private space for PEAs, the supply of internet/broadband and marketing materials. The impact of these resourcing issues will be explored in the section on delivery.
- 2.22 In addition to resourcing challenges there were operational ones. These reflected different interpretations of the purpose and role of the PEAs (eg to be 'on the floor' in the ICC, being active in the community or completing back office duties), how they would be managed (ie by JCP, ICC/CF or a matrix approach), and some confusion about the responsibilities of the different key agents in the pilot's implementation (this appeared to link back to how the implementation had been initially negotiated at the local level). Over time, this situation was resolved as the value delivered by PEAs through all aspects of their work was demonstrated to all involved. This situation was not dissimilar to the early stages of the English pilot where parties would have valued clearer guidance about roles and responsibilities from the outset.
- 2.23 A key lesson from the early phase of work was that an emphasis on awareness raising and engagement activities would deliver the desired outcomes over time. PEAs and other stakeholders recommended that this should form the majority of PEAs' work at the outset of the initiative.

The role of CF in delivery

- 2.24 National stakeholders suggested that CF had great potential to support the rapid embedding of the pilot and could help to alleviate some challenges seen in the English implementation. These surrounded the time needed to build networks and partnerships necessary for success. Since CF are already embedded in the local communities, and very well networked, they potentially could assist PEAs through '*plugging them into*' these established local networks.
- 2.25 In practice, the strong networks of CF were a huge asset and had meant that the pilot could '*hit the ground running*'. The PEAs made significant use of the networks established by CF and quickly embedded into those of the ICC as well. This meant that, rather than spending time scoping local organisations/provision, building relationships and developing knowledge of local services (which one CF Coordinator estimated would take between six and nine months), the PEAs were able to commence effective delivery rapidly (eg within a month of commencing pilot work).
- 2.26 CF was also an active partner to the pilot (and of course a co-funder with JCP). Local Coordinators took an active role in delivery and they, and CF development workers, were highly engaged with the pilot's aims and delivery. CFPs offered particular support in the marketing of the pilot through including it in newsletters and other mail drops in local communities and in their discussions with individuals in the local community and with networked partners.
- 2.27 There were indications that the CF and ESICC approaches intersected well. For example, CF workers could provide triage support to individuals in the community, directing them to services and support needed (eg to overcome particular barriers or to gain confidence) until they would be ready for more specific employment support. In this way, the CF provided 'wraparound' support to the ESICC. The PEAs could also use the CF referral networks to direct parents they were working with to appropriate sources of support for their needs. This is consistent with the approaches set out in the 'Tackling Poverty Action Plan'², which

² Welsh Government (2012) Tackling Poverty Action Plan 2012-2016

identifies a clear role for effective multi-agency approaches to alleviate child and family poverty.

- 2.28 A critical role played by CF workers was in helping ESICC to engage the hard to reach (HTR) parents. This is partly because CFP are seen as non-threatening to HTR parents as they are a non-statutory body with no power of enforcement over parents'/individuals' lives: *'We attract the hardest to reach people because we're seen as a social service in the community.'*
- 2.29 Many of these families held negative perceptions of JCP and were likely to be disengaged from mainstream employment services; a PEA felt they *'couldn't communicate properly with the Jobcentre'* while an ICC Manager felt that these HTR parents were a group – clearly identifiable to staff working in communities – who had tended to be *'written-off'* by wider society. Reaching these groups – which was reported to lead to savings in respect of social services, probation teams and policing – was vital to the project. *'I didn't think I'd learn something quite so fundamental from the project, and that is that you've got to go after that group [the hardest to help] and stick with it, because the...potential pay-offs are millions of pounds.'* [ICC Manager]
- 2.30 Where CF workers engaged these groups, they established rapport and trust and could bring in PEAs when appropriate, building on this trust. Notably, it was hard for PEAs and the ESICC as a whole to make progress with HTR parents where CF had not done so either. This suggests that CF plays a critical role in ensuring the widest reach of the ESICC.

What delivery entailed

How Parent Employment Advisers spent their time

- 2.31 As would be expected, there was some variance between the four areas about how PEAs used their time. Overall, however, it was apparent that the role needed to balance engagement and outreach activity, delivery of appointed employment support and work-focused interviews (WFI), as well as making drop-in employment support available.

2.32 For PEAs, there needed to be a period of adjustment to understand how these aspects of the role could be balanced. This often was a less formal approach than would be used at Jobcentre Plus offices:

'When I came out here to work, having work in the Jobcentre for so long, I realised I was going to have to change the way I worked completely.'

2.33 Understanding that drop-in sessions were important developed over time and this led to new approaches in the delivery of WFIs to ensure sufficient time was available to both aspects. In one area, group WFIs had been introduced which involved a small group of parents – willing to share the session – in a two- to three-hour employment support session. This innovative approach was reported to follow the structure of one-to-one WFIs, although it enabled parents to share different perspectives and views as well as learn from each other. It may have also increased parents' confidence to share information about some of their circumstances since they gained support from peers. However, to be effective, it was crucial that parents gave informed consent to be part of the group, and that agreements were reached about disclosure and confidentiality before group meetings could go ahead. It was also important for parents to know they could access one-to-one support should they not be comfortable with discussing some issues in a group session.

2.34 The delivery of WFIs as part of the ESICC was included from the outset, which varied from the English pilot. However, the approach appeared beneficial: it meant that eligible parents could be referred to the ESICC by JCP ensuring a flow of customers to the service; second, once at the pilot site, in most cases, parents who were not already using it, could be introduced to the wider support available; most critically, parents were relieved to have a less formal, and more child-friendly place to attend (which replicated experience in England) and consequently spread the word in the community, which also generated demand for the service.

2.35 Initially the time spent on the community, engaging with local stakeholders and parents, could be higher, though over time it stabilised at around two days a week. However, there was also consensus that

time spent in this way would reap rewards over time as the community became comfortable with PEAs and the support they could offer.

- 2.36 The PEAs' work appeared well adapted to local circumstances, although this may have taken some time to establish since the research took place towards the end of the initial pilot period. It was apparent that particularly for CF workers, outreach was a necessary part of '*building a bridge*' towards employment and ensuring individuals received support for overcoming wider barriers that would help ready them for employment support.
- 2.37 Similar to the experience in the English pilot, there could be tensions if not all key agencies were aware of how PEA time was being spent – particularly where their schedule was not shared. Related to this, CF and ICC staff might not understand the time that PEAs were required to spend logging the contacts and WFIs on management information (MI) systems. However, in all instances, these tensions had been resolved through improved communication and information sharing.

Claimant groups accessing the pilot

- 2.38 The main target group for the pilot was parents, particularly as their children reached the age where the parent was expected to start seeking work, and it was reported that they had formed the majority of those helped. However, other claimant groups accessed the service, including parents in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (ESA), those not in receipt of benefits, and groups not traditionally supported by JCP, such as potential second earners.
- 2.39 There was a strong message emerging from the research that the PEAs should and do work with all parents, although some parents in the focus groups felt lone parents had received more intensive support. Overall, the benefits of working with a range of parents included getting the message through word of mouth that the ESICC was available and worth accessing.
- 2.40 A spectrum of needs among parents was supported by the pilot. While it was centred in deprived wards, there can be no assumption that all parents share the same needs. The evaluation evidence indicated that

some parents were highly qualified (to degree level) whereas others required pre-entry level literacy and numeracy support. Their barriers to employment varied (for example, ranging simply from childcare issues to multiple and significant barriers) but the pilot was sufficiently flexible to support this range of needs.

- 2.41 Working in the community, PEAs were confident that they were engaging with HTR parents. Relationships might build from simple queries about benefits into more extensive support. PEAs felt that HTR parents would not have shared information about their situation as freely without the opportunity to build the relationship, in small steps, through the ESICC. *'Customers felt at ease... so they would open up and tell me a lot of what was going on in their life... [whereas] in the JCP the customer just agrees to go along with things'*.
- 2.42 Parents were asked for their views about whether the pilot was reaching all those eligible for the service in the local community. They suggested that it was not, although the group they identified as least engaged with the service were those parents who were more affluent, *'rushing off to work having dropped off their children'*, or parents who knew about the service but the circumstances were not right for them to engage.
- 2.43 One mother offered her own case as an example of this: she noted that she had found out about the pilot as a result of being told by other mothers in the community. However, she kept finding other priorities to address, associated with having two profoundly disabled children requiring health and educational support, instead of engaging with the pilot. A referral to attend the main JCP office triggered her to make an appointment with the PEA as she felt the environment at the main JCP office was challenging in respect of taking her children there. This suggests that it takes time to develop demand, and that there is an interplay with other, external factors that determines demand.
- 2.44 Overcoming the inertia that some parents feel is without doubt challenging. PEAs felt that one of the biggest contributors to this inertia was a lack of confidence, particularly among parents with multiple barriers to employment who had been out of the workplace for long periods. Building confidence often required more intensive support, with

an emphasis on showing parents how to do things rather than simply telling them what to do. In one area, the Adviser had also focused on establishing training in pre-entry level basic skills to tackle some of these confidence barriers.

Focus on Hard to Reach (HTR) Families

- 2.45 A particular goal of both the Welsh and the English pilots was to engage those families which could be classed as 'hard to reach' (HTR). This HTR category can be broken down into two broad types of parents – one that is logistically hard for JCP to reach, and the other that JCP has more regular contact with and might be better termed 'hard to engage'.
- 2.46 The first HTR category consists of parents who are not working but are unlikely to have any contact with JCP due to having a partner in work. Known as 'potential second earners', these parents are usually ineligible for Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and may not be actively job-seeking. However, given that around half of children living in poverty have a parent in work and that two-earner households are at significantly lower risk of falling into poverty³, these non-traditional JCP customers are an important target for employment services.
- 2.47 There was limited evidence about the extent to which this HTR group had been engaged by the pilot. Some parents in this category were involved in the focus group research and PEAs separately identified the relevance of offering employment support to them. Both sources identified that statutory services were not targeted to support potential second earners. However, providing employment support that could move such parents towards, and ideally into, work had the potential to increase the financial security of families by reducing their reliance on one parent's wages. For this group, affordable childcare was a barrier, and specialist support on this could be delivered through the co-located services within the ICCs.
- 2.48 The second HTR group are those that JCP are aware of, but who are 'hard to engage' – for both JCP and community organisations. These

³ Harker, L. (2006). *Delivering on child poverty: What would it take?* London: DWP

parents tend to have multiple barriers to employment, such as criminal records, poor basic skills, physical or mental health problems, childcare issues, and problems with debt or substance abuse. They often have spent very long periods out of the labour market, and can be suspicious of JCP and unwilling to engage with employment support. However, these parents are also likely to be a long way from the labour market, requiring intensive long-term support and training.

- 2.49 Interviewees felt that the pilot had been particularly effective at reaching this 'hard to engage' group. This was in large part linked to the involvement of CF and their contacts with other community outreach organisations. For example, in one area, the PEA could use CF networks to access a range of services focused on the hardest to help, such as food parcel drops, home visits, debt advice services and mentoring. PEAs also felt a community-based approach allowed them the time and flexibility needed to re-engage these families, to gain their trust, and to begin to tackle the multiple barriers they faced. This allowed the pilot to offer far more personalised and continuous support than would typically be available at JCP. The engagement of this group of parents was viewed as a central element of the pilot's added value, since these groups entail significant costs for local public services (such as policing and probation).

Most popular forms of employment support

- 2.50 The PEAs reported that Better Off Calculations (BOC), WFIs and drop-in advice to be most popular – largely in that order. However, there was some variance between pilot sites which reflected how the other key agents saw the added value of the ESICC.
- 2.51 At one site, the ESICC had, in the words of the ICC Manager '*completed us*'. It meant that a full suite of services was available to parents which provided comprehensive support. Each of the services understood their strengths and the boundaries in terms of their knowledge and expertise, and consequently cross-referred frequently. It was also apparent that transitions between co-located support services were supported by 'warm handovers' between the different advisers, which helped to

ensure that parents did indeed access the support that services identified they needed. There were many illustrations offered about how this helped parents overcome barriers and how services were delivered in such a way as to avoid duplication of effort. This approach clearly links to the ambitions set out in the Child Poverty Act (2010) and the Child Poverty Strategy (2011), which both encourage co-location of services to provide early and effective intervention and whole family approaches to tackling child poverty.

