

## Report of Director of Children's Services

### Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

**Subject: An update on progress in relation to increasing the Number of Young People in Employment, Education or Training**

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| Are specific electoral Wards affected?<br>If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Is the decision eligible for Call-In?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?<br>If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:<br>Appendix number: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

### Summary of main issues

1. The Children and Families Scrutiny Board conducted an investigation into the support available in Leeds in order to reduce the risk of young people not accessing appropriate employment, education or training, also referred to as NEET.
2. The Board conducted its inquiry over three sessions involving a range of key stakeholders and two visits to speak to young people undertaking courses provided by igen and Leeds City College.
3. This led to the production of a Scrutiny Inquiry Report in March 2013 containing 13 recommendations and a subsequent response from Children's Services in July 2013.
4. The recommendations included a request for an update on progress in October 2013 and a further update in September 2014.

### Recommendations

5. The Board are requested to note and comment on the progress to reduce the risk of young people not accessing appropriate employment, education or training.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report provides a detailed progress update on a number of key areas of activity to increase the number of young people in employment, education or training.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Board was tasked with carrying out a piece of work on each of the three Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) obsessions. The third of these related to reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or Training (NEET).
- 2.2 The focus of the inquiry was on the support available in Leeds in order to reduce the risk of young people aged 16 to 19 years old becoming NEET and help them access appropriate employment, education or training.
- 2.3 During the course of the three sessions the inquiry received written and verbal evidence from a range of key stakeholders involved in supporting young people including council services, schools, FE colleges and igen. This was supported by two visits to speak to young people undertaking courses provided by igen and Leeds City College.
- 2.4 This led to the production of a Scrutiny Inquiry Report in March 2013 containing 13 recommendations and a response from Children's Services in July 2013.
- 2.5 The Scrutiny Inquiry Report also requested a progress update on a number of key areas of activity to reduce NEET to be presented to Scrutiny Board in October 2013 and a further report on progress in September 2014.

## **3 Main issues**

### **3.1 The Leeds strategy and model to reduce NEET (Recommendation 12)**

- 3.2 Our performance in reducing the number of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is a powerful indicator of our overall success in educating and supporting young people. If young people fail to make a successful transition to further learning, employment and adult life, it is likely to have major consequences for their future economic wellbeing. To successfully address NEET and achieve our ambition to become a child friendly NEET free city we must tackle a range of complex inter-related issues affecting the most vulnerable. Our work with young people around the development of the Child Friendly City, our review of post-16 provision, the development of the Leeds Youth Offer and the major programmes that are now underway around the Devolved Youth Contract Programme and Families First initiatives are coming together to provide a cohesive package of opportunity to achieve our ambition for all young people aged 16-19 to be productively engaged in education, employment or training.

- 3.3 The Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) means young people now remain in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. This will raise to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in September 2015. In addition to efforts to increase participation in education or training we are also focusing on providing employment opportunities and ensuring young people have the skills to succeed in the workplace. Ensuring there are jobs for all our young people will be a major challenge over the coming years.
- 3.4 **NEET & Not Known Performance Update**
- 3.5 There is evidence we have started to turn the curve with regard to reducing NEET/increasing progression to education, employment and training and reducing Not Knowns, see Annex 1. There is currently a particular focus on ensuring that no young person aged 16-19 is NEET for over 6 months by autumn 2015 as the first stage in delivering on our ambition to become a NEET free city.
- 3.6 Whilst there are around 180 more young people NEET in June 2014 compared to June 2013, there have been dramatic decreases in the number of young people with a not known status by around 600. This means that at this current time we can be more confident in the accuracy of our NEET data than in earlier reporting periods.
- 3.7 The number of young people whose status is not known was down to a record low of 2.9% in June 2014; see Table 2, Annex 1. This is just over half the number of young people with a not known record compared to the same month last year and around a third of the equivalent national rate of 8.6%. Our success in getting not known down to this level has been a dedicated collective effort involving igen, schools, colleges, the council and other partners. Our processes and procedures are now more robust and we can go forward with confidence around the quality of our data. On this measure for June 2014 Leeds ranks joint 21st of 150 local authorities.
- 3.8 This substantial reduction in not known rates has impacted on the NEET rate in Leeds, as inevitably some young people with an expired status have been identified as NEET.
- 3.9 Table 9 shows the change in NEET and not known levels by cluster over the last 12 months. From the 25 clusters, 7 clusters have a reduction in the number of young people who have a status that is not known, and have not experienced an increase in the number of young people who are NEET. These clusters are: Alwoodley, Ardsley/Tingley, Bramley, Brigshaw, EPOSS, Morley and Seacroft Manston. Clusters that have seen an increase in both the number of young people who have a not known status and the number of young people who are NEET are ESNW, NEXT and Pudsey. Specific activities and initiatives, and how and when it is targeted locally to support young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET, is detailed and monitored through Area Level NEET action plans, led by igen.
- 3.10 The DfE use data from the reporting period between November and January each year as their key measure of local authority performance and this data is shown in Table 4. They also indicate where local authorities have particularly high rates of

