

Out of Work Service funding extended until 2020

The Out of Work Programme (OoWS), which was launched in September 2016, provides peer support and employment advice to people recovering from substance misuse and/or mental health issues.

The scheme supports people aged 16-24 who are recovering from substance misuse and, or mental health issues and are not in education, employment or training. It also helps people aged 25 or older who are recovering from substance misuse and, or mental health issues and are long-term unemployed.

The programme is funded by the European Social Fund, Welsh Government and the Substance Misuse Area Planning Boards in Wales. It is available across Wales and in addition to helping people recover and gain life and employability skills, it offers transitional support for up to three months to participants who find work.

The extension of funding will ensure both groups continue receiving support until 2020. Planned total funding for the programme will be £17.3m, including £11.5m from the European Social Fund.

Rebecca Evans said:

“I am pleased to announce the extension of funding for this programme which aims to support up to 14,000 people to overcome their barriers to gaining and staying in employment.

“It will provide new opportunities and improve outcomes for unemployed people, often those furthest from the labour market, so that they can receive the help and support they need to access skills and employment.”

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, Mark Drakeford, said:

“Being in employment can help people recovering from substance misuse or mental health issues. By removing the barriers to employment, this project is supporting thousands of people across Wales to enter and stay in the job market.

“I am pleased that EU funds have enabled the extension of this programme, enabling many more to benefit from a healthy future.”

Press release: Government to extend Public Lending Right scheme to e-book authors

The change to the Public Lending Right scheme is being introduced in the Digital Economy Bill and will mean authors of e-books and e-audiobooks are eligible for payment in the same way as those whose physical books are borrowed from libraries.

The UK is one of the first countries to extend its library lending compensation scheme to remote e-lending.

E-book lending has jumped 38% in the last year alone, with more than four million e-book loans and almost one million e-audiobook loans in Great Britain in the twelve months to April 2016.

Rob Wilson, Minister for Civil Society and responsible for libraries, said:

“We want to help public libraries embrace the digital age by improving access to e-lending and wifi services.

“This important change will put e-book authors on the same footing as those writers, illustrators and photographers whose physical books are borrowed for free.

“This legislation fulfils a manifesto commitment and underlines our support for the growing e-book sector, while ensuring that appropriate protections for rights holders are maintained.”

The Public Lending Right scheme is managed by the British Library on behalf of the Government, with more than £6 million of payments made to 22,000 authors, illustrators, photographers, translators and rights holders each year.

Roly Keating, Chief Executive of the British Library, said:

“With the rapid rise in popularity of ebooks and e-audiobooks in recent years, it’s fantastic news that authors’ PLR payments will now reflect remote ebook loans of their books from public libraries as well as the borrowing of hard copies.

“Over 22,000 writers, illustrators, photographers, translators and editors who have contributed to books lent out by public libraries in the UK receive PLR payments each year, so we look forward to working with even more new authors who are now eligible.”

The change comes after the Government funded a wifi roll-out across England, which benefitted more than 1,000 libraries, helping to increase access to digital services and e-lending.

Government has also launched a £4 million library fund to help disadvantaged communities and promote new digital and literacy projects. The Libraries Taskforce's Libraries Ambition: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021 also provides local authorities with practical and innovative options to help improve and develop services across the country.

Media enquiries – please contact the DCMS News and Communications team on 020 7211 2210.

[News story: Government publishes Custody Image Review](#)

The Home Office has today recommended to police chiefs that people not convicted of an offence should be given the right to request that their custody image is deleted from all police databases, with a general presumption that it must be removed.

That is one of a series of recommendations included in the Home Office's report, published today (Friday 24 February) on the Review of the Use and Retention of Custody Images by police in England and Wales, as well as the current legal and operational framework by which they are governed.

Following consultation with key policing partners, the principal recommendation is that an individual not convicted of the offence in relation to which their custody image was taken may apply for it to be deleted. There should be a presumption that police will remove it from their databases unless retention is necessary for a policing purpose, and there is an exceptional reason for it to be retained. For those under the age of 18 when the image was taken, the review sets out there should be a strong presumption that police will remove it unless there is a highly exceptional reason to retain it.

Brandon Lewis, Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, said:

Custody images and facial searching play an important role in the detection and prevention of crime but there is a clear need to strike a careful balance between protecting an individual's privacy and giving the police the tools they need to keep us safe.

I believe the recommendations of this important review strike the right balance. They will now be passed to the NPCC and the College of Policing to take forward, and I expect the changes to guidance to come into effect in the near future.

The report also recommends that police should automatically review all custody images held after specified periods to ensure that they are only retaining those they need to keep – without the need for the individual to apply for them to be deleted. It also recommends that – when undertaking these reviews – police should generally delete images of unconvicted individuals, those whose image was taken when they were under 18 and persons convicted of a non-recordable offence. The Home Office recommends that the specified period after which reviews should be undertaken vary according to the seriousness of the offence which the individual had been accused.

The review's key recommendations include:

- giving unconvicted people (i.e. persons who are not convicted of the offence in relation to which their image is taken) the right to request that their image is deleted
- a presumption that chief officers will delete images following such an application, except where retention is necessary for a policing purpose and there is an exceptional reason to retain it, or a highly exceptional reason in the case of individuals whose image was taken when they were under 18
- that the police should automatically review after specified periods all of the custody images that they hold to ensure that they are only retaining those they need to keep
- that under certain, limited circumstances (for example, if a conviction is very old or is for a minor offence) it may be appropriate for the police to delete the custody image related to that offence. However, other than where the conviction was for a non-recordable offence (or the image was taken when the person was under 18), there would be no presumption in favour of deletion.

The review also considered whether it would be possible to require all forces to undertake a weeding out exercise to identify custody images which should no longer be retained but concluded that such an approach would not be practical. The Police National Database does not link custody images to individual crime records. Therefore such an exercise would require forces to review all of the images that they hold which would be extremely lengthy and resource intensive. It would also cost a very considerable amount of taxpayers' money and would unnecessarily take funding away from other areas of policing, potentially weakening the police's ability to protect the public.

You can read the [Report on the Review of the Use and Retention of Custody Images](#).

Jonathan Reynolds comment on RBS results

Jonathan

Reynolds MP, Labour's Shadow City Minister, commenting on RBS's reported £7bn annual loss today, said:

"Today's results show RBS still has much to do to overcome the legacy of the financial crisis.

"Whilst the core banking business of RBS is improving, the financial burden caused by the errors of the past has generated a significant loss.

"British taxpayers have had to stump up huge support for RBS – they need to know that there has been a significant change in the regulation and culture of banking to prevent this happening again.

"The scale of the taxpayers' support also means there needs to be a conversation about what the long-term future of RBS should look like, to best protect the public's money."

News story: Avian flu confirmed at a farm near Haltwhistle, Northumberland

The UK's Chief Veterinary Officer has confirmed H5N8 avian flu in a small flock of chickens at a farm near Haltwhistle, Northumberland.

A 3km Protection Zone and a 10km Surveillance Zone have been put in place around the infected premises to limit the risk of the disease spreading. We have published [full details of the controls in place](#).

The flock contains about 35 birds. A number have died and the remaining live birds at the premises are being humanely culled. A full investigation is under way to determine the source of the infection.

Public Health England advises that the risk to public health from the virus is very low and the Food Standards Agency is clear that bird flu does not

pose a food safety risk for UK consumers.

[Read the latest advice and information](#) on avian flu in the UK, including actions to reduce the risk of the disease spreading, advice for anyone who keeps poultry or captive birds and details of previous cases. Journalists with queries should contact [Defra press office](#).