- 2.52 In contrast, the Better Off Calculation (BOC) came to dominate the ESICC offer in another site because this was seen as the additional value by key agents and the reason that they referred parents to the PEA. In this area, the ICC and CF had a relatively long history of offering their own employment activities (through employment-related training, job clubs, work experience and brokering volunteering opportunities). The JCP element, in their view, could best focus on assisting parents to navigate the JCP system and understand how working could be beneficial to finances.
- 2.53 However, while BOCs had become a dominant feature here, the PEA ensured the services extended beyond this and delivered support around confidence and self-esteem. The PEA also got involved in community activities to ensure a wider reach. Parents had come to appreciate this support: *'She makes you believe you can do anything, and she remembers you.'*
- 2.54 The continuity of the support available through the PEAs was a crucial benefit identified by parents. The PEAs would remember their stories – even if the parent was not case-loaded, and this built trust that enabled parents to make progress towards employment through getting involved in training or other types of support.
- 2.55 Overall, it appeared that the PEA had integrated well with the ICCs and CFPs. There was evidence that they were considered part of the team, and were involved in activities that supported the wider objectives of the ICCs and CF as well as those of the pilot.

Targets

- 2.56 At national level, there had been some discussion about whether to set targets for the Welsh pilot (and in England the pilot operated without targets), but a decision was reached that targets were important as a means to monitor the progress and effect of the pilot. It was apparent that the targets set an expectation for what should result from the work and acted as a steer to those involved in delivery.
- 2.57 At a local level, those interviewed noted that the targets were achievable rather than stretching. However, this was not a criticism. Operating in an environment of achievable targets meant that PEAs felt able to dedicate significant time to HTR parents, furthest from the labour market, without fear that they would be found to be under-performing. Over time, this approach appeared to be having some success: a PEA who had achieved job outcomes with two of the HTR parents in year 1 said: *'Achieving those extra two job starts was quite big... it's a huge achievement really to have helped the hardest to help customer groups.'*
- 2.58 While the evaluation has not had access to end-of-year management information, part-year data for year 2 and the full-year data for year 1 suggested good progress, which was confirmed in the interviews. In a number of instances, the targets were reported to have been exceeded and the available evidence supported this.
- 2.59 However, interviewees and the evaluation team identified a few issues that could be addressed in future target setting. One point was whether targets were discrete outputs from each other and if not, whether there was a clear and logical flow between them. For example, the management information (MI) sheet for the original pilot period required PEAs to record the number of referrals to other opportunities, and as a sub-group, the number given advice on training, and *of these* the number referred to a training provider, and *of these* the number starting training. However, PEAs thought that routes from referral were more varied than this logic flow allowed for.
- 2.60 Another issue was whether there was a strong enough link between some of the objectives for the pilot, and the targets that were being recorded on the MI. For example, there were not precise data recorded

for the number of new clients meeting PEAs; instead the MI recorded the number of clients engaged with the PEAs.

- 2.61 More importantly, the interviewees offered some insights into how the targets had been interpreted differently among those involved. For example, it was reported that differences could arise in the interpretation of signposting and referral; also whether this represented a unique output given the nature of both the ICC and CFP's work and objectives.
- 2.62 CF workers reported that referring and signposting is second nature and embedded in their role, and not something that they would naturally see as an output from their work. A point was made that CF and ICCs could have been more involved in designing the targets – particularly those that related to their activities. Some areas reported difficulties in getting CF and ICCs to report their outputs in relation to the pilot, and along with less procedural approaches in these organisations compared with JCP, the lack of involvement in the design of targets may have been a factor.
- 2.63 A point was also made about the initiatives that operated alongside the pilot, particularly in its first year. In one area, a PEA noted that the employment target had been achieved in year 1. However, the jobs that parents had gained were Future Jobs Fund (FJF) roles they felt did not offer guaranteed sustainability⁴. It is not clear how far FJF roles influenced employment outputs in other areas.
- 2.64 More saliently, JCP has undertaken sustainability assessments for the ESICC, in September 2010 and September 2011, that report on employment outcomes and off-flows from benefits, headlines from which it has shared with the evaluation. These data show that:
- 64 per cent of customers helped by the pilot who obtained employment between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011 remained in employment or did not return to claim out-of-work benefits six months later, and
 - 92 per cent of customers helped by the pilot who obtained employment between 1 April 2011 and 30 September 2011 remained

⁴ There has been no nationally commissioned evaluation of FJF, but DWP published a study based on early analysis that suggests 50 per cent of those taking up FJF did not return to benefits; available here, downloaded July 2012:
http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc_analysis/2010/fjf_nov_2010.pdf

in employment or did not return to claim out-of-work benefits six months later.

JCP is planning to conduct a similar exercise for the period between 1 October and 31 March 2012 in September 2012.

- 2.65 One final point is the extent to which the targets recorded all the throughputs of the pilot. For example, it was apparent that there had been particular achievements in engaging and supporting HTR families with relevant outcomes, such as advice sessions and training, in some areas, which the MI was unable to record in sufficient detail to elaborate the particular effect of the pilot on these key groups of parents.

Partnership working

- 2.66 In all instances, strengthened partnerships had developed as a result of the pilot. Key among these was an improved perception of JCP by the other key agencies and particularly CF (whose view was often influenced by experiences of local community members with this service). Having PEAs in the community has broken down some of the stereotypes of JCP.
- 2.67 Understandably, effective partnership working had taken time and effort on all parts to develop. The organisations all had their own working styles. However, more influential were the relationships between the key agencies prior to the pilot. There were examples of a long history of partnership work between ICC and JCP in some cases, with one ICC Manager reporting that a critical JCP Manager '*was passionate about what we do*'.
- 2.68 Partnership working was most firmly established where there was trust in the PEAs that they were fulfilling their role. In this respect, there was a need to be seen to be active by the key agencies, or to explain why they might spend time off direct delivery to develop understanding of what their role entailed, which included updating the JCP Labour Market System (LMS) when WFIs and other interviews/drop-ins had been completed.
- 2.69 It was apparent that PEAs were welcomed into local networks and became an effective part of them. There were numerous examples of

handovers between different specialist support services and of services and the ESICC working together to meet targets – all relevant to the goals set out in the Child Poverty Act 2011 and the associated Child Poverty Strategy. Examples included parents being referred to debt advice led by CF or the Citizens Advice Bureau. The support services could also approach PEAs for detailed advice on new arrangements for claimants such as benefits sanctioning processes under the Work Programme.

2.70 The Welsh Government recognises the contribution that increasing access to affordable **childcare** can make to supporting transition into employment and thereby helping to alleviate poverty.⁵ The National Childminding Association (NCA) is part of the ICC network, providing information on availability of different sources of childcare, but critically, on developing a career as a childminder. The PEAs were tasked to contribute to this agenda by referring interested parents to suitable services via the NCA. Childcare could also provide a means for self-employment which PEAs were asked to consider. One PEA used CF contacts to organise volunteer placements for parents interested in developing a career in childcare at local CF crèches and family centres. Several parents had since gone on to begin formal childcare training. Another ESICC also referred parents who were interested in developing a career in childminding to the NCA Adviser. This resulted in a training outcome for the pilot which also helped the NCA achieve its outcome targets.

2.71 There were also illustrations of how the key agencies worked together to deliver their pilot's aims. This example in Box 1 was drawn from Penlan.

⁵ Welsh Government (2012) Tackling Child Poverty Action Plan

Box 1: Get Gok! Event

This event aimed to bring something new to the traditional careers fair and was held just before Mother's Day to provide a treat for parents while also delivering some advice. The key partners (PEAs, CF and ICC) identified a need to offer guidance to parents about personal presentation and what to wear to job interviews. They designed a creative approach to do this which they called 'Get Gok'. The ICC funded full outfits for three parents working with the PEAs. The PEAs went shopping with the parents to help them select outfits (each costing around £30). The outfits aimed to be suitable for different job goals (office, sales etc).

The CF venue was used for the event and the CF Coordinator dressed up as Gok Wan to give feedback on the outfits and why they worked. The CF Development Worker contacted local employers to ask them to contribute to gift bags for parents. The bags included spa items and grooming products. M&S (a local employer) was approached to lead a bra-fitting session since CF workers and PEAs identified that some mothers required re-fitting to look their best when they went to an interview.

Local training providers and colleges also attended the event. However, instead of presenting their whole prospectus, the PEAs provided guidance to them about the types of courses most needed by parents and the community. Around 30 parents attended the event and their contact details were captured. Notably, at least one employment outcome was achieved as a result of this event.

2.72 There were also numerous examples of how the PEAs added value to the projects of ICCs and CFPs locally (see Box 2). Since they had been accepted as a member of the team, in part because of their willingness to get involved, this seemed a natural extension to their work.

Box 2: Examples of partnership working

In Duffryn the PEA assisted CF to bid for JCP flexible support-fund monies to run a confidence-building and motivation course. She also provided advice about how this provision could best be marketed to guarantee referrals.

As a result of information provided by a PEA, an ICC outreach worker helped to resolve a bullying incident that was affecting a parent's child, and this lifted a barrier for the parent in terms of their journey towards employment.

In Caia Park, the PEA had identified basic literacy problems as a major barrier for many of the people she supported, but also a lack of relevant training provision locally. The PEA pointed out that only accredited (Level 1) courses were available fully-funded but that these were too advanced for many of her customers. To overcome this, CF offered monies from its training budget to fund bespoke provision, and the PEA worked with the local authority to find a suitable provider to fill this gap. These pre-entry level courses proved highly popular; there is capacity for 13 learners and, when the research was conducted, seven people were waiting to join. Two individuals had completed the course and were now ready to move on to accredited training.

The PEA had also created partnerships with a range of other organisations – most recently with local health centres. Health visitors had become an important source of new referrals. The PEA felt that links with other agencies mean there are no services that cannot be offered. It was felt that the pilot had also helped those it supported to engage with their local community: *'More often than not they're not aware of everything that's available to them.'*

In Llwynhendy, the PEA could direct parents towards volunteer work through CF. Some parents had helped out at CF's local allotments or in its Family Centres. This helped to develop their CVs and gave them work experience; some who had volunteered in Family Centres had subsequently begun to consider careers or qualifications in childcare.

2.73 It was apparent that integrated approaches and joint working were seen as critical within the local areas in order to meet the needs of the

community. Consequently, locating JCP services in the community was felt to be appropriate and there was significant support for the continuation of the service: *'We've got to continue [working in partnerships], some of these families are so dependent upon it.'*

- 2.74 Some critical partners to include within the offer at the ICCs, and alongside JCP, included debt advice (including Citizens Advice Bureau and CF debt provision), and other services that alleviate financial stress such as food banks. CF staff identified that locating JCP advice within the community meant that they developed a much greater understanding of the disadvantages some families faced: *'In a call centre, the JCP [Adviser] doesn't understand, doesn't see this person is in dire straits and doesn't have food to feed their children. Here they can see it and they also come to know the services we can offer to help those families.'*

Marketing and engagement approaches

Reaching out to parents

- 2.75 There was a consensus that to get the message out to parents, informal marketing – through word of mouth, signposting, and referrals among local stakeholders – was most important. Parents who had a positive experience with the pilot were a source of referral as much as other local services.
- 2.76 In addition, PEAs making themselves available on the floor at ICC and CF, in the café or social areas, near reception, and at community events was also important since incidental meetings that could lead to the delivery of support would result. Rapport with parents needed to build over time and this was a good way to make a start.
- 2.77 This is a critical success factor and suggests that PEAs need to be outgoing individuals, capable of starting up informal conversations with parents that can lead, in time, to engagement with employment support. However, this requires a sensitive approach which could take time for PEAs to develop.
- 2.78 Not all parents appreciated the presence of the PEAs in these informal, social areas of the ICC, and some non-engaged parents criticised the PEAs for taking too much time *'off the job'*. These non-engaged parents

were also distrustful of the PEAs, and were suspicious that PEAs would breach their confidentiality. These parents felt that if they disclosed information about their circumstances (such as a criminal record) it would be shared with other staff at the ICC. This is suggestive of how important it is to build up rapport and trust with parents, and the significant amount of time it may take to do this.

