



**merlin**

promoting supply chain excellence

Assessment Report  
For

**CAREERS DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

**By Ruth Regan**

**On behalf of emqc Ltd**

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# Contents

About the Organisation .....	3
Assessment Methodology .....	3
Assessment Outcome .....	3
Strengths .....	4
Areas for Improvement .....	4
Areas Requiring Further Development .....	5
Assessment Findings	
1 Supply Chain Design .....	6
2 Commitment .....	7
3 Conduct .....	9
4 Review .....	12

## About the Organisation

Careers Development Group (CDG) is a welfare to work charity with 30 years' experience in helping those who are unemployed find and sustain employment.

CDG started delivering the coalition government's Work Programme as a prime contractor in London East in June 2011 and, as part of a strategic alliance with international welfare to work provider MAXIMUS Employment and Training, also deliver the Work Programme in London West and Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and is a delivery partner to Avanta in Sussex.

CDG also works internationally and has formed an organisation based in Australia in partnership with BEST Community Development, a leading third sector welfare to work organisation in that country.

As part of its charitable and public benefit, CDG launched the Expert Volunteer Initiative in 2010 and CDG Volunteers in 2011. The two initiatives provide further support to people wanting to find and stay in work by tapping into the expertise of people who would like to give something back.

As well as delivering the Work Programme directly, CDG has established a network of 14 end to end delivery partners, six of which are charities, three are not-for-profit organisation, three are private companies and two are public sector. Supporting these organisations is a range of 'menu' partners offering specialist services such as self-employment, ex-offender support, mental health awareness, short vocational training skills etc.

## Assessment Methodology

The Merlin assessment plan ensured that a representative sample of Supply Chain Partner organisations operating in East London (CPA4) and their staff and a range of staff from CDG was invited to take part in the assessment. The assessment team including the lead Assessor, Ruth Regan and team Assessors Linda Howells and Tracey Pepper spent 12 days onsite completing the assessment which involved face-to-face or telephone discussions with senior managers, managers and customer facing staff from 14 active members of the supply chain and 1 potential Supply Chain Partner who did not proceed to contract.

A Board Trustee, Directors and a range of CDG staff working with and supporting the Work Programme Supply chain were also interviewed.

During the assessment, the team was able to review a range of written documents relevant to the Work Programme Supply chain, review IT based systems, programmes and services provided by CDG and visit their Customer Support Centre in Northampton.

## Assessment Outcome

<b>Overall %</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Overall Outcome</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Supply Chain Design</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Conduct</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Review</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>

## Strengths

A range of strengths were identified during this Merlin Assessment and these are summarised below. The numbers in brackets relate to the elements the Standard to which the areas relate.

- ▲ The research and approach taken to the scope, variety and design of the supply chain has resulted in a partnership of organisations with a real commitment and ability to deliver the range of services needed by the customer groups. For example Avanta who exists to make the world of work a better place, Community Links, a charity that helps disadvantaged local people and the Faith Regen Foundation who is committed to working towards increasing social harmony in society. (1a)
- ▲ Clear, robust, effective, and two-way communication processes between CDG and their Supply Chain Partners has developed trust, honesty and openness across the supply chain. This approach has created a culture where the sharing of information, knowledge and best practice ideas are accepted, thereby increasing the abilities of the supply chain to meet the requirements of the Work Programme contract (2a)
- ▲ The time and effort taken by CDG staff to work with their small, specialist and third sector providers is acknowledged as having a positive impact on their contract performance (2b)
- ▲ Investment made by CDG to IT systems (Customer Management System, Customer Zone, E-Kwip.Me) and the ongoing development of CDG Volunteers is very much recognised as a major strength and is supporting the supply chain's capacity and capability to deliver (2b)
- ▲ Support offered pre-contract ensured organisations fully understood the funding model used and the impact joining the supply chain might have on their own finances. The ongoing review of supply chain partner's financial health will ensure any potential cashflow issues are identified and support offered when appropriate (2c)
- ▲ CDG staff understand the values by which the organisation operates – charitable heart with a commercial brain - and this is recognised and appreciated by Supply Chain Partners. If those staff supporting the supply chain change, efforts to ensure new staff have the same CDG ethos and culture will be important to ensuring the ongoing commercial and business integrity of the relationship (3a)
- ▲ Stakeholder groups are clearly defined and understood and have been actively used to seek feedback. The ongoing feedback from all stakeholders will ensure the supply chain continues to meet the requirements of the contract and the wider aims of the commissioner (4a)

## Areas for Improvement

The following suggestions were made by the assessment team, in order to provide additional value for CDG and their further development and improvement of their supply chain management. The assessment team have endeavoured to identify as many suggestions as possible, in order to encourage CDG to continue to seek excellence in all their supply chain management activities and as such these relate to a variety of scores as identified within the final scoring document.