young people with a not known status. For 2013 data (November 2013 – January 2014) the DfE flagged 36 local authorities where the proportion of young people whose current activity was not known was more than 50% above the England average. A high not known rate serves to artificially suppress the reported NEET rate, and this means that comparison of NEET rates with just under a quarter of local authorities in the country is not a valid exercise.

- 3.11 It should be noted that of the young people who are included in the NEET figures at any particular time, around 300-400 will not be available to the labour market due to medical reasons, or because they are caring for young children or have other caring responsibilities. In addition 50-60 young people who already have a date agreed to start work or further training will remain recorded as NEET for a short while longer. At the current time around 1200 of the NEET group are those young people who are actively seeking education, employment or training. These groups are shown in table 5 of the appendix of performance data.
- 3.12 Around a quarter of the NEET group have been NEET for fewer than three months. Our focus is on working with the 'sustained NEET' group, who have been NEET for more than six months and at the end of June 2014 there were 958 young people (57.5%) of the NEET cohort in this group. Sustained NEET rates by cluster are shown in Table 8.
- 3.13 The rate of participation in learning in Leeds was 84.2% in June 2014 compared to a national average of 81.1% and a rate among statistical neighbour authorities of 83.3%, see Table 3. This positive picture is important as we move towards a situation as a result of the Raising of the Participation Age where by 2015 young people under the age of 18 will not be able to be in a job that does not include the equivalent of at least one day per week of learning. Leeds ranked 85th of 150 local authorities on this measure in June 2014. On this measure, comparison against the performance of other local authorities is more reliable, as this measure is not distorted by large numbers of not known records.
- 3.14 We will increasingly report the rate of young people in learning alongside the NEET rate as the DfE have previously stated they would start they would move away from measuring NEET to measuring Participation as the Raising of the Participation Age was implemented.
- 3.15 As a city, we will continue to focus on ensuring that no young person aged 16-19 is NEET for over 6 months by Autumn 2015 as the first stage in delivering on our ambition to become a NEET free city.
- 3.16 The last NEET Scrutiny progress report lay out and explained the key areas of work taking place across the city to help reduce NEET and showed how these link together to form a comprehensive and coherent model and strategy to reduce NEET across Leeds. These are summarised in Annex 2. This update report provides progress on these areas along with providing information on new initiatives, such as Head Start and Fair Chance. This report also provides information on work underway to introduce Health Education and Care plans for young people in the city who have Special Education Needs or a Disability (SEND). Detail on progress with supporting children who are looked after or care leavers into positive learning or employment destinations post 14 and 16 is also

included. This work is reflected in detail in the Care 2 Work Progress Plan in Annex 3.

### 3.17 **Learning Offer**

### 3.18 **Post-16 Learning infrastructure (Recommendation 12)**

3.19 The local authority recently shared with Schools, Governors and Councillors members the “School Sixth Forms in Leeds: A Discussion Document for Post 16 Learning in Leeds 2014-2020” document and held an event for Heads/Principals, Governors and Councillors on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. There is no prescription in the collaborative solutions outlined in the document. However, solutions that could improve the future economic sustainability and student outcomes in sixth forms are needed. The document described potential solutions identified by the Council for each area of the city.