- 2.79 Once the message was out about the ESICC, a virtuous circle had started to develop whereby those receiving the service would refer other parents, and some self-referral would also develop. Word of mouth was particularly effective in communities with close knit families where word spread rapidly, and in areas where many ICC users lacked basic literacy skills, making written communication ineffective.
- 2.80 However, while these informal mechanisms were highly effective, broad-spectrum marketing was frequently supported by CF. This included mail-drops to the whole community with information about the service, and inclusion of articles about the ESICC within the CF newsletters. However, it should also be noted that CF were to some extent motivated to undertake responsibility for marketing as a result of the stringent DWP procurement and processes. These had initially delayed purchase of marketing and publicity products. However, a process and system was approved to support the pilot, although its use to purchase materials was minimal.
- 2.81 PEAs and ICCs also experimented a little with social media – mainly Facebook – although this took the form of ‘shop front’ adverts rather than making use of interactive features. Part of the reason for this was that PEAs felt that greater use of interactive elements risked breaching JCP’s data security rules. There was some indication that parents found information on Facebook useful. Overall, however, there was minimal use of social media and it was unclear what the demand might be among parents for its use beyond that seen.

Marketing to local stakeholders and services

- 2.82 There was criticism in all areas that greater resource had not been made available for marketing the service to local stakeholders and other services, which in part was linked to the lengthy procurement procedures within JCP. It was felt that some branded materials such as flyers or business cards would be helpful. In some of the areas, eventually some budget had been released to fund some of this, including pull-up banners. This meant that when PEAs took up a stall at local events, there was something to highlight what they could offer and to grab the eye.
- 2.83 In one area, CF had provided some resource, although the materials produced did not bear the JCP brand since it had not providing co-funding for the marketing materials.
- 2.84 The extent to which this lack of branded marketing materials had an impact upon pilot delivery was hard to discern. While it meant that PEAs did not have giveaway items that local services could refer to some time after events, the MI and evaluation data suggested that the ESICC had achieved a good reach and was well known among local services (no doubt thanks to the efforts of PEAs, CF and ICCs) in any case.

Perceived impact

- 2.85 Parents, the intended beneficiaries of the pilot, reported that they felt more confident as a result of getting involved in activities that would help them move towards employment. However, the critical benefit – which appeared instrumental to their increased confidence – was developing a relationship of trust with the PEAs in a comfortable and trusted environment.
- 2.86 Locating employment services in the ICC helped to reduce the costs associated of travel into the main JCP offices, but more importantly, it meant parents could attend, and bring their children to, a more welcoming environment that was often reported to be in stark contrast to the situation at the JCP office. *'In the main jobcentre they're only given a set time – ten or fifteen minutes... with CF and the ICC, we know the background of the family, we know their personal circumstances... the*

Adviser working here now knows the stories behind the families – there’s more empathy with the client.’

- 2.87 However, it may be that one (small) group of parents was driven out of attendance at the ICC by the pilot. Staff in one area identified that some parents who they suspected of claiming benefits fraudulently withdrew. This is a challenging outcome since these parents were withdrawing from a range of services, not just those of the JCP. However, the PEA and other staff knew that if information about fraudulent claims had been disclosed, there would have been a duty for the PEA to report it. Given that CF is seen as a non-threatening organisation to such families, there may be a role for its staff in seeking to support the re-engagement of this group with ICC services and in helping them to consider entering into a more sustainable position with statutory services.
- 2.88 From the PEAs’ perspective, the impacts surrounded learning more about the local communities and the challenges faced by local families. The pilot had brought them up close to people’s problems. However, they also found that parents and others were more willing to share more information about their circumstances than they would in JCP offices, and this helped PEAs to closely tailor the support they could offer.
- 2.89 The PEAs also had an influence over the training and support provision offered within the ICC and CF, often bringing a closer focus on employability. Positively, there were examples where the PEAs had helped to reinvigorate existing provision with a greater focus on transferable skills that were being developed.
- 2.90 However, their influence was not always positive in the view of parents. One point of contention was around training. In one pilot, staff found that training courses tended to be dominated by particular groups of parents, who tended to view the classes as more of a social event than a means to gain a qualification. This mirrored the situation in the English pilot, where some parents were ‘serial leisure learners’ not willing to make a progression in their learning activities since they lacked a strong desire to work. The pilot was trying to tackle this by encouraging these parents to focus more on their goals and progression opportunities, and by trying to encourage less-engaged parents to participate. However, there were

some complaints from parents that leisure learning courses were replaced by courses with a greater focus on employability. The pilot is now looking to strike a balance between engaging parents in learning for pleasure and encouraging them to consider courses which enhance their job prospects. Overall, it remains important to challenge parents to progress in learning and to realise the value of learning to employment, since employment is acknowledged to be a route out of poverty.

2.91 CF workers were in a position to identify the difference made by the pilot in light of their detailed knowledge of local communities. In one area, CF staff were confident that 10 parents, who would not otherwise have done so, had found work as a result of the ESICC pilot. There were also cases of parents entering FJF roles initially and finding another job once their position ended because their families had become used to the extra income, and the parents realised the social benefits of working.

2.92 In another example, CF workers had undertaken a gap analysis and concluded that their progress with helping parents to employment was constrained without specialised support on BOCs, and knowledge of the welfare system and welfare reforms, including working tax credits (WTCs). The pilot confirmed the necessity of JCP support in the community to them, and the ICC Manager felt that some parents had been retained in work as a consequence of advice on WTC who otherwise would have quit their jobs because they did not understand that in-work benefits were available to them.

2.93 The PEAs had also helped to fill other gaps in local provision. For example, in one area the PEAs noted the lack of pre-entry level basic skills provision that was needed by people in the local community. The PEAs had been able to work with local providers to fill this gap and gain parents the support they needed to start a journey towards work. This is a critical impact and an issue that requires further consideration by the Welsh Government. Its Tackling Poverty Action Plan identifies the role of basic skills in supporting transitions to work and consequently in alleviating poverty. Ensuring pre-level 1 literacy and numeracy may be a necessary staging post to this aim for parents in deprived wards.

- 2.94 The pilot has enabled the PEAs to find out in much more detail about the factors that prevent harder-to-help parents from moving into work. In some cases, other staff at JCP have been interested to hear more about the community-based work and the learning that has involved, and in one area, local JCP office staff have visited the pilot.
- 2.95 However, this involvement of the wider JCP staff was not common. More frequently, there was a view that community-based work presented an easy option. Often PEAs felt it was necessary to mount a defence of their community work with JCP colleagues, while also trying to raise the profile of the pilot and disseminate their increased understanding of parents' needs and the local community. This tension was also found within the English pilot, where community work was seen 'as a bit of a jolly' among JCP office staff. The community visit approach established in one of the pilot areas in Wales offers an effective means to overcome such stereotypes if resources can be found to support it.
- 2.96 Overall, there was a groundswell of support for the pilot: among parents, key agencies and other local services. Many positive factors were associated with JCP services in a community venue, which included continuity of support, accessibility, flexibility, and a welcoming, child-friendly environment. Being on the spot, so being able to respond with immediacy, was instrumental in gaining the trust of parents but also in resolving their concerns quickly, which, when related to entitlements and in-work support, could break down barriers to employment.
- 2.97 In addition, the PEAs offered sustained support that did not end when parents found work. One reported that she had regular contact with her customers, either via text or through seeing them at the ICC, and this meant she was able to help them navigate any issues. In some cases, she had also been able to support customers who had fallen out of work, discussing the issues with them and trying to help them make a quick return to the labour market. Another pointed out that she was able to help parents with the financial implications of moving off benefits and that it was important that parents did not feel they had been left alone as soon as they started work. In all pilot areas, it was clear that the PEAs developed closer personal relationships with their customers than they

might in the Jobcentre environment. This contributed to ensuring ongoing contact between Adviser and customer even after entering employment.

- 2.98 Such support appeared strongly linked to sustained employment outcomes, demonstrated by the JCP sustainability assessments reported earlier. This is an aspect of added value delivered by the pilot, and is a demonstration of the proactive approach taken by PEAs; it is also consistent with strategies embedded in the Work Programme, ie government strategy. It would be valuable to extend the practice of providing in-work support in any future roll-out.

Consideration of additionality and/or deadweight

- 2.99 The steering group asked the evaluation to provide some insights into the additionality and/or deadweight generated by the pilot. This was challenging for a number of reasons.

- 2.100 First, in at least two of the selected areas, this was not the first pilot to introduce employment support from JCP into the community. Linked to this was the availability of employability development opportunities and training through CF in all of the areas. This makes it hard to isolate and attribute the particular effect of the ESICC without applying more expensive evaluation strategies such as impact surveys using quasi-experimental designs.

- 2.101 Second, in the context of this initiative there is a vital question over what, if anything, can be considered to be deadweight. If the pilot delivers support to someone outside the target group for its services, should that be discounted? Experience showed that the pilot supported some parents (such as potential second earners whose spouses were in sustainable and highly skilled work) who did not have access to employment support through other means, although they were not in the target group. If these individuals spread the word to their friends, who were in the target group, about the support available and its value, it helped market the pilot and extend its reach. More broadly, helping this HTR group can make a significant contribution to alleviating child poverty. Around half of children living in poverty have one parent in work

and if 20 per cent of these families 'were to become dual-earner couple households, around 80,000 children could be lifted out of poverty' (Harker, 2006⁶).

2.102 The MI may have encouraged the recording of activity that would have happened in any case without the pilot operating in the ICCs. This includes referral and signposting to different local services and to different forms of provision. It is not safe to attribute all these outputs to the ESICC in isolation from the existing local initiatives. Similarly, on this basis, staff may have recorded outcomes that could be attributed to sources other than the pilot because the MI was not sufficiently sensitised to local circumstances. For example, in one area CF has offered employability training for some time and reported that 80 per cent of participants progress to further learning or work following participation (although the evaluation did not see evidence that confirmed this). If these outputs were verified and attributed to the pilot, this would be a misattribution of the pilot's effect.

2.103 Finally, in some respects the model itself embeds a displacement effect since parents who are invited to access services via the ICCs are often already in contact with mainstream JCP offices. In this respect, the model does not increase the volume of parents receiving support; rather, it delivers that support in an environment that is more palatable to them and through which they can engage with a range of services as well.

2.104 While it is important to highlight these challenges of additionality and attribution, the evaluation team remains convinced that sufficient benefits for local communities have arisen from the pilot's work.

⁶ Harker, L. (2006). *Delivering on child poverty: What would it take?* London: DWP

3 Factors and approaches that proved effective

3.1 This chapter identifies factors that were critical to the success of the pilot. It also explores the challenges that were faced during its delivery and the solutions devised within the localities.

Critical success factors

- 3.2 Fundamental to the success of the pilot has been recruiting PEAs with the right attributes for the role. The PEAs must be friendly, approachable and knowledgeable, and understand the importance of outreach, and working flexibly and creatively.
- 3.3 CFPs – and ICCs – played a critical role in helping the PEAs to quickly link with parents in the local communities (especially HTR parents) and other local services. The input here appeared to accelerate the pilot’s progress and allow it to move into delivery far more rapidly than might have happened otherwise. This appeared to be a unique feature of the Welsh pilot when compared to the English version.
- 3.4 The combined work of CFPs and ICCs on the one hand, and JCP on the other, appeared to be central to the pilot’s success. Community organisations had a full and detailed understanding of the community, established relationships with local public services and the trust of local people. JCP Advisers had access to the most valuable information for jobseekers, particularly around vacancies, training opportunities and benefit entitlements. Using community organisations to reach out through their networks to promote the work of JCP and using designated JCP Advisers to offer information in a more accessible way were critical to engaging the harder-to-help families.
- 3.5 Equally important is developing shared aims and a shared focus between the key agencies (CF, ICC and JCP staff) and then broadening this to include the other co-located services and local organisations including employers. In addition, work is needed to ensure there is a clear understanding of how services can add value to each other in order to avoid duplication of provision.