- ▲ Continue to develop, utilise and embed the use of menu partners so that the full range services available through the supply chain is not only understood by all the delivery partners but is fully utilised to support the needs of the customers (1a)

- ▲ Consider how more collaborative projects between CDG and Supply Chain Partners could be undertaken (2a)
- ▲ Revisit how you actively promote, and facilitate the learning and development of supply chain staff – consider how needs are identified, how, when and where programmes of learning are promoted and what impact measures you put in place to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of learning delivered (2b)
- ▲ Continue to support Supply Chain Partners to develop their business proposition through signposting and supporting them to additional funding streams (2b)
- ▲ Consider what (if anything) can be done to simplify the supply chain contractual documentation so that it can become a useful reference tool rather than something that is only referred to on occasion (2c)
- ▲ As the Progression Plan is rolled out and the step changes made to quality assurance and performance management process, continue to review and reflect on the organisations values (Customers, Innovation, Integrity, People, Performance) and ensure they remain embedded within CDG staff and throughout the supply chain (3a)
- ▲ The ongoing benchmarking, setting and revising of impact measures / monitors need to follow on from the work already completed around health and safety, safeguarding and environmental sustainability (3b)
- ▲ Consider how the excellent practice that is already appearing within the supply chain around health and safety, safeguarding and environmental sustainability can be more formally identified, documented, better utilised, shared and measured for effectiveness (3b)
- ▲ Revisit the approach taken to measuring distance travelled across the supply chain and, working collaboratively, agree and share a best practice approach to this (3d)
- ▲ Ensure that an evaluation and review processes is in place to enable the impact of the Progression Planning approach to be monitored (3d)
- ▲ Identify organisations (within the supply chain or external) that are recognised for their best practice approach to diversity and equality and share their approach with the Supply Chain Partners (3e)
- ▲ Ensure that stakeholder groups are continually involved in reviewing and implementing the action plan which is being produced following the creation of the Self Assessment Test report (4a)
- ▲ Following the outcomes of the social impact study ensure further impact measures are set on wellbeing / environmental sustainability etc (4a)
- ▲ Ensure Supply chain partners develop their own impact measures to support the above and the wider objectives of the commissioner (4a)

## Areas Requiring Further Development

None identified during this assessment.

## Assessment Findings

### 1 Supply Chain Design

#### 1a) Supply chain design

The decision to bid to become a Prime Contractor for the Work Programme was one which was not taken lightly by CDG. Once the decision was made they entered into a four stage process through which they engaged with and selected their Supply Chain Partners.

Robust research was undertaken to ascertain the services and types of Supply Chain Partners needed to deliver an effective Work Programme. For example they undertook an analysis of the long term Jobseekers Allowance and Employment Support Allowance claimants statistics from NOMIS at borough level, conducted qualitative research reviewing published reports such as the Local Area Agreements etc to ensure they understood the likely make-up and demographics of potential customers. Subsequently CDG entered into strategic alliance with a private provider of Government funded programmes to enable them to bid to deliver the Work Programme pan-London.

A key aspect of their bidding strategy was to promote the supply chain partnership opportunities as widely as possible to ensure that third sector, charities, local authorities and private sector organisations, with the potential of meeting the identified needs of the anticipated customer groups had the opportunity to join the supply chain.

Promotional activities included the production of a bespoke Work Programme booklet for potential partners, advertising the opportunities on relevant websites, attending promotional events, engaging with local authorities, attending relevant sector events, delivering presentations to interested associations etc.

Organisations (both current members of the supply chain and those who chose not to enter into a supply chain relationship with CDG) all confirmed that the awareness raising and engagement process followed by CDG ensured that they were fully aware of the requirements of the Work Programme and the likely needs of the customer groups they would be supporting should they join the supply chain.

The Expression of Interest (EOI) documentation and process was described by Supply Chain Partners as open, honest and transparent – with guidance and feedback being given to those who were initially unsuccessful with their application. Initial feedback was given via email, with additional feedback being given both orally and in writing if requested by the applicant.

