



merlin standard

INGEUS UK LIMITED

COMPACT REPORT

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1. KEY INFORMATION

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Assessment Type | ACCREDITATION REVIEW |
| Assessor's Decision | STANDARD MET |
| Anniversary Date | 15/06/2022 |
| Assessment Dates | 29/06/2020 – 01/07/2020 |
| Lead Assessor's Name | RUTH REGAN |
| Customer ID | C10122 |
| Assessment Reference | PN104842 |

2. ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| OVERALL OUTCOME | 86% Excellent |
| 1. Design | 97% Excellent |
| 2. Procure | 90% Excellent |
| 3. Contract | 100% Excellent |
| 4. Funding | 73% Good |
| 5. Develop | 73% Good |
| 6. Performance Manage | 86% Excellent |
| 7. Quality Assurance and Compliance | 84% Good |
| 8. Review and Close | 88% Excellent |

3. METHODOLOGY

Ingeus UK Limited (referred to as Ingeus or the Organisation throughout the report) continues to be mandated by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to be accredited against the Merlin Standard due to being a Prime delivery partner for several of their programmes. Ingeus has other supply chains as a result of holding contracts with various commissioners, and these were also included in the scope of this Merlin assessment. Organisations that hold the Merlin Standard are required to be re-accredited every two-years, and consequently, Ingeus came forward for re-accreditation in line with its anniversary date.

The Merlin assessment team included Ruth Regan (Lead Assessor) and Susan Smith (Team Assessor), supported by a Coordinator from within Ingeus. The Lead Assessor started working with the Coordinator in January 2020 to establish the scope of, and discuss the logistics for, the assessment. The dates when the interview evidence gathering would take place were confirmed, and an initial project plan agreed which was later amended to take account of the Covid-19 lockdown.

A booking form and a spreadsheet declaring a list of Supply Chain Partners was submitted by Ingeus to Assessment Services Limited. Subsequently, Ingeus confirmed that the list presented was accurate, and there were no potential Supply Chain Partners to engage in the accreditation review.

In advance of the interview evidence gathering, all 42 declared present, and six past Supply Chain Partners were invited to participate in the Merlin online survey, with responses being received from 31 present (74%) and one past (17%). The results of the survey informed the focus of the interview evidence gathering and contributed to the overall scoring.

The Lead Assessor liaised with the Coordinator throughout the planning phase to review and agree the adjusted virtual interview schedule. All documentation required for the accreditation review; Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ), Pre-Assessment Notes (PAN) and interview timetable were shared in line with the agreed timescales, enabling the assessment to take place as planned.

The assessment team spent two and a half days each reviewing documentary evidence and undertaking interviews via Microsoft Teams with Ingeus staff involved in the strategic and day-to-day management of their supply chains. Also, 19 (40%) of the declared Supply Chain Partners were interviewed (again using Microsoft Teams) which is in line with the published Merlin scoping framework for Covid-19 virtual assessments.

The following report provides an overview of the findings against the key criteria within the Merlin Standard, evidenced across the supply chains. Areas of strength, areas to consider for development over the forthcoming two years are also highlighted.

4. ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

Ingeus evolved from an Australian start-up that has become a global provider of services that assist thousands of citizens every day. The original insight that created the Organisation – that people with barriers to work should be supported to thrive rather than left alone just to survive – was embraced when establishing the business in the UK in 2002.

Over the past 18 years, Ingeus has created new, better ways to support people with barriers in their lives delivering health, employment, justice and youth services.

In December 2018, Ingeus became part of the international human services provider, APM Group. The APM Group's UK business (APM UK) now operates as part of Ingeus in the UK. This purchase effectively doubled the size of the company and extended its operations across Europe, South East Asia, the United States of America and Canada. The international group operates from 710 locations and employs some 6500 people; 1500 of whom work in the UK.

Its mission is '*to enable better lives*' of the people it supports; while their published values of *Take Pride, Do the Right Thing, Believe in Everyone, Care and Respect and Own It*, are described as underpinning all they do.