- 3.6 The set-up of CF and ICCs varies between areas and this brings different benefits and drawbacks for delivery. For example, either of these agencies could have stronger connections with JCP or other local services, and this required the PEAs to come up with localised solutions to navigate and broker relationships that would support the pilot and the parents it helped. There were no particular examples of practice that were not transferable *per se*, but the pilot's processes had all evolved according to the local context, and delivery had differing emphases between areas. The salient point here was that the design of the pilot's model was flexible enough to allow the necessary adaptations to fit into local contexts. Building this local flexibility into the design of similar programmes, or into any roll-out of the pilot, would be valuable.
- 3.7 The PEAs reported the benefits of flexible and informal approaches. It was acknowledged that the same focus on rules and regulations as would be seen in JCP offices does not work in community settings. This led PEAs to speak to parents mainly face-to-face, away from the computer, and to not stick to rigid appointment times. Only once claimants left appointments did PEAs move *'back into JCP mode'* to complete the paperwork. Informal communication methods such as texting were also effective.
- 3.8 Consequently, in all cases, the PEAs adopted a far more flexible way of working once in the community than they would have within JCP offices. This included non-standardised appointment times, group WFIs and making time for drop-in sessions. This allowed flexibility to parents and made the JCP more approachable in their perception. Through working in this way, PEAs felt they better understood parents' needs and could focus *'less on telling them what to do, and more on showing them how to do it'*.
- 3.9 The location of CF and its venues, and the ICCs, was felt to be vital to the success of the pilot. They are close to local schools and in the centre of the community. Many parents were reluctant to travel into the local town to attend the JCP and so were appreciative of access through these trusted venues.

- 3.10 The PEAs' involvement in activities such as family fun days and parenting groups helped to break down the formality associated with JCP and gave parents a more positive impression of the service. This made PEAs people parents could 'chat' with and come to trust.
- 3.11 The PEAs' regular contact with ICC and CF staff, as well as developing relationships with local parents, meant they came to understand their customers in a way not possible in the regular JCP environment. Several PEAs felt that this made their services more effective, in that they fully understood their customers' needs and could tailor their support more appropriately.

Practice lessons

- 3.12 A number of lessons emerged from the research, which could assist any roll-out of the ESICC pilot or future initiatives with similar aims, and/or assist JCP in leading community-based work.

For roll-out or delivery of similar projects:

- Allowing PEAs time and flexibility to develop good relationships with local organisations is effective. Strong partnerships, based on a sense of shared purpose, and a multi-agency effort were key to the success of the pilot particularly in engaging with the HTR families.
- Installing a target regime that allowed for focus and recognition, but was not high-stakes. This ensured targets were not the central focus of the pilot and allowed Advisers to develop their support for the HTR.
- Building support around already-existing community networks, such as those developed by CF.

For JCP more widely:

- Working more closely with communities allows JCP staff to gain a more realistic sense of the barriers these families face, meaning Advisers are able to better target their support.
- More flexible working practices – such as where interviews are carried out and how long they last – may help Advisers working with the most challenging customers.

- Engaging in less formal outreach activities can help to alter customers' often negative perceptions of JCP.

Challenges encountered and the solutions reached

- 3.13 Each of the pilot areas had unique facets in regard to the local community, the CFP and the way it worked, as well as the ICC and its operation. It was apparent that a one size fits all approach would be ineffective⁷ and that there needs to be communication and work among the key partners to ensure the fit of the ESICC and that it embedded in the local setting. However, some generalisable issues were encountered which are detailed here.
- 3.14 The extent to which the PEAs felt connected to JCP, as well as the other key agencies, was an issue. PEAs could feel isolated from other JCP staff but also misunderstood by them. It was reported that community-based work was seen as the easy option – although the practice suggests it is demanding. It was also the case that PEAs felt they were missing vital information and policy updates by not being part of meetings at the main offices. It was not always clear that these tensions had been fully overcome, although regular communications with other JCP Advisers, and resilience on the part of PEAs (to ignore any negative comments about their community work) helped considerably. PEAs in the English pilot reported similar feelings of isolation and again it was felt that regular meetings with JCP colleagues were important to overcoming these.
- 3.15 Some minor misunderstandings arose as a result of the cultural differences between the different key agencies. For example, in one area it was reported that CF workers did not realise the volume of paperwork the PEAs must complete to document their interaction with parents, and the time this entails. However, effective communications with local staff about the necessity and purpose of the administrative work overcame this.

⁷ This was reflected in the pilot's design which envisaged local flexibilities.

- 3.16 Some challenges encountered would take longer to resolve. For example, there is a drive to create more, and more affordable, childcare in the communities but this will take time to achieve. In one area, childcare to cover shift work was an unresolved challenge. Other provision gaps encountered with pre-entry basic skills training were noted in Chapter 2. While a small-scale and short-term solution had been found as a result of funding provided by CF, there was no guarantee that funding could be found to allow this provision to be rolled out further.
- 3.17 An unresolved challenge was that a small number of parents could not be persuaded of the benefits of the presence of JCP in the ICCs and had withdrawn from using the services within the ICCs. Staff thought that their withdrawal potentially related to fraudulent benefits claims although no objective evidence of this was gathered by the evaluation. It is unclear whether parents who disengaged from the ICC might return to it in time – perhaps with support from CF, which was seen as a much less threatening organisation than JCP. It is certainly critical that CF should attempt re-engagement of those affected. It is also important to note that this issue did not impact on views of the benefits of the pilot among the key staff locally. Any future projects of this type might consider approaches to prevent disengagement with ICCs for this reason, and to test these, as part of their implementation.
- 3.18 Overall, it did not seem that the difficulties encountered were as substantial as those seen in the English pilot. However, this may be as a result of the evaluation methodology in that it was retrospective (conducted at the end of the originally funded pilot period), rather than over the duration of the pilot.
- 3.19 There were some benefits suggested by the Welsh pilot which other regions could learn from. The Welsh pilot speeded into delivery in comparison to the English pilot, and this could be attributed to:
- the established CF network which ESICC could plug into – which significantly reduced the time needed to establish local relationships. In seeking to replicate this effect, other regions should seek to locate

similar pilot in areas which have the benefit of networks similar to those of CF.

- in Wales there appeared to be a greater and pre-existing awareness of the role of employment as a means to alleviate child poverty across the ICCs, CF and other support services in the local areas. This could be an artefact of the timing of the Welsh pilot (ie following the English pilot), although it seems to be more reflective of shared concern among CF and ICCs to empower families in their community and a realisation that through empowering families to take control, they develop employability skills and attributes that can support transitions to work.

3.20 The Welsh pilot also exhibited some innovative approaches which would be worth replicating in other regions, or more widely if the initiative is rolled out to more communities:

- The provision of group WFIs gave confidence to parents through sharing experiences within a peer group; it also meant that PEAs' time could be freed up to make greater allowance for drop-in support opportunities. It helped PEAs manage their time effectively as well as providing a further means to support parents who had anxieties and fears about working with statutory services such as JCP.
- The setting of achievable targets meant there was a clear indication of the scale of work anticipated for the PEAs and the types of outcome that should be achieved. This appeared beneficial and would be a useful feature to build into other implementations.
- The main JCP culture is office-based, and community work can be seen as the easy option by some JCP staff. In the Welsh pilot, in one area, office-based JCP staff were enabled to conduct 'research visits' to the ESICC, which helped to break down the stereotypes of community work. This meant that office-based staff became more receptive to messages about the needs of disadvantaged families in the communities, which may have increased the benefits to JCP of involvement in the pilot in terms of staff capacity and knowledge.

4 Conclusions

4.1 In this final chapter, the pilot is reviewed in terms of the objectives set for the evaluation and some conclusions are drawn.

Assessment against the evaluation objectives

Did the pilot achieve its targets?

- 4.2 While the evaluation did not have access to the year-end MI data, it reviewed part-year data during the desk research phase and also collected local MI as part of the research visits. These sources suggested that the pilot had achieved the outputs set for it.
- 4.3 As might be expected, engagement and case-loading targets proved unproblematic and were exceeded to a considerable degree. BOCs also proved to be in high demand and the number delivered far exceeded what was probably quite a low target output. Similarly, the number of referrals recorded far exceeded the target although some of these referrals may have happened whether or not the pilot was operational.
- 4.4 The part-year data suggested that the targets that were not being achieved were those that related to training and accreditation. However, the MI showed that three of the four areas were not recording these data; also the local MI data for the one area which was recording these outcomes showed some variance with the part-year national data. There are, then, reasons to be cautious about whether training and accreditation targets were reached or otherwise.
- 4.5 Entry to work was stronger and this is perhaps surprising since there is an interplay here with external factors outside the control of the pilot, in that recruitment is in the gift of employers rather than pilot staff. Some of these jobs comprised opportunities resulting from the FJF policy which in some cases may have been short-term. However, despite this potential drawback, these jobs are likely to have helped parents demonstrate skills and employability attributes, and gain a recent reference that could assist their progression into further work. The benefits of work to the relief of child poverty are widely acknowledged; consequently, the pilot can be deemed successful in making a contribution to this agenda.

- 4.6 Beyond the numeric targets, there was qualitative evidence of the broader objectives having been met (see Chapter 2). On the ground, strong relationships had been established between JCP, ICC and CF staff which underpinned effective joint working to the benefit of the local community and which contribute to the Tackling Poverty Action Plan (2012). These relationships strengthened those already established in some instances at a strategic level or, in some instances, were more cooperative than those seen at the strategic level.
- 4.7 Evidence from the parent focus groups highlighted the benefits of the support networks that were established by the CF and ICC approaches, and it was apparent that adding JCP support into this mix was appreciated. The parents also noted that they had taken up a range of support and services that they might not have done otherwise, helping them to overcome barriers and move closer to work.
- 4.8 There was limited evidence about the degree to which the pilot had influenced the number of local applicants to local vacancies, although this could be inferred since parents preferred to work locally. The evaluation did not uncover any findings in relation to public funding reaching local employers through ReAct funding or job subsidies.

Did those who engaged with Personal Employment Advisers (PEAs) via the ICCs move into training or employment and, if so, what factors were instrumental?

- 4.9 The MI required the PEAs to identify the number of case-loaded parents who started work or training. Consequently, it is possible for the evaluation to confirm that this happened.⁸ However, it is also important to note that counter-factual evidence was not available, nor was baseline evidence on the progression rates prior to the introduction of the pilot. Therefore, some caution is necessary in attributing outcomes in total to the pilot.
- 4.10 It was impossible to discern if any one factor was instrumental to the achievement of these outcomes; rather, it was the combination of

⁸ A point has already been made about the weakness of the MI in capturing information about training and accreditation outputs.

service elements that appeared effective. It was apparent that parents appreciated working with someone who got to know their story and whose advice could build up over time and adapt to particular circumstances that arose.

- 4.11 This tailoring and personalisation of support was reflected within the Adviser discussions, which revealed some creative and flexible thinking to help parents hone their work goals and move towards employment.
- 4.12 What was also critical was good working knowledge of the other integrated services, CF and other training and support provision, which led to effective and appropriate referrals that helped to build the trust of parents and to motivate them towards their goals.
- 4.13 Helping parents to develop a sense of control over their own destiny, as well as confidence in their abilities, appeared to be instrumental and a critical element of the offer for all the services involved. However, this sense of confidence and autonomy would evolve from the range of activities they were involved in (which the PEAs could be instrumental in referring them to) rather than a single facet of the pilot.

Did the pilot succeed in reaching its target group of parents, ie those furthest from the labour market?

- 4.14 There was evidence that the pilot did reach out and engage HTR parents, although the extent of this varied between the different areas. CF was instrumental in this regard: where CF had made in-roads with HTR families, it could facilitate the pilot's access to these families. Where CF had not managed to engage HTR families, the PEAs struggled to do so. There was also a suggestion that multi-agency working is the only way to reach out to these families, which confirms the value of the pilot's approach and is consistent with messages in the Child Poverty Strategy (2011) and the Tackling Poverty Action Plan (2012).
- 4.15 The differing contexts had some influence on this point, since the characteristics of HTR families varied between the areas. In one, there were geographic divisions in the community which determined which CF and other venues they used. In another, the divisions were more

economic than geographic; affluent parents could lead demand and potentially overwhelm (in volume) any HTR parents engaged by the pilot centres. PEAs noted that their contact with staff and organisations working closely with the local community had been vital in helping them to identify the HTR families.