3.20 The document also made the case for and against collaboration. These were:

| <b>Argument for Retaining an Independent Sixth Form</b>   | <b>Argument for Collaborating in a Joint Sixth Form Centre</b>   |
|---|--|
| Teacher recruitment is easier if post-16 teaching is on offer.  | Teachers can be better paid in more economically sound provision and thus more easily recruited.   |
| Sixth formers can act as “ambassadors” in school. Year 11 students have something to aspire to.       | Year 11 students can show greater maturity as the eldest in school.<br>The interactions between pre-16 and post-16 students are not always positive in school. |
| Having sixth formers in school can inspire year 11.   | The opportunity to go to “college” can be motivating.  |
| Teachers benefit from the challenge of having some teaching of more academically challenging material | Teachers become more specialised and thus more expert rather than thinly stretched.  |
| Teachers can be motivated to get better results in year 11 to boost sixth form numbers                | The most able staff may be teaching sixth formers, to the detriment of year 11.<br>The pressure to recruit may result in biased careers advice to students.    |
| A school with a sixth form is more attractive for recruitment to year 7                               | A school with guaranteed places in a strong collaborative sixth form will be more attractive   |
| The pastoral care of students is better informed from their previous years in school                  | Students benefit from a ‘fresh start’ and the ability to leave behind earlier aspects of their childhood and be more “grown up”                                |
| The ethos of the school is improved by having sixth formers present                                   | Students become more mature and self-reliant in a “college” environment  |

It is proposed that the local authority co-ordinates the development of collaborative solutions across the city and engages interested partners in developing the proposals further. A summary of the proposals can be found in Annex 4.

### **3.21 University Technical College (UTC)**

The first UTC in Leeds will open its doors in the city in 2016. The new school for 14 to 18-year-olds will specialise in manufacturing and Engineering. The project has been led by major employers including Kodak UK, Agfa, Unilever, Siemens and Grant Thornton. It has the backing of Leeds City Council, Leeds University, Leeds City College and the city's chamber of commerce.

### **3.22 Special Educational Need & Disabilities (SEND)**

The new legislation brought in as part of the Children and Families Act 2014 will ensure young people with Special Education Needs will receive a coherent and joined up plan from the age of 0-25 through the introduction of Education Health (EHC) and Care Plans. The EHC Plans will ensure that a young person's education and learning better prepares them for the transition into adulthood and an appropriate positive destination; whether that be into further learning, employment, independent or support living, or a meaningful adult life.

The local authority is working closely with key partners such as Health, Schools, College, training providers and others to implement the necessary changes. Conversion to EHC Plans will begin from September 2014 over a 3 year phased period. The local authority has already worked closely with the education sector to develop a coherent local offer and to implement a fair and equitable process for funding Post 16 learning, with the new process being implemented from September 2014.

The implementation of the EHC Plans, focused on destination and outcome led pathways for young people, will ensure services and learning provision are better planned and young people's needs are better met. Plans to establish a post 16 (HNS) providers forum are in development with a view to increasing the numbers of young adults with SEND accessing the world of work when they leave post 16 provision.

### **3.23 Children Looked After and Care Leavers – Care 2 Work**

- 3.24 As of March 2014, Leeds City Council's Children's Services has given greater emphasis to the work around supporting Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers into further education and employment. This area of work is the responsibility of the Care 2 Work Group, which reports strategically into the MALAP Education to Employment sub group. The Care 2 Work Group brings together staff from Leeds City Council's Children's Services, DWP, Employment and Skills, Children's Services Social Care, Leeds City Council HR, and Igen with the specific aim of improving the numbers of CLA / Care Leavers entering Education, Employment and/or Training (EET). This work is monitored and evidenced in the Care 2 Work Plan (see Annex 3) and the group are working to

successfully obtaining the nationally accredited Care 2 Work Quality Mark for Leeds.

- 3.25 The work of the Care 2 Work group to date has been wide and varied as this is the first time such a plan has been enacted. A comprehensive training plan has been delivered to Children's Services Social Care staff to up-skill and enable them to effectively support and sign post Children Looked After / Care Leavers on their case load into positive post 14 and post 16 destinations. A Readiness for Work programme was piloted in July 2014, to prepare our NEET 18-21 year old care leavers to take the next step to EET. This was a very successful pilot and work is now being undertaken to integrate opportunities of work experience within Leeds City Council, in order that such care leavers will then be in an excellent position to apply for Leeds City Council jobs when they arise. It is envisaged that the Readiness for Work programme will then be mainstreamed as a continual rolling programme. Collaborative work is also underway with Leeds City Council HR to identify employment opportunities and Apprenticeship placements for care leavers prior to those jobs being externally advertised. Early success is evidenced in the two Admin Apprentices recruited in August 2014. This success will now serve as a positive promotion to other service directorates and that work will continue to report to the Care 2 Work group.

