



Moneywise Plus BBO Review of Delivery Roles 2019

Context

In October 2017 ERS was commissioned by Reaching People to evaluate the Moneywise Plus Project funded by the Building Better Opportunities (BBO) Programme. It aims to improve the on-going digital and financial skills of individuals to support them in moving towards employment, education or training.

When the Moneywise Plus Project was designed in 2016 consideration was given to aligning roles from the previous Get Moneywise Project within the new budget available. There was a sense of a need for continuity. However, the Get Moneywise Plus programme was considerably different in terms of the expectations and demands, and the inherited terms and conditions have proven inappropriate in terms of the salary of frontline delivery posts. ERS has supported this process and this report summarises the progress made.

Reaching People is not alone in considering this issue. Across a number of BBO programmes being evaluated by ERS, it is evident that the Advisor/Work Coach/Navigator/Employment Support Officer role is much more challenging than originally expected, largely due to the administrative demands, often requiring more work to be completed than is possible given their working week. ERS have undertaken an assessment of a number of current BBO programme roles currently active across the country. It is evident that the salaries, largely for delivering a similar role albeit often with a different job title, vary considerably.

Ensuring Pay Reflect the Roles

Early in 2018 Reaching People asked Moneywise Plus Project Delivery Partners to reflect on their job roles as the project had progressed. It was evident that the demands of the project reporting, the client group and the issues presented were requiring staff with additional skills. Recruitment to vacant posts was becoming an ongoing issue with some of the feedback being that the salaries were not reflecting the demands of the roles. There was some disparity between delivery organisations in the rates of pay for the roles being delivered. Job roles had evolved and therefore the need of a full job evaluation for delivery staff was identified.

While there is no role for Reaching People as the lead organisation to set terms and conditions for each delivery organisation, they do recognise their role to provide support and advice on this and to ensure fair processes are applied across the delivery partners. They wanted to check out our job roles and expectations and salaries by cross referencing to external sources.

They therefore used the skills and experience of an external HR evaluator with a national recognised questionnaire and grading scales to review in detail some of the key delivery and administration functions. This was a lengthy iterative process between staff and managers where they identified the evidence of examples of work the staff were carrying out. The HR job evaluation went alongside ERS review of other BBO programmes. These are summarised below:

- Moneywise Plus Community Engagement and Triage Worker: Salary up to £18,824
- BBO Disability Specialist Work Coach in the East Midlands: Salary £21,745
- BBO Community Engagement Adviser in the East of England: Salary £24,000 to £28,000
- BBO Employment Navigator in the North East: Salary £18,289 - £22,386 inclusive of essential car user allowance
- BBO Employment Navigator in the North East. Salary: £21,000 to £23,000
- BBO Work Coach in the East Midlands. Salary: £23,000
- BBO Employment Support Officer in the East Midlands: Salary £23,000 to £25,000

It is evident from evaluating a number of other BBO programmes across the country that a number of partnerships have seen a considerable turnover of staffing and this has had a direct impact upon the quality of delivery. Of course, there are a number of factors that influence why candidates apply for, or choose to leave, particular job roles. Demand for jobs in particular sectors, organisational culture, perceived opportunities to progress alongside wider terms and conditions (salary, flexible working practices, etc.) all contribute to the mix.

The results of the external HR evaluation are reflected in the grading and salary structure displayed below.

<p>Grade 1 - Entry level and junior administrative/support staff. The first point in this scale will be the National Living Wage and, therefore must be reviewed annually in line with any new rate introduced. 121 to 299 points - salary scale bands: £15,857; £16,835; £17,500</p>
<p>Grade 2 - Senior/more experienced administrators or other support staff with identified functions. 300 to 450 points – salary scale bands: £18,000; £19,100; £20,000</p>
<p>Grade 3 - Project delivery staff with responsibility for own outputs and organisation of work. 451 to 550 points – salary scale bands: £20,000; £21,245; £22,300; £23,500</p>
<p>Grade 4 - Degree level delivery staff with additional responsibilities eg contract management, quality etc. 551 to 650 points – salary scale: £25,000; £26,400; £27,800; £29,000</p>
<p>Grade 5 - Project Management. Line management of team of delivery staff and responsible for all actions within that function. Responsibility of strategic direction and some senior management responsibilities. 651 to 700 points – salary scale £36,000; £37,350; £38,700; £40,000</p>

Further work is ongoing within Reaching People to consider the appropriateness of more senior grades i.e. overarching management at an organisational level i.e. at Director and Chief Executive level.

Conclusions

The VCS traditionally pays on different pay grades and there is a need to change the mindset in some quarters to start valuing the skills of staff and paying them a salary that reflects the role they are delivering.

Reaching People and the Moneywise Plus delivery partners have used the job evaluation to review job roles and rates of pay and also to influence VCS organisations in the delivery partnership and beyond to review the way they pay and value staff and their skills. Whilst also recognising that different organisations have their own reasons for rationalising their pay and conditions and that these will continue to vary in accordance with local conditions.

A number of other interesting points can be drawn out with wider implications across the VCS and in particular in relation to BBO delivery projects.

It is evident that the person specification in terms of qualifications and experience varies considerably, with the highest paid roles not always asking the most. Some roles require a Level 3 IAG qualification, whilst others don't. Given the type of advice provided often extends beyond that of specialist knowledge (e.g. digital or financial inclusion) and covers CV preparation, job search, etc. consideration should be given to discussing whether all frontline delivery staff possess such an IAG qualification.

We know of one project that has recast the scope of frontline delivery roles (i.e. increased salary) to attract higher calibre staff. We also know of BBO programmes that have seen staff move from one provider to another. Whilst salary and wider terms and conditions are important, we understand that wider issues such as organisational culture are also contributory factors. The emergence of the BBO Programme across the country has provided a healthy jobs market for work coaches/advisors/navigators, and each accountable body/delivery partner will need to be cognisant of this in scoping future roles. .

Looking forward, there is a need for managing authorities and programmes leads to scope the costs of delivering services more accurately, accepting that the salary expectations for those working in important frontline often needs to be greater than that currently. The pay grade presented earlier in this report provides a sound framework for this.