- 4.16 PEAs, and the other key agencies, were highly aware of the particular value of engaging this group. Where HTR parents were engaged, and where employment or training outcomes were achieved, these were judged to be particular successes. *'It's made a huge difference... we've had one lady who took four weeks after seven years on benefits to get into paid employment.'*

Were there any additional impacts, beyond the existing work of JCP, in the pilot areas?

- 4.17 There were indications that the pilot helped employment services to reach out to individuals who were not in receipt of them because they were not entitled to support. Since close to half of children living in poverty are in a household with one working parent, this has potential to make a significant impact on child poverty in Wales. It was also evident that parents could start to build their engagement with employment services ahead of it becoming mandatory.
- 4.18 Being located in the community meant that JCP staff gained increased understanding of the needs of local people and could adapt their offer to suit these needs. Feeding this knowledge back into JCP main offices might be problematic, however, as it was reported that not all JCP staff believe that community-based work is valuable, and rather see it as an easy option. This issue was also raised in the English pilot. An innovative approach adopted by one of the Welsh pilot centres saw Jobcentre-based Advisers encouraged to visit the community-based PEA to understand more about her work and to share the insights she had on engaging HTR customers. Ideally, this practice would be spread, but there may be resourcing constraints. JCP may need to consider the best way of achieving a culture change among its staff – whether this is through training staff in the potential contribution of community initiatives

to the aims of the Child Poverty Act, and/or whether there needs to be stronger regional and local leadership of the agenda. There is increasing flexibility allowing JCP to locate its services in alternative venues, and consequently it is important that it considers how to address this culture clash in order to support this agenda.

- 4.19 The PEAs threw themselves into a range of local activities, and these went beyond normal service levels. They helped to:
- reinvigorate existing employment support activities such as job clubs
 - find ways to fill gaps in local provision
 - identify creative approaches to addressing some key issues such as presentation.

This meant that an employment angle could be brought to activities that previously had none, and the role of JCP as well as the other key agencies was extended.

- 4.20 A final point is about the potential impact of the ESICC pilot on local families. It was not uncommon for families to be third or fourth generation unemployed. CF has recognised a need to raise the aspirations of children to break the cycle of disadvantage. The pilot has helped the parents, and this in turn helps the children: *'Even though the pilot is linked to the parents, it's about moving down to the child so that the child thinks, "Well I want to go to work, I want to have a job"'* [CF project officer].

- 4.21 Overall the pilot had been welcomed by the key agencies involved and by many of the parents who were eligible for support. There was a groundswell of support for the delivery of employment support in community-based settings, and significant demand had developed.

- 4.22 There was evidence that advice on welfare and in-work benefits was valued by parents and other Advisers (such as Citizens Advice Bureau). Bringing this specialist employment support into the ICC meant that the service became more holistic.

- 4.23 There was significant demand that employment services continue to be delivered in the pilot areas, beyond the initial trial phase. There also

appeared to be some justification to encourage this type of approach in more areas since it made employment services more accessible and more welcoming, and helped parents overcome barriers, which meant they moved closer to employment or into work. Positive effects on Child Poverty can be inferred on the basis of the impacts identified and their consistency with those identified in the English pilot (which was subject to a larger multi-method evaluation).

- 4.24 PEAs appreciated the existence of targets as a concrete measure of the pilot's successes. Some staff felt that targets had been quite conservative, although others appreciated the fact that fairly low targets had allowed PEAs to concentrate on the HTR customers, who might be overlooked in a high-stakes target regime.

What could be improved in future?

- 4.25 If the approach is rolled out more widely, a few points should be considered to smooth its path and ensure impact:
- Early, and ongoing, communications and development work should involve all key agencies to avoid the sense that the activity is imposed, rather than developed with their support. Co-location and joint working are key principles of the Child Poverty Strategy and the Tackling Poverty Action Plan; ensuring all partners feel actively involved in strategy and delivery will ensure the aims of collaboration are met in respect of the relief of child poverty.
 - In order to ensure a tailored approach, designing local flexibilities into initiatives such as this is critical. The pilot was effective in this regard, and local flexibility was a key contributor to the effective joint working arrangements documented by the research.
 - Target setting should involve all the key agencies to ensure that the data to be captured is seen as relevant and valuable. More generally, setting targets that are achievable (avoiding the creation of a 'high stakes' targets environment) provides a steer about expectations for the number of parents to be supported and the outcomes achieved

with them, but it also allows for intensive work with parents who have multiple barriers.

- It would also be useful to encourage PEAs to provide in-work support, as they did in the pilot, which can help parents sustain their employment outcomes. PEAs were highly proactive in this regard and the support was able to flex to the needs of parents, ranging from contact by text message to personal support. Replicating this tailoring of in-work support in similar programmes would be valuable.
- The quality and commitment of PEAs has been instrumental to the success of the pilot. PEAs who were selected due to their enthusiasm for the pilot, including the outreach and community work that is required, existing community connections and their good knowledge of the workings of JCP, appeared to have had greatest success. It would be beneficial to include these attributes in selection criteria when recruiting to similar roles.
- Challenges were encountered with access to marketing materials, IT facilities and private space in which to conduct interviews within the ICC or CF – these will need to be more clearly addressed in any extension of the work. Selecting ICCs which are able to accommodate an additional service, and ICCs with existing high footfall, is important. Providing clear guidance about the procurement processes for resources would also be beneficial.
- PEAs working in the community benefit from regular contact with JCP, both formally and informally. However, community-based work can be perceived as an easy option in the mainstream culture of JCP. Encouraging office-based JCP Advisers to visit community sites, which happened in one area, could strengthen JCP's ties with community and better illustrate the value of this kind of pilot to all JCP staff. It may also increase the learning benefits to JCP from involvement in community-based projects. However, the resourcing issues associated with visits may be prohibitive in the current economic climate. It may therefore be valuable to find other means to

address this 'culture clash', for example through training and leadership among senior staff.

- All PEAs had plenty of informal contact with staff at ICCs and CF, but PEAs who were also formally involved at the community level – sitting on ICC or CF boards, for example – reported particular benefits in terms of sharing information or establishing partnerships to tackle local issues. This kind of regular formal contact between PEAs and management at ICCs or CF could help resolve any cultural issues and create a sense of shared purpose and should be encouraged where this approach is rolled out more widely.
- In some areas, a shortfall was reported on training and accreditation targets. However, this could be related to gaps in suitable provision. It would therefore be valuable for PEAs, CFs and ICCs to explore in more detail the particular training needs of the hardest-to-help in local communities, and the availability of relevant provision and funding streams that could fill gaps where identified. Helping parents move closer to employment, through allowing them to develop basic skills as well as employability attributes, is critical to reducing child poverty and is a strategy identified within the Tackling Poverty Action Plan (2012).

Appendix: Research Instruments

1. This appendix contains the research instruments (topic guides) used to collect data as part of the national stakeholder interviews, and the case study research (in person and by telephone) with local staff, stakeholders and parents in the local areas.
2. The topic guides provided a framework of key questions and example probes. Unlike a script, topic guides were used flexibly and not in entirety with any respondent; moreover, questions were tailored to reflect each respondent's status within the pilot and the Welsh context.
3. The same introduction was used with each respondent. This stated: 'This review of the employment services in the integrated children's centre project has been commissioned by the Welsh Government, and is being carried out by the Institute for Employment Studies, an independent research organisation. As part of the review we are conducting desktop research (analysis of documents and management information), and discussing pilot aims and outcomes with national and local stakeholders including staff from Communities First, Jobcentre Plus and Integrated Children's Centres. We will also be seeking the views of parents who have worked with JCP Advisers and those who have not.'
4. All respondents were assured of confidentiality and were advised that individuals, organisations or clients would not be named in the research. Respondents were also offered an opportunity to ask any questions they had before their interview commenced.

National Stakeholder Interviews

Background

- Could you briefly describe your job role? How long have you worked in this role?
- What have been your responsibilities in relation to the ICC pilot? For example:
 - Have you been involved with the pilot since the beginning?
 - Has your role changed or developed over the course of the pilot? How?
 - What is your relationship to the governance of the project – ie membership of steering group? Who is on the steering group?
 - How much of your time does working on the pilot take up? On what? Has this changed over the course of the pilot?
 - Who do you communicate with/what communications do you receive about the pilot on a regular basis?
 - How does this sit alongside your other responsibilities at CF?
- Is there any background information you could tell us relating to CFPs or ICCs which you feel would be helpful context for the evaluation (eg structure or typical work/projects and relation of ICC/CFP pilot to these)?
- Is there any background information which you feel it would be useful for us to know in relation to drivers behind the pilot and its design to fit Welsh policy?
 - How were the four pilot areas selected? Are there any key differences between the areas (eg rural/urban, ICC user footfall, labour market characteristics, levels of disadvantage)?
 - How were the JCP Advisers and the CF core workers selected for the role? Does this vary across the pilots?
 - How do Welsh ICCs differ from ICCs involved in the UK government pilots?

- What are the key similarities/differences between the Welsh and English pilots?
- In what ways was the pilot designed to be supported by CFPs?
 - How was it imagined the pilot would link in with and benefit from existing CF activity? Any examples?
 - What new activities would be developed to support the pilot? Any examples?
 - What value was this expected to add?
 - Do you have any information with respect to how well you think this has worked in reality?
- Historically, what have been the working relationships between CFPs, ICCs and JCP before the pilot? How has this varied by area?
- Are there any other key partners or stakeholders that you are aware of who have been involved in this pilot? Probe role of Families First.
 - In what capacity?
 - How did these organisations become involved? Do you know how the relationships developed over the course of the pilot?
 - Did the partnerships exist prior to the introduction of the pilot or are they new relationships?
 - What value have they added/was it anticipated these partners would add?
- In your opinion how well have these partnerships worked between CF, JCP and the ICCs? What has worked particularly well? Have there been any notable challenges?
- Do you know how these relationships have developed as a result of the pilot? Have there been any differences by pilot area? Why do you think this is?

Pilot Delivery

- How do the channels of communication work between yourself/national CF officials, local CFP, ICC and JCP? In your opinion, how effective have these been? Have there been any challenges? How were these resolved?
- How much contact do you personally have with the individual pilots? How about other officials from CF? What is the nature of this contact (formal meetings/catch-up/emails)? Has this functioned as you would like?
- How involved do you feel you have been able to be with this pilot? How much influence have you been able to have? Is this as much as you would have liked? Explore why/why not.
- Have you had any influence regarding the activities the Adviser undertakes and how they divide their time? In what ways?
- On what aspects have the local pilots required the most support and advice? Was this to be expected?
- As far as you are aware, have there been any ongoing practical or logistical difficulties associated with the pilot delivery?
- Have there been any key milestones with respect to pilot delivery? Can you tell me about these?
- Has there been any communication between the four pilots over the course of the project to share experiences? How have these communications been managed and what impact have they had?

Project Targets

- Can you tell me how the pilot outcome targets were agreed upon? How does the data captured by pilot areas relate to the targets set nationally? Why?
 - Have these targets changed at all over the course of the pilot? How?
 - How is data captured in relation to these targets? (New MI systems, JCP, LMS; does the pilot have any way to capture soft outcomes, or distance travelled?)

- How have outcomes been reported?
- What information have you received relating to pilot progress? How often do you receive this? In what form? (quarterly reports, MI, other?)
- Have there been any particular challenges associated with the data-capture/reporting process? How have these been resolved?
- In your opinion how realistic are these targets?
- To what extent do you think these targets have been achieved? Any evidence? (Have they already done any analysis of MI/quarterly reports? What form did this take?)
- Are there any differences in pilot performance between areas? Can you tell me about these?
- Do you know, or was it intended, that these targets influence the type of activities undertaken in the pilot?
- How do you think these targets have impacted what the pilot has achieved?
- Have there been any wider impacts that you are aware of beyond the work of JCP in the pilot areas?