Ingeus recognises the value of working with Supply Chain Partners to ensure the needs of the customer groups and those of the commissioner/s are met. At the time of this accreditation review, the following contracts were being delivered in the UK with the support of a supply chain:

Employability

Commissioner: Central London Forward (CLF).

Programme: Work & Health Programme across central London delivered under the title, Central London Works (CLW).

Delivery: Ingeus 90% / Supply Chain 10%.

Commissioner: Department for Communities Northern Ireland (DCNI).

Programme: Steps to Success (S2S) employability contract across Northern Ireland.

Delivery: 51 % Ingeus / 49% Supply Chain.

Commissioner: Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).

Programme: Work and Health Programme across Greater Manchester delivered under the title, 'Working Well'.

Delivery: Ingeus 54% / Supply Chain 46%.

Commissioner: Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Programme: Work & Health Programme North West (WHP NW) delivered across Cheshire, Lancashire, Cumbria and Merseyside.

Delivery: Ingeus 72% / Supply Chain 28%.

Employability (APM)

Commissioner: Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

Programme: HM Prison & Probation Service (HMPPS) Co-Financing 3 (CFO3) employability programme in the East Midlands, North East, Yorkshire & Humber.

Delivery: This is a legacy APM / HMPPS contract delivered through 50% Direct Delivery / Supply Chain 50%.

Health

Commissioner: NHS England (NHSE).

Programme: National Diabetes Prevention Programme (NDPP).

Delivery: Ingeus 10% / Supply Chain 90%.

Commissioner: Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Programme: Access to Work Mental Health Support Services (ATW) delivered across the UK under the title, 'Able Futures'.

Delivery: Ingeus 67% / Supply Chain 33%.

Youth

Commissioner: National Citizen Service Trust (NCST).

Programme: National Citizen Service (NCS) delivered across the South East and East Midlands.

Delivery: Ingeus 14% / Supply Chain 86%.

5. AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT STRENGTH

Several significant strengths were identified during the Assessment, and these are described below. The numbers in brackets refer to the criteria of the Standard:

Supply chain design continues to be a comprehensive and robust process that considers the needs and requirements of commissioners and customers, Ingeus' capabilities to deliver and the benefits to be had of engaging a supply chain. Where supply chains are in place, the range of organisations engaged includes private, public, registered charities, third sector, local, regional and national organisations of varying sizes and sectors. More extensive networks, including specialist partners, referral organisations etc. are actively engaged in offering additional support to customers. Supply Chain Partners were able to give examples of how their supply chain had been reviewed and improved to meet the changing needs of customer groups that were not catered for through the mix of organisations within the original supply chain. (1.1, 1.2, 1.6)

A significant number of Supply Chain Partners were very positive about how the design of their supply chain encourages and facilitates effective collaboration leading to better services being provided to customers. Examples include sharing resources, working from dual delivery sites and sharing ideas on new delivery models pre and during Covid-19. Supply Chain Partners believe that they can talk openly and candidly with Ingeus and other members of their supply chain and subsequently work together with a spirit of openness and transparency. For example, members of the NCS supply chain have worked with Ingeus on how they might repurpose the summer programme and explore options for 2021 delivery. Comments from Supply Chain Partners across the different supply chains included:

"...we collaborated with APM to develop it (a data protection impact assessment) and then shared this with other Supply Chain Partners to see how it would work."

"...we work in collaboration and partnership on casework."

"...a partner in the supply chain gave us advice on how to navigate the CRM (customer relationship management system) and shared with us the issues they'd had and how they overcame them."