All EOI's were scored against set criteria which included a proven performance track record, experience of supporting the potential customer groups, location and knowledge of the local communities, added value they could bring to the supply chain and culture and values fit between the organisation and CDG.

Of the 14 end-to-end Supply Chain Partner, 9 organisations had no previous contractual relationship with CDG. However all brought a background of supporting and working with the potential client group through their previous / existing service delivery.

In order to support the work of the end-to-end Supply Chain Partners, CDG has a comprehensive range of menu partners who, following the EOJ and due diligence process have a formal Service Level Agreement in place confirming the services offered and the prices charged.

Other networks contribute to the supply chain including voluntary and community sector networks, colleges with access to complementary community funded provision, NHS support / signposting etc.

## **2 Commitment**

### **2a) Collaboration, cooperation and communication**

Supply Chain Partners confirmed that clear, timely and constructive communications took place at all stages of the procurement process. Timescales for decisions were communicated to and understood by all, with the supply chain highlighting literature, emails, presentations, briefing sessions and one-to-one discussions as communication vehicles used. Subsequent to contracts being agreed, the communication flow between CDG and its supply chain follows an agreed plan which involves daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly communication through email, telephone, one-to-one meetings and Supply chain forums. The Supply Chain Partners described communications as a mix of formal, informal, proactive, planned and responsive - meeting both their operational and strategic needs.

Prior to finalising the CDG delivery model, potential Supply Chain Partners were asked to contribute their thoughts on how best practice identified through other programmes they may have been involved in could be included, for example how best the Customer Support Centre could allocate referrals. More recent consultation has seen the Supply Chain Partners being asked for potential source for new CDG Volunteers and their input into the design of the booking process to enable Supply Chain Partners to take advantage of the Volunteer programme. Following feedback received from the Supply chain about the referral process, two Supply Chain Partners offering specialist delivery have worked with CDG's Customer Support Centre to establish a bespoke referral process.

The supply chain forum is used by CDG to encourage their partners to cooperate together and share information and knowledge to develop the services offered to their customers. For example CDG has arranged for their strategic alliance partner to share their approach to performance and case-load management at a recent forum. There are also examples of CDG arranging for Supply chain partners who are new to the Work Programme to visit established providers to enable staff to learn from those more experienced than themselves.

Very clear communication channels are in place between CDG and its Supply Chain Partners. During the contracting stage ongoing discussions took place to ensure the details within the contract were fully understood. This step-by-step approach was very much appreciated by those new to the Work Programme. Although subsequent written communication is perceived by the supply chain as clear and unambiguous, understanding and interpretation is always checked during the oral communications between them and their CDG contact.

All the Supply chain partners involved in this assessment commented on the strong, open and honest communications and relationships between them and staff within CDG. Partners described how they felt that they could contact CDG at anytime and would always receive a positive and professional response. There were examples shared by the supply chain of staff within CDG responding to urgent request for support / guidance 'out of hours' and / or on a very regular basis and that these requests were always responded to a style and spirit of true partnership.

## 2b) Developing Supply Chain Partners

The smaller / 3rd sector Supply Chain Partners who had no experience of delivering large, outcome-funded programmes were especially complementary about the levels of support they had and continue to receive from staff at CDG - enabling them to develop their delivery and organisational capacity and capability. Examples of support received ranged from one-to-one consultancy type interventions, through to hands on support to help staff understand the referral and claims process (thus ensuring they were getting paid appropriately and on time), to training to enable full utilisation of the Customer Management System (CMS) and on specific regulatory requirements such as adherence to ISO 27001.

The recent rollout of the CDG Volunteers initiative to the supply chain will have a long term impact on their collective capacity and ability to deliver. Other, specific examples shared by the supply chain of the approach CDG has taken to help them build and develop their services includes the offer of using CDG premises to meet with customers - thus reducing the need for alternative premises, signposting and supporting partners to apply for additional funding streams such as the Flexible Support Fund and from the City Bridge Trust, and working with menu partners to enable them to enhance their offer which might enable them in the longer term to become an end-to-end provider.

Written and oral evidence confirm that CDG has promoted and delivered a range of learning and development interventions for staff within the supply chain. These have been in the form of training workshops covering topics such as action planning, advanced interviewing techniques, effective job search support, drug and alcohol awareness etc. In addition staff within the supply chain confirmed that they have also received one-to-one coaching sessions and been offered work / job shadowing activities.