Pilot Ending

- When does this pilot officially come to an end? Can you talk me through this process? What is planned?
- Has anything been done to ensure the sustainability of some of the pilot provision or to embed key learning from the pilot after the funding ends?
- Do you think any of the partnership working arrangements will continue after the end of the pilot? What elements can be sustained, post pilot funding?
- Are there any plans to continue the pilot in any form?
- In your opinion, do you think this pilot offered good value for money? If so/not, why? (Probe how they are defining 'value for money' and what is important in pilot 'success'.)

- Based on your current understanding of resource levels, what do you envisage the employment and support on offer in the ICC will look like after the pilot?
- What do you think the pilot has achieved in terms of new ways of working and collaborative working?
- Have there been any specific lessons for CF that have emerged from this pilot? What would you do differently if starting again?
- What do you think are the critical factors for success?
- Any other comments?

Are there any particular issues you think we should explore in the case study research?

Thank You

ICC Manager

Background

- How long have you worked (a) in this role? (b) in this ICC?
- Could you briefly talk me through your role and key responsibilities?
- Can you tell me about any previous experiences of working with JCP services (in this ICC/elsewhere) – views on these?
- How many staff are employed by this ICC?
- Have there been any major changes to this ICC in the last few years?
- Can you talk me through the general profiles of the parents that use this centre? Men/women, age, ethnicity, what languages do they speak, what levels of qualifications do they hold?

Pilot Delivery

- How was your ICC selected to be involved in this pilot? How did you feel about this?
- Is this ICC located in one building or spread across several sites? Where is the Adviser based? How do they work between locations?
- Talk me through what having this pilot in your ICC meant for your own job role and activities.
 - What has been your involvement in the pilot?
 - How much of your time does it take up?
 - Have you been involved to the extent you would have hoped? Why/why not?
 - Has this changed over the course of the pilot?
- What has having this pilot in your ICC meant for other permanent children's centre staff? How do you think ICC and CF staff have responded to the pilot at the ICC? In terms of general welcome, help and support, onward referrals, understanding of and receptiveness to Adviser role and pilot aims?

- As far as you are aware, what activities does the JCP Adviser undertake and how does he/she divide their time between these? Has this changed over the course of the pilot?
- How much influence have you had in terms of how the Adviser divides their time?
 - Is this as much as you would have liked?
 - Is there anything you would like them to do more/less of?
- In your opinion, how successful has the PEA been in striking a balance between outreach/engagement activities and more traditional work-focused activities? Has this changed over time?
- How successful do you think the PA has been in integrating him/herself into the ICC's activities and team of staff? Probe: What decisions were taken regarding the branding of the JCP Adviser services?
- In what ways does the ICC support the pilot?
 - In what ways has the pilot been able to link in with and benefit from existing ICC activity? Any examples/evidence?
 - Have any new activities been developed to support the pilot? What has been the impact of this? Any examples/evidence?
 - How does the pilot link to other provision in the ICC?
- Do you feel you have been provided with enough information and guidance to support the pilot well? If not, what could have been improved?
- How do the channels of communication work between yourself/CFP, ICC and JCP? In your opinion, how effective have these been?
- How much contact do you personally have with the Adviser? What is the nature of this (formal meetings/catch-up/emails)? Has this functioned as you would like?
- Have there been any ongoing practical or logistical difficulties associated with the pilot delivery?

- Have there been any key milestones with respect to pilot delivery? Can you tell me about these?

Project Targets

- Thinking about the outcome targets associated with this pilot...
 - Do you know how these targets were agreed?
 - Have these targets changed at all over the course of the pilot? How?
 - In your opinion how realistic are these targets?
 - To what extent have these targets been achieved? Can you provide me with any additional data or evidence (not contained in pilot MI)?
 - What factors have been most helpful or instrumental in achieving these targets?
 - How do you think these targets influenced the activities undertaken?

Outreach and Engagement

- How has the pilot been promoted to ICC users?
- How is it promoted outside the ICC to parents in the wider community? Get examples.
- How successful do you think this promotion has been in raising awareness of the service? Do you feel the pilot has achieved a wide level of awareness? What evidence is there for this? Probe any data sources and evaluation access, eg on new users, referrals etc.
- Is there any particular method of engaging parents/ promoting the pilot that has been particularly successful? or unsuccessful? Why do you think this is?
- Have you found the engaging parents relatively straightforward or challenging? Why is this?
- Have there been any particular groups of parents using the service more than others (eg lone parents, potential second earners, by age of child)?
- Do you think the pilot is engaging with more disadvantaged groups in the local area (BME etc)? What evidence do you have for this?

- To what extent do you think the ICC has been able to add value to the pilot in terms of helping to engage the hardest to reach? Any examples or evidence?
- How do you ensure the pilot works with the key target groups and those most in need of support? (ie avoid dead weight. Any evidence of creaming?)
- Do you have a feel for why some parents may not want to engage with the pilot?

Partnerships

- Thinking about working relationships between CFP, ICC and JCP, how have they changed or developed as a result of the pilot?
- In your opinion how well have these partnerships worked between CF, JCP and the ICC? What has worked particularly well? Have there been any notable challenges? How did you try to resolve these?
- In your opinion, what are the benefits and drawbacks of the ICC being in a CF area?
- Would you say there have been difficulties in the pilot, arising from what you might call the 'cultural' differences between Jobcentre Plus and ICCs and CFP – for example, the Jobcentre Plus priority on employment outcomes versus the ICCs priority on what's best for the family?
 - What have the nature and extent of these problems been?
 - Would you say these issues have made it difficult to do your job?
 - What was done to try to resolve them?
- Are there any other key partners or stakeholders you have been working with during this pilot?
 - In what capacity?
 - How did these organisations become involved? How has your relationship developed over the course of the pilot?

- Did the partnerships exist prior to the introduction of the pilot or are they new relationships?
- What value have they added?
- In what ways do you think parents are benefiting from the collaborative working of JCP/ICC/CF and any other partners? In what ways do you think the overall pilot is benefiting? Get specific examples whenever possible.
- Have you been in contact with the other three pilots over the course of the project to share experiences? How have these communications been managed and what impact have they had?
- The pilot officially comes to an end in October. Has anything been done to ensure the sustainability of some of the pilot provision or to embed key learning from the pilot after the funding ends?
- Do you think any of the partnership working arrangements will continue after the end of the pilot? What elements can be sustained, post pilot funding?

Outcomes and Lessons Learnt

- Overall, how have you found hosting the pilot in your ICC? What has been easier/harder than you expected?
- In your opinion, what have been the key successes of the pilot? What have been the biggest challenges?
- Have you had feedback from parents about the pilot? What has this been?
- How has the pilot performed in relation to the key targets? Make sure we have all the available evidence.
- What difference do you think this pilot has made to parents?
 - How successful has it been in encouraging parents to think about work as a medium- or long-term option? Do you have any examples or evidence of this? (Soft outcomes – what is typical distance travelled over the course of the pilot?)
 - What is the relative divide between hard and soft outcomes achieved?

- Have there been any wider impacts that you are aware of beyond the work of JCP in the pilot areas?
- What do you think the pilot has achieved in terms of new ways of working and collaborative working?
- Do you think staff (from all organisations) working at the ICC or as part of the pilot have improved understanding of the role of work in alleviating child poverty – as a result of this pilot?
- Are there any factors outside your control which you feel have negatively impacted what the pilot has been able to achieve? What were these and what impact do you think they had? Probe if not already covered:
 - difficulties or delays in the set-up period for the pilot
 - practical concerns such as lack of space or privacy to meet with parents
 - lack of footfall to ICC
 - IT/data security issues
 - staff changes or absence of staff in key roles
 - local labour market characteristics
 - gaps in the local support or services available to parents, eg childcare, ESOL, other training or wrap-around provision
- Based on your current understanding of resource levels, what do you envisage the employment and support on offer in the ICC will look like after the pilot?
- Has the pilot affected your opinions on the role of outreach links with Jobcentre Plus?
- Have you learnt any valuable lessons? What would you do differently if starting again?
- What do you think are the critical factors for success?
- Any other comments?

Parent Employment Adviser

Background

- How long have you been working as a Jobcentre Plus Adviser? What were you doing before this? Have you been involved in this pilot from the beginning?
- Have you done any work in or with children's centres before? When and in what capacity? Have you done any other outreach work before?
- How did you become involved in this pilot? Did you volunteer for this role or were you selected? How?
- Was the level of Jobcentre Plus/employment support available in the ICC before the pilot?
- What working relationships existed between Jobcentre Plus, ICCs and CFP before the pilot?

Pilot Delivery – Adviser Activities

- Can you briefly describe the different activities you undertake in your role as Jobcentre Plus Adviser, as part of this pilot? Listen for details of the following and get examples of specific activities undertaken:
 - educating ICC and CFP staff about the WAG employment policy and how it fits with the child poverty agenda
 - outreach and engagement activities within the ICC, community facilities and in the wider community
 - standard JCP Adviser functions for JCP clients (eg WFIs, making appointments and caseload activity) and offering support to potential second earners
 - running seminars and employer events
 - making relevant referrals
 - ad hoc support and bespoke services – get examples of these
- How is your time divided between these activities? Has this changed over the course of the pilot?

- What factors influence how you divide your time? Has this changed over the course of the pilot? Probe:
 - needs of parents
 - pressures from JCP
 - pressures from ICC or CFP staff
 - targets
 - available facilities
 - own initiative
- In your opinion, is this the most effective use of your time? If not, how do you think your time could be better organised and what would help you to do this?
- How many hours a week do you work? Do you find that you have had any regular spare capacity, or conversely, regular 'overload'? Has this changed over the course of the pilot?
- Have there been any key milestones in pilot delivery? What were these?
- Where do you normally meet with parents? At the ICC? Community venues?
- Have there been any ongoing practical or logistical difficulties associated with the pilot delivery?
- Which of your services are most in demand (IAG about employment or training, job search, WFIs, benefits advice and better off calculations, other)?
 - Has this changed over the course of the pilot?
 - What is the relative divide between the level of work-related support and more general wrap-around support parents require?

Outcome Targets

- Thinking about the outcome targets associated with this pilot...
 - Do you know how these targets were agreed?

- Have these targets changed at all over the course of the pilot? How?
- In your opinion how realistic are these targets?
- How do you capture evidence and report outcomes? Are there standard procedures? Have you developed any of your own data capture/reporting techniques? Collect evidence.
- Have there been any particular challenges associated with the data capture/reporting process? How have these been resolved?
- To what extent have you achieved these targets? Can you provide me with any additional data or evidence (not contained in pilot MI)?
- What factors have been most helpful or influential in achieving these targets?
- How have these targets influenced your role and the activities you undertake?
- How do you think these targets have influenced what the pilot has been able to achieve?

Partnership Working

- Can you briefly describe what the responsibilities (as you understand them) are of the ICC and CF staff in relation to this pilot?
 - What is each one delivering/bringing to the pilot?
- Can you describe how you work with ICC and CF staff on a day to day basis?
 - What are the job roles of the staff you work the most with?
 - What has been the role of the CF core worker?
 - How have these relationships developed over the course of the pilot?
- How is communication managed between you? In your view how well do these arrangements work?
- How do you think ICC and CF staff have responded to your services at the ICC? In terms of general welcome, help and support, onward referrals,

understanding of and receptiveness to your role and what you're trying to achieve?

- How important has this input from these partnerships been in helping you in your role? Are there any good examples or evidence of this?
- In your opinion how well have these partnerships worked? What has worked particularly well? Have there been any notable challenges? How did you try to resolve these?
- Would you say there have been difficulties in the pilot, arising from what you might call the 'cultural' differences between Jobcentre Plus and ICCs and CFP – for example, the Jobcentre Plus priority on employment outcomes versus the ICCs' priority on what's best for the family?
 - What have the nature and extent of these problems been?
 - Would you say these issues have made it difficult to do your job?
 - What was done to try to resolve them?
- Are there any other key partners or stakeholders you have been working with during this pilot?
 - In what capacity?
 - How did these organisations become involved?
 - Did the partnerships exist prior to the introduction of the pilot or are they new relationships?
 - What value have they added?
- In what ways do you think parents are benefiting from the collaborative working of JCP/ICC/CF and any other partners? In what ways do you think the overall pilot is benefiting? Get specific examples whenever possible.
- Have you been in contact with the other three pilots over the course of the project to share experiences? How have these communications been managed and what impact have they had?