"...Ingeus is one of the most proactive Primes in sharing resources and encouraging open collaboration amongst partners. We have developed an excellent relationship with one of our fellow Supply Chain Partners." (1.4)

Supply Chain Partners believe that they are working with a Prime whose values are matched to their own. All described being committed to supporting the individual and having the customer at the heart of all they do. Examples were provided of how the shared core principles and values manifested themselves in the management of the supply chains. For example, providing support to vulnerable customers which goes over and above the requirements of the contract and working in true partnership to ensure provision supports the local communities served by the contract/s. (1.5)

Procurement practice remains excellent. Opportunities to become a Supply Chain Partner are promoted widely, and Expression of Interest (EOI) requests judged through a transparent and objective-based assessment process which leads organisations involved to believe the selection process to be open, fair and transparent. A 'smart-based' Request for Further Information (RFI) as a follow-up to an earlier EOI process to obtain more detailed information for a specific bid has been developed, and where appropriate, this is supported by a weekly checkpoint call to assist previously short-listed organisations to complete the process. Due diligence was acknowledged as being very robust, comprehensive and developmental, as Ingeus' requirements 'stretched' organisations and ensured their policies, procedures, finances etc. were the best they could be. Examples of support provided included the sharing of policies to enable a Supply Chain Partner to 'be on point' with the latest legislation and being signposted to different sources of support to become Cyber Essentials compliant. The approach to onboarding new Supply Chain Partners was again described as robust with implementation plans being put in place which left nothing to chance. Comments from Supply Chain Partners across the different supply chains included:

"...we were fully kept in the loop throughout this process, and Ingeus put together an excellent due diligence information pack for Supply Chain partners to refer to."

"...comprehensive due diligence, flow down of info throughout the onboarding process. This was open, fair and transparent." (2.1)

A comprehensive strategy to address the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) for those transferring in or out of Ingeus is in place. The approach taken to any TUPE situation is always to have the employee at the heart of the process, ensuring they are provided with the information, advice and guidance they need quickly and consistently. Lessons learnt from each TUPE intervention are completed resulting in small incremental changes which ensure the process follows the required legal process while maintaining high levels of support to those affected. (2.2)

Supply Chain Partners confirm that there are explicit contracts in place that have been clearly explained, with Ingeus staff going to great lengths to ensure the risks associated with the agreement are highlighted, discussed and understood. Examples were also shared of how Ingeus had acted on behalf of the supply chain where the commissioner's terms were perceived as onerous and changing clauses to the benefit of individual partner organisations. The contract variation control process in place has ensured that during Covid-19, all changes to contracts have been managed effectively and efficiently. Where previously well established and understood performance expectations change, these are communicated and explained successfully to Supply Chain Partners. (3.1, 3.2)

Communications and the culture of openness and honesty during staff interactions were cited as being excellent in both the Supply Chain Partner online survey and their interviews. The majority also commented on good relationships with others across the Organisation, including those within support services. Examples of robust and effective working relationships were described, which were underpinned by an open, honest and two-way flow of information and communication. (6.1, 6.2)

Supply Chain Partners talked about how the quality assurance and compliance processes used by Ingeus were robust while being fit for purpose and proportionate to the level of the contract being delivered. In the spirit of collaboration, Supply Chain Partners were open to the findings of the quality assurance activities being shared across the supply chain/s so that they might be used to improve the service delivered to customers. Supply Chain Partners were keen to share that it was not just compliance that Ingeus was interested in – it was the quality of delivery and the customer experience too. (7.2)

The Ingeus raison d'être is *'to enable better lives'* of the people it supports, and it continues to assess the impact of delivery on marginalised people, those undergoing economic and social hardship and the development and wellbeing of customer groups in the broadest possible sense. A considerable range of examples demonstrating how they and their supply chain/s have contributed to encouraging people/employee wellbeing and improving community sustainability were shared. (8.3)

The approach to exiting Supply Chain Partners from their supply chain/s, mirrors that used by Ingeus during onboarding in that plans are developed which leave no room for error or oversight in what needs to be done and by when. This approach enables both Ingeus and the Supply Chain Partner to manage the exit of the contract with confidence. All records are archived effectively, information security is maintained, payments due are received and, where customers are involved, a seamless transfer is made with no disruption to the service provided. (8.5)

6. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Two areas where further development would be beneficial were identified during the Assessment. These are for the Organisation to consider as a contribution to continuous improvement. The numbers in brackets refer to the criteria of the Standard:

Organisations across the supply chains praised Ingeus for their approach to paying invoices, and in particular, the payment of invoices promptly during Covid-19. However, this was countered by a small proportion of Supply Chain Partners who in the online survey and during their interviews highlighted that, as recently as in second quarter of 2020, remittance advice notices had not been received, and payments had been late. Consideration should be given to investigating why there are these perceived delays and ensuring that solutions are sort and Supply Chain Partners informed as a result. The contrasting range of comments made by Supply Chain Partners regarding the receipt of accurate and timely payment include the following:

"...Ingeus pride themselves on timely payments, and we have never had any issues with payments. They have been extremely supportive during the COVID-19 interim payment arrangements ensuring that we continue to receive payments timely and accurately."