In terms of data, the C2W group has identified a number of reporting strands which, prior to this year, have not been prioritised. The first area of work has been to reconcile data between systems (Framework-I and Insight). This work has enabled there to be massive strides forward in being able to track which Children Looked After /Care Leavers have just left Year 11 or Year 12, and do not have an offer of learning or employment with training for September (September Guarantee). For those young people who do not have an offer, a collective targeted approach is being taken by Igen and their social worker to swiftly work with them to help them secure an appropriate learning or employment with training destination. As an additional element of support to this age group, all Children Looked After/Care Leavers were offered free places on the National Citizenship Service programme for this summer, enabling to positively engage with other young people and build crucial skills in readiness for post 16/17 learning and/or employment.

### **3.26 ATA and Apprenticeship Hub**

- 3.27 The Leeds ATA and Apprenticeship Hub are now into year two of a three year programme funded through the City Deal (ending September 2015).
- 3.28 The ATA continues to trade as a company limited by guarantee and is jointly owned by the Council and Leeds City College. The ATA supports the creation of new apprenticeship opportunities involving small and medium sized (SME) employers that would otherwise be unable to take the business risk of employing an apprentice directly. Effectively operating as an employment agency, the ATA directly employs apprentices who are hired to host employers where they will complete their apprenticeship.
- 3.29 The Apprenticeship Hub is part of the Employment & Skills service and works across the city to drive up the number of apprenticeships. It works in partnerships

with training providers and offers support, guidance and information to businesses and young people about apprenticeships.

- 3.30 The Hub and ATA jointly coordinate and deliver wide ranging SME and young person engagement programmes and are supported to by a network of apprenticeship and business ambassadors.
- 3.31 Staff from both teams attend regular business events and network meetings to promote opportunities. The teams have good relationships with business organisations including Leeds Chamber of Commerce. The Hub works with sector bodies and sector skills councils and has enabled support and brokerage services to businesses in the city across the manufacturing, cultural, creative and digital, legal and professional business services sectors.
- 3.32 Articles in local press including About Leeds and Professional Magazine have also helped to increase awareness.
- 3.33 The Hub and ATA deliver a school engagement programme which ensures school and college leavers receive information about accessing an apprenticeship as a career progression route. Activity within schools includes delivering year group presentations, workshops, stands at careers events and bespoke events e.g. exam result day information sessions.
- 3.34 The school engagement programme continues to grow and the Hub has to date delivered in 31 out of 37 Leeds high schools. In addition, noticeboards have been made for every high school so they can establish a dedicated Apprenticeship area with delivery and fitting supplied by the Hub. The school engagement programme aims to achieve a long-term increase in apprenticeships numbers across the city.
- 3.35 The Hub delivers four high profile events during the year, one in each of the three locality areas and a large central summer event. The 2014 summer event was held in June at the town hall. 63 businesses and training organisations exhibited and the event attracted over 1700 delegates. The importance and demand for these events continues to grow.
- 3.36 To date 136 young people have been supported into apprenticeships with the Hub and ATAs support and 238 businesses have committed to take on an apprentice.

### **3.37 Employability Support Activity (Recommendations 3,6,7 and 8)**

### **3.38 Devolved Youth Contract Programme**

The Devolved Youth Contract Programme for 16 and 17 year olds was devolved from the nationally procured programme under City Deal in May 2012. The Youth Contract has recently been approved by Cabinet Office to continue until March 2016 in order to allow as many young people as possible to be supported to achieve a 6-month sustained progression in EET. Year 2 has been characterised by steady progress, with programme elements being established as 'business as usual', alongside strong partnership-working arrangements.

As we enter Year 3, we have nearly completed recruitment with 1,032 young people currently on programme. Currently, 661 of these young people have



progressed to employment, education or training, with the majority of young people entering Further Education (see Appendix 3 for further details). To date, we have successfully supported over 30% of the Youth Contract cohort through to their 6-month sustained progression point. This represents a successful transition for a significant proportion of the hardest to help young people in Leeds, including those with experience of housing issues, child protection, in care/care leavers, pregnancy/teen parents, learning difficulties and/or disabilities and mental health issues.