- How much contact have you had with your colleagues in Jobcentre Plus over the course of the pilot? Are they receptive to the aims of the pilot? Have they offered help and support?
- On reflection, is there anyone in particular, or any organisation you feel has offered you the most support in your role as Jobcentre Plus Adviser during this pilot?

Marketing and Outreach

a) Within the ICC

1. How has this pilot been marketed and promoted within the ICC? Get copies or leaflets, details of events, face-to-face promotion etc.
 - What has been the role played by yourself/ICC/CFP? How important have each of these partners been?
 - Has this varied over the course of the pilot?
2. In your opinion which marketing/outreach methods have been most and least effective? What is the evidence for this?
3. Do you feel the pilot has achieved a wide level of awareness among parents using the children's centre? How long did this take? What evidence is there of this?
4. What have you found to be the most successful route of establishing initial contact with parents already using the ICC? (Own proactive engagement, onward referrals from ICC/CF staff, self referrals via word-of-mouth, other?)

b) Within the wider community

Repeat 1-4 above with reference to engagement of parents in the wider community.

Engagement

- Where do most of your referrals come from (JCP/ICC/CFP/self referrals/other partners)?

- Have you experienced any challenges in terms of receiving referrals?
How were these resolved?
- Does the referral route affect how easy it is to subsequently engage the parent in work-focused activity?
- In what ways do you, in your role as Jobcentre Plus Adviser, proactively engage parents? How have parents responded to your attempts to engage them?
- Have you found that different methods of engagement work better for some groups of parents than for others? Can you tell me about this?
- Have you found the job of engaging parents relatively straightforward or challenging? Why is this?
- What proportion of parents with whom you make contact sign up to the pilot?
 - What is the relative reach of the service into each of the target groups? Are there any client groups signing up and using your services more than others?
 - Have any of the target groups been particularly difficult to engage? How did you try to resolve this?
 - Have you noticed any trends in levels of engagement over time?
- How do you ensure you work with the key target groups and those most in need of your support (ie avoid dead weight. Any evidence of creaming?) particularly if your caseload is large?

Adviser Experiences

- Overall how have you found working in a different environment? What has been easier/harder than you expected?
- Do you feel that you became fully integrated into the ICC/CFP staff team? If not: why is this? If yes: How long did this take? What helped this process?
 - Probe: What decisions were taken regarding the branding of the JCP Adviser services?

- Have you experienced any particular challenges over the course of the pilot? What were they and what effect have they had on what you have been able to achieve? Were these issues resolved?
- Do you feel you have been provided with enough information and guidance to do your job well? If not, what could have been improved?
- What skills and attributes do you think an Adviser needs to do their job well?
- The pilot officially comes to an end in xxxx. What advice have you been given about the level of continued engagement with customers? How will support wind down?
- Do you think any of the partnership working arrangements will continue after the end of the pilot? What elements can be sustained, post pilot funding?

Outcomes and Lessons Learnt

- In your opinion, what have been the key successes of the pilot? What have been the biggest challenges?
- How has the pilot performed in relation to the key targets? Make sure we have all the available evidence.
- What difference do you think this pilot has made to parents?
 - Have there been any additional outcomes, not covered by these targets? (Soft outcomes – what is typical distance travelled over the course of the pilot?)
 - What is the relative divide between hard and soft outcomes achieved?
- Have there been any wider impacts that you are aware of beyond the work of JCP in the pilot areas?
- Do you think staff (from all organisations) working at the ICC or as part of the pilot have improved understanding of the role of work in alleviating child poverty – as a result of this pilot?

- Are there any factors outside your control which you feel have negatively impacted what the pilot has been able to achieve? What were these and what impact do you think they had? Probe if not already covered:
 - difficulties or delays in the set-up period for the pilot
 - practical concerns such as lack of space or privacy to meet with parents
 - lack of footfall to ICC
 - IT/data security issues
 - staff changes or absence of staff in key roles
 - local labour market characteristics
 - gaps in the local support or services available to parents, eg childcare, ESOL, other training or wrap-around provision
- Have you learnt any valuable lessons? What would you do differently if starting again?
- What do you think are the critical factors for success?
- Any other comments?

Communities First Staff

Background

- Could you tell me a little bit about the CFP in this local area?
- Could you briefly describe your job role within CF? How long have you worked in this role?
- How did you become involved in the pilot? *Probe* for invitation to partner or other arrangements.
- What are your responsibilities in relation to the ICC pilot?
 - Have you been involved with the pilot since the beginning?
 - Did you volunteer/apply for this role, or was it an additional part of your day job?
 - How much of your time does it take up?
 - Has your role changed or developed over the course of the pilot?
 - Who do you communicate with about the pilot on a regular basis?

Pilot Delivery

- In what ways does the CFP support the pilot?
 - In what ways has the pilot been able to link in with and benefit from existing CF activity? *Any examples/evidence?*
 - What new activities have been developed to support the pilot? What has been the impact of this? *Any examples/evidence?*
 - How does the pilot link to other provision in the area? How does CFP help support these links?
- How involved do you feel you have been able to be with this pilot? Is this as much as you would have liked? *Explore why/why not.*
- Do you feel you have been provided with enough information and guidance to support the pilot well? If not, what could have been improved?
- Have you had any influence regarding the activities the Adviser undertakes and how they divide their time? In what ways?

- How do the channels of communication work between yourself/CFP, ICC and JCP? In your opinion, how effective have these been?
- How much contact do you personally have with the Adviser? What is the nature of this (formal meetings/catch-up/emails)? Has this functioned as you would like?
- Have there been any ongoing practical or logistical difficulties associated with the pilot delivery?
- Have there been any key milestones with respect to pilot delivery? Can you tell me about these?
- In your opinion, how successful has the PA been in striking a balance between outreach/engagement activities and more traditional work-focused activities? What constraints do they face? Has this changed over time?
- How successful do you think the PA has been in integrating him/herself into the centre's activities and team of staff? *Probe:* What decisions were taken regarding the branding of the JCP Adviser services?
- How do you think CF has responded to the pilot? In terms of general welcome, help and support, onward referrals, understanding of and receptiveness to Adviser role and pilot aims?

Project Targets

- Are you familiar with the outcome targets associated with this pilot?
 - Do you know how these targets were agreed?
 - Have these targets changed at all over the course of the pilot? How?
 - In your opinion how realistic are these targets?
 - To what extent have these targets been achieved? Can you provide me with any additional data or evidence (not contained in pilot MI)?
 - What factors have been most helpful or instrumental in achieving these targets?
 - How do you think these targets influenced the activities undertaken?

- How do you think these targets have influenced what the pilot has achieved?

Outreach and Engagement

- How has CF been involved in the promotion of the pilot to ICC users and parents in the wider community? How have you personally been involved? *Get examples.*
- To what extent do you think the CFP has been able to add value to the pilot in terms of helping to engage the hardest to reach? *Any examples or evidence?*
- How successful do you think this promotion has been in raising awareness of the service? Do you feel the pilot has achieved a wide level of awareness? What evidence is there for this?
- Is there any particular method of engaging parents/ promoting the pilot that has been particularly successful? or unsuccessful? Why do you think this is? Are there particular methods that are effective in reaching out to hard-to-reach parents?
- Have you found the engaging parents relatively straightforward or challenging? Why is this?
- Have there been any particular groups of parents using the service more than others (eg lone parents, potential second earners, by age of child)? Do you have any evidence for this?
- Do you think the pilot is engaging with more disadvantaged groups in the local area (BME etc)? What evidence do you have for this?
- How do you ensure the pilot works with the key target groups and those most in need of support? (*ie avoid dead weight. Any evidence of creaming?*) Do you have evidence which can validate this?
- Do you have a feel for why some parents may not want to engage with the pilot?

Partnerships

- Historically, what have been the working relationships between CFP, ICC and JCP before the pilot? How have they changed or developed as a result of the pilot?
- In your opinion how well have the partnerships worked between CF, JCP and the ICC? What has worked particularly well? Have there been any notable challenges? How did you try to resolve these?
- Would you say there have been difficulties in the pilot, arising from what you might call the 'cultural' differences between Jobcentre Plus and ICCs and CFP - for example, the Jobcentre Plus priority on employment outcomes versus the ICC's priority on what's best for the family?
 - What have the nature and extent of these problems been?
 - Would you say these issues have made it difficult to do your job?
 - What was done to try to resolve them?
- Are there any other key partners or stakeholders you have been working with during this pilot?
 - In what capacity?
 - How did these organisations become involved? How has your relationship developed over the course of the pilot?
 - Did the partnerships exist prior to the introduction of the pilot or are they new relationships?
 - What value have they added?
- In what ways do you think parents are benefiting from the collaborative working of JCP/ICC/CF and any other partners? In what ways do you think the overall pilot is benefiting? *Get specific examples whenever possible.*
- Have you been in contact with the other three pilots over the course of the project to share experiences? How have these communications been managed and what impact have they had?

- The pilot officially comes to an end in xxxx. Has anything been done to ensure the sustainability of some of the pilot provision or to embed key learning from the pilot after the funding ends?
- Do you think any of the partnership working arrangements will continue after the end of the pilot? What elements can be sustained, post pilot funding?

Outcomes and Lessons Learnt

- In your opinion, what have been the key successes of the pilot? What have been the biggest challenges?
- Have you had feedback from parents about the pilot? What has this been?
- How has the pilot performed in relation to the key targets? *Make sure we have all the available evidence.*
- What difference do you think this pilot has made to parents?
 - How successful has it been in encouraging parents to think about work as a medium- or long-term option? Do you have any examples or evidence of this? (Soft outcomes – what is typical distance travelled over the course of the pilot?) *Probe evidence sources.*
 - What is the relative divide between hard and soft outcomes achieved? *Probe evidence sources.*
- Have there been any wider impacts that you are aware of beyond the work of JCP in the pilot areas? What are these? Evidence?
- What do you think the pilot has achieved in terms of new ways of working and collaborative working?
- Do you think there have been any changes as a result of the pilot in how staff across CFP and ICC understand the Government's employment message and how it fits in with the Child Poverty agenda? (*Probe nature of any changes and how they occurred.*)
- Are there any factors outside your control which you feel have negatively impacted what the pilot has been able to achieve? What were these and what impact do you think they had? *Probe if not already covered:*

- difficulties or delays in the set-up period for the pilot
 - practical concerns such as lack of space or privacy to meet with parents
 - lack of footfall to ICC
 - IT/data security issues
 - staff changes or absence of staff in key roles
 - local labour market characteristics
 - gaps in the local support or services available to parents, eg childcare, ESOL, other training or wrap-around provision
- Based on your current understanding of resource levels, what do you envisage the employment and support on offer in the ICC will look like after the pilot?
 - Has the pilot affected your opinions on the role of outreach links with Jobcentre Plus?
 - Have you learnt any valuable lessons? What would you do differently if starting again? What do you think are the critical factors for success?
 - Any other comments?

Communities First Partners

Background

- Could you briefly describe your role and the organisation you work for?
What does this organisation do? How long have you worked in this role?
- What is the relationship between your organisation and the CFP or ICC?
 - What is the nature of the relationship? Formal/Informal?
 - When was this relationship/partnership established?
 - Was it pre-existing before the pilot, or was it established as a result of the pilot?
- What involvement does your organisation have in the JCP/ICC pilot?
 - What support/services does your organisation offer with respect to this pilot? Where? What does this bring to the pilot?
 - At what stage did your organisation become involved in the pilot? How did it become involved?
- What are your responsibilities in relation to the ICC pilot?
 - What do you deliver?
 - Have you been involved with the pilot since the beginning?
 - Has your role changed or developed over the course of the pilot? How?
 - How much of your time does working on the pilot take up? On what? Has this changed over the course of the pilot?
 - Who do you communicate with/what communications do you receive about the pilot on a regular basis?
 - How does this sit alongside your other responsibilities?
- Do you work in partnership with any other organisations to support the pilot (other than ICC/JCP)? Which organisations and in what capacity? How did these relationships develop? What do they bring to the pilot?