## 2c) Contracting and funding

CDG staff described and Supply Chain Partners confirmed that procurement processes are open, fair, clear and transparent and that robust communication protocols are followed throughout. Following the initial round of procurement, feedback has been obtained from the supply chain and subsequently the EOI document has been refined and the scoring process computerised – thus speeding up the process further. (See 1a above)

As a charity, CDG is particularly aware of the financial risks of payments by results contracts and therefore shared best practice from their own financial due diligence with their potential Supply Chain Partners. A cashflow forecasting tool enabled potential end-to-end Supply Chain Partners to assess the financial viability of CDGs subcontracting offer against their costs; as well as predicting working capital requirements. This tool enabled organisations to assess whether they needed to renegotiate payment profiles with CDG. Supply Chain Partners did share examples of tailored funding models being agreed based on the financial risk analysis undertaken.

Contract and / or Service Level Agreements are in place for all members of the supply chain. Pre-tender, selected end-to-end Supply Chain Partners received a Memorandum of Understanding which outlined CDG's and the partner's mutual obligations to the Work Programme tender. Letters of Intent were signed by menu partners prior to the bid being submitted. Some of the smaller Supply Chain Partners had not experienced government related contracts prior to joining the Work Programme Supply chain, and therefore CDG ensured that they spent time and effort with these organisations to ensure they understood the roles, responsibilities, expectations, outcomes, legalities etc described within the contracting documentation.

CDG's rationale for market share allocation firstly involved ensuring that any contact delivered would be viable for them, otherwise the biggest financial risk to Supply Chain Partners would be CDG's own poor financial position. During presentations to the potential members of the Supply chain the detailed calculations and potential percentage share of clients and volumes per Local Authority areas was shared. Negotiations between CDG and each Supply Chain Partner also shaped the market share allocation to each providers based on their ability to delivery and the finance being taken into account. Discussions regarding market share are ongoing to reflect the fluctuation in referrals being received.

Supply Chain Partners confirmed that volumes, funding and performance expectations were discussed, negotiated and agreed during one-to-one discussion / communications and confirmed within the contracts / service level agreements.

Throughout the pre and post contract award the requirements of the individual Supply Chain Partners was taken into account and, where possible, actioned.

Robust and efficient processes are in place to ensure payments are validated, approved and paid within agreed timescales. Supply Chain Partners confirmed that they received ongoing support and guidance to ensure the self-billing process works effectively and efficiently.

As part of the pre and post contracting process CDG presented details to the supply chain of what the management fee was and what they could expect to receive in return. Details were also included in the Letters of Intent. The management fee charged by CDG was described by the supply chain as being low compared to other Prime contractors and good value for money.

## **3 Conduct**

### **3a) Demonstrating commercial and business integrity**

Discussions with CDG staff confirmed that they fully understand the values and principles by which the organisation operates and believe they are embedded into their approach to working with their Supply Chain Partners. A key aspect of the procurement strategy is that CDG want to work with organisations whose culture and values reflect their own. Supply Chain Partners described how they believe there is a common ethos and shared guiding principles between them and CDG and that the approach taken by both parties to develop and maintain open, constructive, honest and effective working relationships demonstrates this.

An effective strategy was deployed and actioned to limit the impact of TUPE on the supply chain. Where TUPE was found to apply, CDG's Human Resources team supported Supply Chain Partners and affected employees through every step of the process. Due to the proactive approach taken by CDG to negotiations, the numbers of staff actually affected by TUPE was minimal.

The relationship between CDG and Supply Chain Partner staff reflects the organisations values and principles with both parties describing interactions as supportive, positive, focused, strong and professional.

Following the initial due diligence activity CDG supported their supply chain to ensure that they all had the required legislative and regulatory policies and procedures in place. Updates are given via the weekly subcontractor email update, discussed at contract review meetings, raised at supply chain forum meetings and where relevant updated on the CMS, the Supply Chain Partners information web-based computer system.

### 3b) Quality Assurance and Compliance

Initial standards for the quality of service and customer experience across the supply chain has been established and monitored. Monthly performance monitoring reviews and regular quality assurance reviews and audits evaluate achievement and adherence to the standards set and also involves a review of customer feedback received. Those Supply Chain Partners with limited experience of working within an outcome based contract described how they received hands-on support, training and coaching to ensure they were compliant and meeting the required quality standards set.