"...there have been occasions where payments have not reflected payment by results accurately and where payments were not paid promptly resulting in remedial works from our teams."

"...regularly have to chase confirmation of payment dates and outstanding ones too." (4.2)

There was mixed feedback from the Supply Chain Partners in both their online survey and their interviews regarding the approach taken by Ingeus to identifying the learning and development needs of staff across the supply chain/s. Some were very complimentary about the learning provided, especially when there had been changes to, for example, systems which required support to understand/utilise. Others were of the view that while onboarding training had been received there had been no further 'systematic' approach taken by Ingeus to identify ongoing learning needs of supply chain staff. Where training had taken place, there was no visible evidence of how the impact of the learning had been evaluated and recognised in terms of improved quality or performance of service delivery. Consideration could be given to the benefits of undertaking an annual training needs analysis of supply chain staff and producing a learning and development plan to share with Supply Chain Partners highlighting the trends identified and the proposals on how they might be addressed. Throughout the year, there may also be benefits to be had of including learning and development as part of the performance/quality review processes. Doing so could be useful in highlighting any additional learning needs and evaluating the impact of learning undertaken. (5.3)

7. FINDINGS

The feedback below is reported against key criteria of the Merlin Standard, aligned with the "Plan-Do-Review" business cycle.

| PLAN |
|--|
| <p>Through planning an effective supply chain, the range of Partners and how they are engaged ensures there is a group of organisations that cover a diverse range of providers that all understand the requirements of the contract and their contributions to achieving the desired outcomes.</p> |
| <p>Whatever contract Ingeus considers, the relevant teams work meticulously to gain a clear understanding of the objectives of the commissioner to ensure they are aligned to their social values and raison d'être. For example, they have engaged in listening events to understand commissioner needs, worked to understand political policy documents to help shape the design of services and completed a survey of 3000 customers of one programme to help develop the design of another. Ingeus belongs to several industry bodies that provide useful information, and this together with data supplied by NOMIS, Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnership, and Combined Authorities help inform thinking/specifications and the scope required of a contract and any subsequent supply chain. Of the 42 Supply Chain Partners currently engaged in delivery, 2% are public sector, 24% private, 34% are from the third sector, and 40% are registered charities. All of whom are aware of the mix of organisations within their supply chain/s and believe them to be fit for purpose in meeting the commissioner's objectives. Supply Chain Partners comments include:</p> <p><i>"...there are all different kinds of organisations in our supply chain, and that brings variety."</i> <i>"...the organisations in our supply chain are all different, but we complement each other."</i> <i>"...we were chosen for our specialism."</i></p> <p>Ingeus continues to review and evolve the supply chain/s design to meet the changing needs of both customers and commissioners. Doing so has led to the loss of organisations from the supply chain/s and the introduction of new organisations. For example, a new Supply Chain Partner joined the CFO3 supply chain to address the changing needs of the commissioner and NCS supply chains have been developed to find more 'hyper-local' organisations that are embedded within their local youth communities. Also, a gap in provision was identified within the CLW supply chain, and subsequently, an organisation was identified and encouraged to submit an EOI who offered the provision / delivery methodology required.</p> <p>The TUPE strategy has been reviewed to include aspects of both APM and Ingeus working practices by <i>"...taking the best from each."</i> After each TUPE intervention, a 'lessons learnt' exercise is completed to ensure the process remains legal as well as employee orientated. For example, a discussion document has been introduced, which details the key points to be covered with affected employees – thus ensuring all the relevant information is gathered quickly and systematically.</p> |

When a Blackburn-based Supply Chain Partner went into administration in late 2019, Ingeus was able to respond within hours of the announcement, instigating TUPE and paying salaries of the staff to keep the programme operational and to provide stability for them and their customers. The implications of TUPE are explored during any bidding process so that any potential TUPE liability is understood before tendering. A member of the Ingeus team said: *"...we demonstrate our values where we can – for example, in our approach to TUPE."* Employees who had been through the TUPE process commented:

"...Ingeus was really quick off the mark – they reassured the team and me."