- 3.39 In Leeds we deliver the Youth Contract programme primarily through our targeted IAG provider (igen) working in partnership with the Education Business Partnership. Young people are recruited to the programme and allocated a key worker who will help them make a successful transition. They are encouraged to choose from a range of activities designed to respond to their needs and help them achieve progression. Options include mentoring (business or peer mentor), group assessment centres, mock interviews, business visits, and work placements within an overall 'Set for Success' programme. Businesses supporting the programme include organisation such O2, Kodak and Leeds Federated Housing.
- 3.40 The key features of the programme in Leeds which have helped us achieve good results already are:
- Being able to ensure that Youth Contract Support Programme activity is a coherent part of a wider city-wide strategy around creating employment opportunities and reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)
  - Strong, pre-existing partnerships between the main service provider and voluntary/third sector offering specialist expertise
  - Well-developed employer links through the Education Business Partnership enabling us to engage businesses extensively in the programme and put an emphasis on helping young people to become 'work-ready' and link to live opportunities in the labour market
  - The sustained relationship with an experienced key worker to provide both support and challenge
  - An emphasis on achieving measurable outcomes, for example by carrying out pre- and post-programme skills audits. This is supported by a 'payment by results' approach, with the final payment made when a young person has been in a sustained placement for six months or more (a strong indicator that a lasting transition has been achieved)
  - A core programme complemented by locality-based innovation projects led by area teams, for example, provision of targeted mental health counselling and outward bound residential programmes

The national evaluation of the Youth Contract highlighted higher achievement rates of young people into and sustaining EET through the City Deal locally designed and delivered programme than the nationally procured provision.

### **3.41 Education Business Partnership offer to schools**

- 3.42 The council's Education Business Partnership (EBP) has reviewed and enhanced their offer to schools. The Team currently offers an extensive range of opportunities to schools and academies for young people to engage with people from businesses to enhance their employability and enterprise skills. These include interactive sessions by business leaders and employees to raise aspirations and understanding of particular career opportunities; structured visits to local businesses; mock interviews and mentoring programmes. In addition the EBP has designed a range of sector related programmes which are delivered in partnership with employers at their place of business and include: Retail in Action, Hospitality in Action, Utilities in Action, O2 Girls into Digital Communications and O2 Learn to Code programmes.

Schools that have purchased tailored programmes for delivery in 2014 include to date: Allerton High, Benton Park, Boston Spa, Cardinal Heenan, City of Leeds, Corpus Christi, Guiseley; John Smeaton, Lawnswood, Mount St Mary's, Priesthorpe, Ralph Thoresby, Roundhay, Royds, Temple Moor, Leeds East Academy, South Leeds Academy, Leeds City College. A further 10 schools access the standard employer led programmes: Wetherby, Brighshaw, Rodillian, Cockburn, Bruntcliffe, Morley Academy, Co-op Academy, Woodkirk, Pudsey Grangefield and Horsforth.

- 3.43 A number of schools access programmes for primary and secondary education via other providers such as The Ahead Partnership and the Prince's Trust.

### **3.44 Support to employment**

There are a wide range of other programmes and initiatives in place across the city to assist young people in securing employment. These include national Youth Contract programmes to encourage and incentivise employers to recruit young people including academies and work trails as well as local interventions:-

- **Sector work based academies** targeted to Jobseeker Allowance claimants are delivered through Jobcentre Plus in conjunction with local partners. These provide pre-employment training, work experience and a guaranteed interview with an employer and participants retain their benefits while on this short programme. Sector initiatives reflect the current recruitment needs of employers and therefore vary, but the Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust regularly recruits to its Apprenticeship vacancies and Clinical Support posts throughout the year through this mechanism.
- **The Work Programme** contracted by DWP is delivered through prime contractors Ingeus and Interserve across West Yorkshire. 18-24 year olds in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance for more than 6 months are referred to the Work Programme. It offers an individually tailored programme of support for up to 2 years.
- **A Work Trial** supported by Jobcentre Plus enables an employer to try out a potential employee before offering them a job. For the employer it reduces the risk and cost of recruitment. Work trials must be for jobs of 16 hours or more

a week and last at least 13 weeks. This enables Jobseeker Allowance claimants to take part on a voluntary basis and retain their benefits while participating.