Following the findings of quality assurance activity, CDG has introduced a revised performance management process called the 'Progression Project' which clearly presents measureable key performance indicator profiles via a performance dashboard. Supply chain partners were able to give specific examples of how, through the support given by CDG, they have been able to make improvements to the processes they use and the interactions they have with customers. For example some Supply Chain Partners have made changes to how they support the different client groups, offering intensive activity to some customers, reviewing and changing how they manage their case-load ensuring that the less work-ready customers receive the additional support they need.

CDG has provided their Supply Chain Partners with a range of information, advice and guidance brochures for them to use with their clients. Through the 'Customer Zone' Supply Chain Partners and customers also have access to 'E-Kwip.Me' which contains e-learning tools including advice on job interviews etc. All materials provided by CDG has to go through an internal, and for some material, external approval process to ensure the information they contain is correct, current, impartial and relevant to the end user. Individuals applying to become a CDG Volunteer are taken through a very robust recruitment process to ensure that they have the appropriate knowledge, skills and capabilities required to fulfil the role and that the information, advice and guidance they may offer to customers will be relevant, impartial and supportive.

CDG is ISO27001 accredited and all Supply Chain Partners understand that they too should be adhering to the principles embedded within the Standard. Following a robust due diligence process which ensured that security plans were in place and met the minimum standard required, CDG gave additional support to those within the supply chain who needed more guidance on how to ensure their plans were actioned and implemented. Security training has been given and policies and processes audited to ensure compliance. The CDG Security Form addresses issues such as data protection, security incidents, information security penetration testing and so forth. Those Supply chain partners who have more experience of the requirements of ISO27001 and have Security Champions in place have shared their knowledge and example documentation.

Supply Chain Partners confirmed that health and safety formed part of the due diligence process and that on-site checks were carried out as part of Work Programme implementation process. Health and safety is a set agenda item for monthly contract review meetings and annual risk assessments are completed by the Supply Chain Partners and forwarded to CDG for review, comment and approval.

Safeguarding processes are in place with Supply Chain Partners being required to have policies and procedures in place which mirror those of CDG. As with security, support has been given to those Supply Chain Partners who needed extra guidance to ensure the minimum standards set were achieved and are maintained. CRB checks are carried out prior to any delivery taking place and this approach is being mirrored with the recruitment of the CDG Volunteers.

CDG requires their Supply Chain Partners to have an up-to-date environmental sustainability policy and plan. Submitted plans have been reviewed, feedback given and best practice ideas shared with the Supply chain.

Supply chain partners believe that CDG actively encourages them to identify and share good practice with their supply chain colleagues. Emails, presentations at the supply chain forums on various topics including CDG Volunteers, sharing of approaches to employer engagement and caseload management were all highlighted as examples.

The Progression Project will ensure that the ongoing monitoring of quality assurance and compliance is fully aligned to measurable performance objectives and targets.

### **3c) Honouring Commitments**

Supply Chain Partners confirmed that contract negotiations were clear and open and that individual circumstances were acknowledged, that they were given every opportunity to understand and discuss the contract requirements and that post contracting agreements and arrangements fully reflect the pre contract negotiations.

CDG has a robust dispute resolution process which is described within their contracts, promoted on their website and at Supply Chain Partner's premises.

The Directors confirmed that CDG will respect any decisions from the Merlin Mediation Service.

The communication mix (one-to-one meetings, emails, supply chain forums, contract reviews etc) ensures that all parties continue to be aware of each other's expectations.

### **3d) Performance**

The Supply chain of CDG does appear to work well together with the aim of ensuring the customer receives the highest standards of service possible. The more successful and experienced Supply Chain Partners have shared their knowledge and expertise and, while accepting commercial confidentiality, there appears to be a culture of openness and a willingness to share to the benefit of the customer. For example CDG has recently developed a new assessment and caseload management tool to improve its own Work Programme service delivery which has been shared with Supply Chain Partners and its effectiveness reviewed as part of the Progression Project.

CDG has a clear framework and process for reviewing performance which has been enhanced by the introduction of the Progression Project which clearly presents measurable key performance indicator profiles via a performance dashboard which is shared between the Supply Chain Partners. As highlighted already in this report, partners are encouraged to work together to help all parties understand, identify and share effective and efficient working practices.

Considerable effort has been and continues to be made by CDG to ensure that performance expectations are clearly defined and understood. Again, the development of the Progression Project is testament to this.