"...new offices, IT and mobile phones were provided really quickly along with an excellent new starter induction."

"...there really isn't anything they could have done differently or better." to TUPE – we enable better lives for those impacted by our response to each situation."

Due to its thorough contracting process, (as described in Section 5 of this report), Ingeus continues to ensure that Supply Chain Partners are fully aware of performance expectations and how these are in line with those of the relevant commissioner. This awareness-raising and subsequent understanding starts pre-contracting and continues during the life of the contracts through the performance management process. During the changing and challenging times brought about by Covid-19, commissioner's requests to make changes to longstanding performance requirements have been explained, and contract variations exchanged. The feedback from both the Supply Chain Partner online survey and their interviews were particularly strong in this regard. Comments made include:

"...I do believe performance expectations are reasonable and realistic – the contract is well managed, and requests are reasonable."

"...they have managed the Covid-19 situation very well and kept us informed all the way re changes to performance needed due to the commissioner."

"...we enjoy an excellent working relationship with Ingeus and feel the targets they set are always achievable."

The approach to funding and payment arrangements continues to be one of primarily mirroring the terms issued by the commissioner. However, as part of the due diligence process, Ingeus conducts credit checks on all potential Supply Chain Partners to ensure their financial position provides sufficient stability to sustain the services being contracted. Several examples were shared of Ingeus staff working with Supply Chain Partners to ensure awareness and understanding of payment models and terms to determine financial risk and cost recovery levels. Supply Chain Partners also gave examples of changes made to funding models to support cash flow challenges both before and during Covid-19.

"...a plan was drawn up with Ingeus, which looked at the costings and income value to show if the contract was viable for us to deliver."

"...new model has been shared, and it's a good model for us – all very transparent and open about what was involved and have agreed to review it every month to make sure the finances are adding up ok."

"...we agreed that we would get a cost-plus funding model during Covid-19."

DO

Supply Chain Partners are supported to develop their services to meet or exceed expected performance and quality assurance requirements.

Ingeus undertakes to support and develop its Supply Chain Partners throughout the life of the various contracts it holds. Supply Chain Partner feedback on how they have been encouraged to create the systems and processes required for successful contract delivery was strong. The support provided during and immediately post onboarding was highlighted as being particularly useful, mainly where the mechanics of the contract were explained, such as how to utilise client management systems/database. Where relevant, during Covid-19 help and guidance has been provided on information security procedures and data impact assessments to enable Supply Chain Partners to remain compliant while staff work from home. Supply Chain Partners commented "*...we had access to their Salesforce guru*", and "*...they helped us at the front end of the contract with processes, documentation and systems training.*"

As highlighted in Section 5 of this report, the level, method and style of communication which permeates across the Organisation and its supply chain/s is, without question, a strength. As well as being praised during Supply Chain Partner interviews, this aspect of supply chain management scored particularly strongly in the online survey. Honesty, openness and transparency were words frequently used by Supply Chain Partners to explain their perception of the overarching culture. Having consistency in relationships was highlighted as being of particular importance with this regard. The following are representative of the views expressed by Supply Chain Partners:

"...professional, solid."

"...transparent and effective."

"...right from the EOJ they have been genuinely interested in working with us in an open and transparent way."

"...I can judge how quickly other Managing Partners are sharing the information, and Ingeus are always on the ball and the most supportive and open and honest."

"...very transparent relationship with a safe culture even when the topics are difficult."

"...our current Supply Chain Manager is fantastic - I really feel she is there to support and guide the supply chain. She doesn't shy away from difficult conversations; she is upfront but very fair. I can't emphasise enough what a difference she has made."