Pilot Delivery

- How do the channels of communication work between yourself/your organisation, local CFP, ICC and JCP? In your opinion, how effective have these been? Have there been any challenges? How were these resolved?
- Who do you communicate with most often in relation to the pilot? What form does this take? In your opinion, how effective have these communications been?
- How involved do you feel you have been able to be with this pilot? Is this as much as you would have liked? *Explore why/why not.*
- Have you had any influence regarding the activities undertaken? In what ways?
- As far as you are aware, have there been any ongoing practical or logistical difficulties associated with the services your organisation delivers with respect to the pilot?
- Have there been any key milestones with respect to pilot delivery? Can you tell me about these?

Project Targets

- Are you aware of the official outcome targets associated with this pilot?
- Do any of these targets directly relate to the support and services your organisation provides as part of the pilot? Which ones?
- Did your organisation have any involvement in developing these targets?
- Have these targets changed at all over the course of the pilot? How?
- In your opinion how realistic are these targets?
- How is data captured in relation to these targets? How have the outcomes been reported?
- Have there been any particular challenges associated with the data capture/reporting process? How have these been resolved?
- To what extent do you think these targets have been achieved? *Any evidence (apart from what we already have)?*

- How do you think these targets have impacted what the pilot has achieved?
- Have these targets influenced the type of activities your organisation undertakes as part of the pilot? In what ways?
- Does your organisation record any additional information? eg soft outcomes, or distance travelled? *Any evidence they can give us?*

Outreach and Engagement

If relevant...

- How have the services your organisation offers been promoted to ICC users?
- How is it promoted outside the ICC to parents in the wider community? *Get examples.*
- How successful do you think this promotion has been in raising awareness of the service? Do you feel there is a wide level of awareness? What evidence is there for this?
- Have you found engaging parents relatively straightforward or challenging? Why is this?
- How well do you think take-up and engagement with the services has gone?
 - How long did it take to achieve these levels of engagement?
 - How about particularly with respect to non-children's centre users in the wider community?
- How far do you think the pilot is engaging its intended target customers? Are the services reaching the most disadvantaged families? What evidence do you have for this? Have there been any difficulties?
- To what extent do you think your organisation has been able to add value to the pilot in terms of helping to engage the hardest to reach? *Any examples or evidence?*
- How well do you think the services have been received by parents? How does this fit with your original expectations?

- Do you have a feel for why some parents may not want to engage with the pilot?
- Looking back, what do you think could be improved in terms of outreach and engagement?

Outcomes and Learning

- What difference do you think your organisation's involvement in the pilot has made to parents and local families? *Any examples or evidence?* How have parents responded?
- What about the pilot in general?
- Have you had feedback from parents about the pilot? What has this been?
- To what extent do you think this pilot has been successful in reaching and working with the most disadvantaged families in the area?
- Have there been any wider impacts of the pilot that you are aware of beyond the work of JCP in the pilot areas?
- What do you think the pilot has achieved in terms of new ways of working and collaborative working? How are parents benefiting from this?
- Do you think staff (from all organisations) working at the ICC or as part of the pilot have improved understanding of the role of work in alleviating child poverty – as a result of this pilot?
- Are there any factors outside your control which you feel have negatively impacted what the pilot has been able to achieve? What were these and what impact do you think they had? *Probe if not already covered:*
 - difficulties or delays in the set-up period for the pilot
 - practical concerns such as lack of venues to deliver services
 - staff changes or absence of staff in key roles
 - local labour market characteristics
 - gaps in the local support or services available to parents, eg childcare, ESOL, other training or wrap-around provision

- The pilot officially comes to an end in xxxx. As far as you are aware, has anything been done to ensure the sustainability of some of the pilot provision or to embed key learning from the pilot after the funding ends?
- Do you think any of the partnership working arrangements will continue after the end of the pilot? What elements can be sustained, post pilot funding?
- Have there been any specific lessons for your organisation that have emerged from this pilot? What would you do differently if starting again?
- What do you think are the critical factors for success?
- Any other comments?

Parent Discussion Groups

Background [don't ask – captured on monitoring sheet]

First of all we would like to find out some background information about your family life. Maybe you all know each other already, but it would be helpful for me if we could go round the circle, and if you could introduce yourself and tell me:

- How many children you have
- The ages of your children
 - Current status/household composition? Married/single/partner?
 - Do partners/spouses work?
- The **monitoring data sheet** asks for information about benefits, health/health barriers to work, and family circumstances (*see end of topic guide*)

Warm-up/introductions

Ask each participant to introduce themselves, focusing on their:

First name (complete a name card)

Number/age of children

Looking for work? What sort of work would they like to do?

Current Circumstances [ASK ALL]

I would like to understand a little bit about your current circumstances.

- Are any of you currently in employment? Can you tell me about what you do? Job role, hours worked? How long have you been doing this? How did you find this job? Is it local?
- Are any of you currently undertaking any training – or hoping to do some training in the future? Can you tell me about this? What are you studying? Where? How long have you been doing this? What are your motivations?

For those not working

- Have you worked in the past? What types of jobs have you done? How recently was this?
- Are any of you looking for work at the moment?
- If no – What influences your decision not to work at the moment? Which factors are most important?
 - Childcare responsibilities, or other caring responsibilities
 - Impact on household financial situation (fear of being worse off if they are on benefits, through additional costs of childcare or transport/travel)
 - Partner's employment situation (ie working hours, pay etc.)
 - Health or disability (self or others)
 - Own skill levels, previous experience of work
 - Age of children, wanting more children
 - Local labour market conditions, flexibility of desired work
 - Own views about advantages and disadvantages of working
 - Partner/family views about them working/not working
 - Other factors

Awareness of children's centre Adviser services and its integration into the ICC [ASK ALL]

- Could you tell me what you currently use this ICC for? Which venues do you visit? What services do you access?
- How long have you been visiting this ICC? How did you first become involved with the ICC?
- How often on average do you visit this ICC?
- Are any of you aware that this Children's Centre offers employment-related services for parents (by having a dedicated Adviser based here at the centre)?

YES:

- How did you come to hear about this? (eg poster, leaflet, personal contact – try and establish whether they actively sought this info, or whether the info was proactively disseminated by the ICC/CFP/JCP PA)
- Was it promoted in any way by any of the Children's Centre/CFP staff? (eg launch days, referrals)
- Do you know exactly what the service offers? (prompt if necessary: job search, IAG, WFIs, advice/help with benefits...)
- And how is the Adviser known within the Children's Centre – ie do you know what their job title is? (establish how the PA is branded within the CC)
- Do you get the sense that the Adviser is part of the Children's Centre team of staff, or separate? Why do you think this? (try and get a sense of how well integrated the PA is with the rest of the CC)
- How easy is it to contact the Adviser within the Children's Centre or wider community? Why do you think this? *Prompt:*
 - Where does the Adviser sit? Do you need an appointment?
 - Have you seen the PA attend particular activities within the Children's Centre? In community venues?
 - Have you seen the PA walking around the CC, talking with parents?
 - Have you heard from other parents who have seen him/her in the CC?
 - How approachable does s/he seem to you?
 - Have you told anyone else about this service? What did you tell them?

NO:

- For those of you who weren't aware of this before, now you know about this service, do you think you might find it useful?
- If so, what for?

- Is this a service which you think would be relevant to you in the near future? (ie next 3 months); in the short to medium term (ie next 3-18 months) or in the longer term (18months +)?
- What is this timing dependent on? (*obtain as much detail as you can here*)
- How do you feel about the fact that you didn't know about this service?
- Are you currently accessing any other employment or training related services (not via the ICC or pilot?) What? How did you come to be using these services? *JCP community courses*

[ASK ALL]

- Thinking more generally, do you think it's a good idea to offer employment and training related services at Children's Centres? Why/not? (*probe*)
- Do you know people who don't use the Children's Centre? Do you know why they don't use the ICC? Do you think they know about the employment services here? What prevents people from coming to the centre?

Use of children's centre Adviser service [ASK ALL – we don't expect the non-user group to answer but should check]

- Have any of you used the service/been to see the Adviser'?
 - **YES:** How did you get to see the Adviser (referral through JCP for interview, approached by PA when using other children's services, did you ask to see them when you knew there was one on site etc)
 - What did you see the Adviser about? IAG, benefits advice, job search/job matching, WFI, advise/help accessing training
 - What did you do in your meeting/s?
 - How many times have you used this service?
 - Where were your appointments held?
 - Did you find the Adviser helpful? In what way was s/he helpful? (*Friendly, informative, welcoming, understanding etc?*)
 - Did you feel the Adviser understood your circumstances/needs? If not, why? *Explore.*

- What (if anything) do you think changed as a result of your visit/s to see the Adviser? *Probe – attitude to work; more informed; encouraged; behavioural changes, now in training or education, found work etc.*
- What do you think your next steps are going to be now? Would you say this was as a result of seeing the Adviser, or do you think you would have done this anyway?
- *[If the Adviser had little or no impact – establish why this was]*
- Have you had contact with JCP Advisers in the past? Do you think s/he has been any different from other Jobcentre Plus Advisers you have had contact with before? How, and in what ways?
- **NO:** why is this? *Probe – because not aware of Adviser, have not had time, not looking for work, education or training, childcare issues while seeing Adviser, prefers to access employment services elsewhere.*
- Is there anything that would change your mind about meeting with the Adviser here?

Referrals/Use of other training or wrap-around support services [ASK ALL – we don't expect the non-user group to answer but should check]

- Are you using any other employment support service (other than provided directly by the Adviser) through the Adviser(s) here (ie within the children's centre, such as training)? Or outside of this centre?
 - **if yes** – Who referred you to these services? Was it the Adviser? ICC staff? CFP staff?
 - Did you attend?
 - What influenced your decision to take up/not to take up the service/training?
- Have you been referred to any other non employment-related service as a result of your involvement with the Adviser here?
 - **if yes** – Who referred you to these services? Was it the Adviser? ICC staff? CFP staff?

- Did you attend?
- What influenced your decision to take up/not to take up the service/training?
- Have you found these services helpful?
- What (if anything) do you think changed as a result of using these other services?
- Would you have used these service anyway, if you had not been referred through the pilot?
- [If the service had little or no impact – establish why this was]
- Are you aware of, or involved with, Communities First? What are your views of Community First?

Future Plans [ASK ALL]

- In broad terms, what are your future plans?
- Do you see yourself in work in these future plans? If yes, do you think this will be in the next 12 months, 1-2 years, 5 years, more?
- If already working – do you plan to remain in work?
- Are you looking for training at the moment?
- Can I ask what factors are influencing your decision to look for work or training? Is this dependent on a change in your circumstances (eg youngest child reaching certain age)? *Probe:*
 - improve income
 - own career goals and plans
 - availability of formal childcare at Children’s Centre or through nanny, childminder, etc
 - availability of informal childcare (family, friends, partner)
 - partner’s employment circumstances
 - set an example to children
 - flexibility/attitude/working practices of employer

- Have you given any thought to what type of job/training you would like to do? Establish what this is based on – previous work experience, area of interest, current skills level, flexibility of job or course.
- Has the contact you've had with the Adviser/children's centre generally had any influence on your decision to look for work/training? If so, how?
- What support are they providing with this?
- What sort of (other) help and support (if any) do you think you might need to get into work in the future? *eg help improving skills, CV writing, soft skills training, jobsearch, information on education and training.*
- Who would you like to provide this support?
- Where would you find it useful to access such help? *JCP, ICC, training provider*
- To what extent do you think a children's centre Adviser would be able to help you into training/employment?

If **not** looking for work or training in the future:

- What has influenced your decision not to work/ look for work at the moment? Probe for other factors, apart from childcare, which are likely to be the main one:
 - What are your plans for working in the future? When do you see yourself moving into work?
 - Are you getting any support through the Adviser/children's centre/pilot generally that might make you consider working sooner?
 - What might help in making work an option for you now?
- What do you think will be the most important deciding factor in your decision to work/return to work?

[ASK ALL]

Is there anything else you would like to say about employment services provided in this ICC/as part of this pilot?