

LOCAL POLICY ACTION: March 2018

Mobile Phone Repairs: consumer empowerment project.

As you will have seen, this project, lead by Max & Emma, has been a great success. A service charter has been developed & local suppliers have been keen to sign up ahead of the national rollout.

The project received national funding which has also supported our general service offer. As we have now established good credentials on this type of work we are keen to identify other projects that may attract consumer empowerment funding. We would therefore be grateful if you could ensure that you raise BEFs for consumer issues as this would assist in identifying any appropriate local project work.

Local Job Centre Partnership.

We have been asked to consider how we can create a closer working relationship with our local Job Centre. We believe that a similar relationship to that which we have with Chiltern District Council would benefit our clients. (Our relationship with Chiltern District Council enables us to feedback on issues of concern and encourages them to consider appropriate changes.). Over coming months we will update you on actions, which are likely to include information sessions on how the local JC+ service works and hopefully an escalation route for difficult problems.

To support this work please raise local BEFS about our Job Centre where you believe a change could be of benefit.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ACTION.

Action by the central Campaigns & Research teams continues to make a difference to our society. Their work is prompted by local offices highlighting problems through BEFs and the use of appropriate AIC codes.

Recent successes include:

- Universal Credit rollout 'paused' to address admin problems.
- Universal Credit; reduction in the waiting time for first payment.
- Support for the progress of a Bill to address poor standards of private rented accommodation (Homes- fit for habitation).
- Gaining support for legislation to ensure mobile phone suppliers automatically reduce contract charges once their handset is paid for.

Current calls for evidence are:

- Benefit stopped but client has not had a letter to notify
-
- Problems arranging and paying for care for a person aged 65 or over
-
- Problems with car finance
-
- Debt and affordable credit
-
- Clients with prepayment meters unable to top up
-
- Attendance Allowance special rules
-
- Effects of banks closing
-
- NHS prescription charges

If you encounter one of the above issues, please ensure you raise a BEF using a similar phrase to the above in the BEF description. The central data search can then pick out your report & direct it to the relevant research team. CASE now gives researchers access to the profile of the client so please make sure that it is up to date.

The current list of calls for evidence is always displayed on office notice boards. Please update yourself from time to time.