There remains a consistent but flexible approach to performance management across the supply chains. Each contract has a specific member of staff within Ingeus that manages the performance of the Supply Chain Partner, and this is understood by all members of the relevant supply chain. Discussions about performance take place monthly with minutes and actions points taken so that there is clarity regarding the agreed required outcomes. The format differs across the contracts, but all are aimed at ensuring that there are structured opportunities to review performance and delivery against expectations of the commissioner, highlight any risks, concerns and mitigating actions and recognition of any over performance and innovation. Supply Chain Partners commented:

"...performance management is really positive."

"...if we have fallen below the required performance levels, Ingeus has provided excellent support to get us back on track."

"...it's about our overall supply chain performance as well as our performance."

"...they have a different culture and mentality to performance – it's actually more productive as we want to improve for them."

The importance of developing and embedding a performance culture is understood throughout the Ingeus business, with staff commenting:

"...when APM came into the business the performance wasn't necessarily the focus – but now all operational teams are focused on performance across all our contracts."

"...our commissioners are seeing an improved performance."

"...a performance culture is now getting embedded."

Recognised data sources/client management systems are used to produce robust, appropriate performance information for Supply Chain Partners. Ingeus Works/Adapt is used for employability contracts, Salesforce for NCS, ReferAll for health and CFO3 uses the commissioners own CATS+ system. Supply Chain Partners confirmed that management information (MI) is used effectively to provide them with a monthly 'performance pack' and that ad-hoc MI reports, as well as those already provided for the contracts, can also be requested. A member of the Ingeus staff explained how *"...there is a performance expectation tool that gives a forward view of performance, and we can alter parameters to show how job starts and sustainability work."* To support performance improvement, MI reports are utilised to highlight priority caseloads to improve outcomes. A high proportion of Supply Chain Partners described the benefits of having access to the broader supply chains performance data. As one Supply Chain Partner said, *"...we get to know how all the supply chain is performing – we only have x% of the overall contract, but we can see through the MI how we including the other partners are contributing to the whole of the contract."*

Ingeus is transparent about the methods and procedures used to quality assure delivery and the customer journey, and all Supply Chain Partners confirmed they were fully aware of them. Each contract has a specific Compliance and Quality Assurance Framework (COAF), which describes the processes to be used to ensure that the contract is delivered to the required quality standards. As highlighted in Section 5 of this report, these processes are welcomed by Supply Chain Partners as they are proportionate to the contract being delivered while assuring that the right mechanisms are in place to meet the requirements of the contract. Therefore, the risk of any potential financial clawback is reduced. The Delivery Partner Assurance Review (DPAR) is currently under review to ensure it remains fit for purpose across all contracts and plans to pilot these developments with Supply Chain Partners is encouraged. Supply Chain Partners commented:

"...compliance is 'are we delivering the minimum service delivery standards', and quality is 'how we get this done'."

"...quality audits take place regularly, and we also share the results of our external assessments with APM."

"...Ingeus has a full quality assurance and compliance process in place which supports our continuous improvements. We have mirrored our practices to reflect this."

"...great to have our own internal quality assurance procedures link into the APM monitor. Our results are fed into the monthly meetings and assist with improving service delivery for our customers."

REVIEW

Review and evaluation is used to demonstrate the impact of the services delivered and continuously improve service delivery.

Social values remain at the heart of everything Ingeus stands for, and people across the business are proud that globally over half a million people are supported by the group each year. For example, National Citizen Service work continues to focus on creating social cohesion, social engagement and social mobility, reflected in the ongoing priority to attract young people from hard to reach/socially disadvantaged groups. Reporting against social values is particularly strong within the GMCA Work and Health Programme where every six months an informative and detailed social values report is produced demonstrating progress towards achievement – the most recent being published in December 2019. Some of the headline 'to date figures' within this report include:

- 124 vacancies being shared across partner organisations,
- 6 Disability Confident events delivered for employers,
- 149 days of volunteering undertaken by the delivery team,
- 2324 external referrals and signposts for health support made, and
- 232 participants referred for specific housing/ homelessness support.