- The National Apprenticeship Service and the Leeds Apprenticeship Training Agency offer the **Apprenticeship Grant for Employers** (AGE) of £1,500 to support businesses to recruit individuals aged 16 to 24 into an apprenticeship. AGE 16 to 24 targets employers with less than 1000 employees, who are new to Apprenticeships or have not enrolled a new recruit or existing employee onto an Apprenticeship programme in the previous 12 months.
- The Council's Employment and Skills service provides **Jobshop** services across the inner city through One Stop and Joint Service Centres. Matrix accredited Information, Advice and Guidance is provided, including support to create an e-mail account, undertake job search, developing CVs and applications, interview and assessment centre preparation and access to adult skills provision. Customers can access a wide variety of job and Apprenticeship vacancies including those secured by the Council through employment and skills obligations placed on developers through S106 planning agreements and on contractors seeking to deliver services on behalf of the Council above specified thresholds.
- The Council's **Work@Leeds** programme completed its final cohort on 30 May 2014. In total, the programme supported 103 NEET young people into work experience and 42 NEET young people into employment. Programme outcomes are continuing to be monitored and it is therefore expected that job outputs will increase. Work@Leeds has been subsumed by Head Start, a LCR funded training and work experience programme for 18 -24 year olds.
- **Head Start** launched on 31st March 2014 and aims to provide 815 young people who have been unemployed for six months with two weeks training and four weeks work experience. Key worker support will be provided to all programme participants by Igen, the Council's delivery partner. Key workers will support young people to overcome any barriers that affect their ability to gain and sustain employment. Training is delivered by Leeds City College and covers a range of skills development including customer service, team building, communication, CV writing and interview technique. The Council is providing a large number of work placements and is also working with employers across Leeds to open up new opportunities. A range of employers are currently working with the programme from large multi-nationals such as Premier Inn to local independents. Through key worker support and the Council's Jobshop provision, young people are being supported to gain permanent and sustainable employment. 326 young people are expected to gain employment over the two year programme with 245 of those sustaining employment for at least six months.
- **Talent Match** is a Big Lottery funded programme that is being coordinated locally by Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) and delivered by Third Sector providers. Talent Match will work with 18 -24 year olds who are furthest from the labour market, including: those that have been NEET for over 12 months;

unknown NEETs and priority groups including, BME; ex-offenders; travellers; lone parents and those with mental health issues. Key worker support is central to Talent Match and outcomes include a range of supported interventions including progressions into employment and supported work placements. The Council is supporting this programme through partner meetings and locally coordinating employer engagement.

- The **Fair Chance** fund will support vulnerable, homeless NEET young people aged 18 - 24 into housing, education and work. It is one part of a new funding package announced by Government in April 2014 which also includes the Youth Engagement Fund, explained in paragraph 3.8. The funding will test Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) as an innovative way of solving complex social problems. SIBs are a payment by results system that will see investors fund interventions to prevent young people from becoming NEET. Payments will only be made if initiatives are successful and positive outcomes are achieved.

### **3.45 Youth Engagement Fund**

3.46 Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield local authorities, with the backing of Leeds City Region, have come together to submit a proposal for the Youth Engagement Fund which is being commissioned by DWP. The aim is to build on the experiences and successes of the DfE-funded Devolved Youth Contract. The proposed programme will focus on tackling the most significant and recurring issues which prevent young people from making progress. Key among these issues are mental health problems, ranging from depression, anxiety and social isolation through to self-harming and attempts at suicide. The programme aims to support young people in making the journey to greater emotional, social and career resilience.

3.47 The priority aims for young people on the programme will be:

- Diversion from a pathway to offending
- Development of emotional resilience/coping skills
- Raising aspirations
- Developing the confidence and skills to connect voluntarily with support services
- Encouraging entrepreneurialism where an aptitude for self-employment is identified
- Increasing work readiness.