CDG's secure CMS, developed specifically for the collection of all management information relating to Work Programme delivery, is directly accessible by all Supply Chain Partners who confirmed that the system enables them to record and receive information consistently and accurately.

Recent enhancements to the CMS administration function has been made following feedback from the Supply Chain Partners. Training events and supplementary one-to-one coaching and guidance has been given to ensure staff of the supply chain understand the system and are recording the required management information.

Value for money is defined at both a strategic and operational level. At a strategic level, CDG has developed and provided additional support to ease the financial burden on the Supply Chain Partners for example through the work of the Customer Support Centre and the Customer Zone and E-Kwip.Me resources. Enabling all Supply Chain Partners to access open-source IT programmes rather than having to purchase licenses to operate Microsoft systems has saved over £2m. At an operational level there is support for joint / bulk purchasing activity and the sharing of premises.

The CMS can be used to demonstrate the 'distance travelled' by customers and for judging how far they are away from the labour market. CDG has developed a separate assessment and distance travelled tool which has also been shared with the Supply chain. The Progression Project will act as a more robust method of judging the distance travelled by individual customers in the future.

### **3e) Promoting Diversity and Equality**

When identifying potential Supply Chain Partners CDG looked for a diverse range of organisations with policies and approaches to supporting diversity and equality which aligned to their own commitment and culture.

Consequently policies, process and plans are in place across the supply chain and these are reviewed and monitored as part of the monthly review process.

Data analysis has been used to support the development of service delivery. For example the need for additional learning / language resources for a specific client group within one Borough, overcoming the barriers to employment within customers aged 50+ and also those who are homeless have all been highlighted through the monitoring of the statistics gathered and projects are being developed to action these needs.

## **4 Review**

### **4a) Supply chain review**

Stakeholder groups are clearly defined and understood and are actively used to seek feedback on the Work Programme delivery. Customers are asked to comment on 'complaints and compliments' and during the monthly review meetings good news stories from each Supply Chain Partner's provision are sought. Supply Chain Partners are also asked to obtain and share feedback from their own stakeholders to ensure CDG receives as wider range of feedback as possible. This is done during the on-going communications between them and their CDG contact. Employers including Network Housing, Tesco and Homebase are partnered with CDG and have given feedback in terms of how the Work Programme met their expectations as employers. There is a strong ethos of stakeholder engagement and mutual respect throughout CDG.

To allow a full year of data to be analysed as part of the Self Assessment Report, CDG completed their Self Assessment Tool (SAT) in March 2012. The report considers all 11 statements outlined in the DWP provider Self Assessment Tool. The areas identified for improvement within the SAT are being included in CDG's overall quality improvement plan.

The SAT was presented to the supply chain at a recent forum and, moving forward through 2012 the outcomes and targets set within the quality improvement plan will be reviewed with the supply chain.

The Supply Chain Partners believe their activities and those of CDG are strategically aligned to supporting the wider objectives of the commissioner due to the approach they are taking to delivering the Work Programme. For example the development of the CDG Volunteers programme builds on the Big Society agenda and the close working relationships they have with major employers and the Greater London Authority will support and improve the communities in which people live and work.

CDG is committed to measuring the wider impact it has on the communities in which it works and has commissioned the design and implementation of a social impact measurement tool which will come into operation during 2012. They have also highlighted through their policy and research activities how they believe they are supporting their stakeholders and customers. For example in 2011 CDG submitted an open submission to Newham Council which outlined how through the Work Programme they are supporting the development of the personal resilience of Newham's residents, in addition to the economic and community resilience of the borough.

Through the variety of communication methods used by CDG they continue to keep Supply Chain Partners informed about the changing needs of the customer groups. For example a briefing was given on the introduction of the additional customer group and through the supply chain forum discussions were held about the Supply chain's ability to support this group. CDG also briefed the supply chain on the introduction of the Youth Contract wage subsidy which included the circulation of publicly-accessible DWP briefing materials.

The whole approach CDG has taken to the design and activities undertaken by the supply chain gives customers the opportunity to develop themselves and their wellbeing in the widest possible sense. For example; the CDG Volunteers take an holistic approach to mentoring the individual (as well as sharing their specific areas of expertise), 6 of the Supply Chain Partners are charities, who have their own additional services / support mechanisms they offer customers in support of their wellbeing, and there are strong local links with a range of support organisations including the NHS. Steps are in place to ensure further impact measures are set on wellbeing / environmental sustainability.