This commitment to social values flows through the supply chain/s with all Supply Chain Partners providing their own good news stories demonstrating the impact of their service. For example, they explained how:

"...the impact we have is to bring financial stability to chaotic lifestyles and ensure people don't get evicted and find statutory debts when they leave prison. We embed financial capability skills which reduces re-offending and crime."

"...it's about the number of hours social action and the funds raised."

"...we have all impacted by the number of people we have got back into work – we have particularly good performance with PG6 – people on ESA benefits."

"...over 80% of people we have seen have been supported to stay in work."

"...we aim for jobs that provide a real living wage."

"...case studies and good news stories are shared amongst the prime and supply chain for HMPPS".

As stated in Section 5 of this report, a considerable range of examples demonstrating how Ingeus and their supply chain/s have contributed to both encouraging people/employee wellbeing and improving community sustainability were shared. A small selection of these are highlighted below:

- Staff delivering the S2S programme were not furloughed so their services could be offered to people across Northern Ireland who needed employability information, advice and guidance.
- A Community Investment Fund invested in an IT project which enables health professionals to make referrals with two thousand being made in one month to food, debt and mental health services. 90% of the fund will be spent with registered charities and third sector organisations to help them build their capacity rather than providing just a one-off payment to cover staff costs.
- Every member of Ingeus staff has two workdays a year they can use for community service activities of their choice.

- Central London Works are inviting Local Authorities and businesses to apply for 5,000 trees as part of their sustainability programme. CLW has partnered with various garden centres to provide 5,000 saplings, free of charge.
- During the Covid-19 lockdown, Ingeus has reported that they have supported nearly 3000 people with mental health conditions to stay in work.
- Also, during lockdown, CLW has made over 1,300 individual signposting referrals to local support services, including 225 referrals for financial support and 71 referrals for mental health. They have also enabled participants to access discounts on their water bills and formed a relationship with the charity Pecan who provide food parcels and a discounted subscription service to Southwark residents.

8. CONCLUSION AND CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

In conclusion, this Assessment provided the opportunity to review the practices of Ingeus for the current contracts against the Merlin Standard. The senior leadership team should be mindful that any significant organisational or senior staff changes, and/or being awarded additional contracts using a significantly different supply chain may require a strategic review. Similarly, any decisions reached by the Independent Complaints Examiner may also result in a strategic review being needed to ensure the Organisation continues to operate in line with the Merlin principles.

Holders of the Merlin Standard Accreditation must:

- Maintain and continually improve upon their approach to Supply Chain Management.
- Cooperate with annual Reviews as required by Assessment Services Ltd.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd (merlin@assessmentsservices.com) or their Lead Assessor if the key contact name or contact details change.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd of any significant changes made to the organisational structure, senior management or systems that may impact on their accreditation; email: (merlin@assessmentsservices.com).
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd immediately if they gain additional contracts.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd of any serious complaint or rise in numbers of complaints received from Supply Chain Partners.
- Not undertake or omit to undertake any activity that may be misleading and/or may cause Assessment Services Ltd and/or the Merlin Standard to be brought into disrepute.
- Only use the Merlin Standard Quality Mark for the areas within the scope of the accreditation and in accordance with the guidelines.
- Ensure in cases where accreditation is withdrawn or where they do not come forward for Accreditation Review, remove from display any certificates or plaques issued by Assessment Services Ltd and do not display the Merlin Standard Quality Mark, nor refer to being a former holder of the Merlin Standard.
- Be aware that Assessment Services Ltd reserves the right to remove any accreditation and/or certification previously applied if payment is not received for services provided.
- Submit their Booking Form for re-accreditation to the Merlin Standard at least four months prior to the accreditation anniversary date ensuring all pre on-site activity is completed in a timely way including planning, payment, completion of the Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ), Pre-Assessment Notes (PAN) and interview scheduling. Accreditation Reviews are due two years from the anniversary accreditation date; it is expected that organisations will be assessed by this date or will risk being de-accredited.

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