3.48 The proposed programme will work with participants typically between 1 and 2 years, based on the individually assessed needs of each young person. It will consist of three key phases;

1. Sign Up – self-awareness, mind-set shift and commitment to entering the next phase
2. Wise Up – personal development and growth of skills
3. Step Up – personal/educational achievements and realising of first aspirations

- 3.49 In the first phase the emphasis would be on more intensive one to one support and challenge, integrated with pastoral care/ learner support already available in schools, colleges and offsite learning settings. Where necessary this could involve referral for psychotherapeutic interventions.
- 3.50 The Second phase would offer the opportunity for positive activities, many in a group or team context. This is particularly where we see potential for smaller, specialist VCSE organisations to add value, innovation and inspiration. Alongside this mentoring support will continue to be offered, including peer mentoring.
- 3.51 In the final phase the onus would shift to the individual being supported to engage with education, employment or training and sustain this progression. By now participants may be ready to engage with more arms-length support, include regular check-ins, e.g. by text or through online forums.
- 3.52 This approach will allow us to plan longer-term help with vulnerable and hardest to reach young people from groups such as: at risk of offending/young offenders; those with child protection plans; looked after young people; persistent absentees; offsite learners; refugees/asylum seekers; young people at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE); those with no fixed abode; young parents and young carers.
- 3.53 The joint initial expression of interest was submitted to the DWP on 14th August 2014. Invitations to Tender will be sent to short-listed bidders 2nd October with a deadline of responses to the DWP by 28th November. Contracts will be awarded in early 2015 and service commencement from spring 2015.
- 3.54 Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (Recommendations 5, 9, 10, 11)**

**3.55 Leeds Pathways**

The Leeds Pathways website is being redeveloped and brought into the Council. This will be launched to schools, other organisations working with young people (aged 14-24) and their parents and carers on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014. The aim is to ensure young people receive up to date information with regards to key sectors and job opportunities within Leeds as well as enabling all year 11 students to apply for Post 16 courses. Interactive services are now fully operational and working successfully. Through the website we are promoting summer 'clearing' opportunities for year 11 students who are not yet fixed up. We are also offering schools and colleges support and training at the start of the autumn term to ensure they are aware of, and confident in using, the full set of online resources. The training will have a great focus on utilising the resources to support young people into Apprenticeships and work. Training will be integrated with other offers including CPD activities available through the Careers Network. We have also developed a range of online training modules located in the Teacher and Professional area to introduce the wider young people's workforce to the principles of IAG for young people and signposting to relevant resources.

**3.56 Information, advice and guidance (IAG) self-assessment**

- 3.57 The new revised statutory guidance for governing bodies and school leaders and staff '*Careers guidance and inspiration in schools*' was published at the end of April 2014 and replaced previous versions issued in March 2012 and March 2013 and will be reviewed on an annual basis. It provides more detail on why schools (and local authorities that maintain pupil referral units) must (by law) secure independent careers guidance for young people, what they must do to comply with their legal responsibilities in this area, and the role of the governing bodies and head teachers in shaping the offer.
- 3.58 It provides greater clarity on the legal requirements around information sharing with the Local Authority. The work undergone in the city to support this is detailed later in this report.
- 3.59 The new duties now state very clearly that schools should ensure pupils are informed about the options available to them at post 14, not just post 16. Such as: GCSE's; options offered by local university technical colleges and studio schools; opportunities for 14 year old enrolments at local colleges. Details of Leeds City College's 14-19 Apprenticeship Academy is available on their website and on Leeds Pathways <http://leedspathways.org.uk/courses>. The local authority supported a mailing in June about the academy to all year 9 students. This goes some way in supporting schools in meeting this element of the duty. Children's Services are working closely with schools so they are aware of the infrastructure changes, detailed in section 3.18, planned in the city for post 14 and post 16 provision.
- 3.60 Finally, the duties put a large emphasis on the evaluation and monitoring of advice and guidance. Ofsted, through the thematic review, found that very few schools did this well. In 2013/14 the Local Authority devised and launched the CEIAG Self-Assessment Tool to support schools and colleges in understanding their duties and enable them to identify what they do well and in what areas they need further support. This has now been updated to reflect the new duties published in March 2014. A number of schools have already completed the Self-Assessment Toolkit and are supporting CPD sessions in September 2014 run via the Careers Network. Completed Self-Assessments have also highlighted other areas where schools would like to receive peer to peer support. These include data and tracking of young people and effective ways of engaging parents in CEIAG. CPD workshops covering these areas will be run by schools and Children's Services in the new academic year.
- 3.61 Overall, a number of different approaches to the careers duties are emerging, including purchasing services from careers guidance suppliers through the list developed by the council, and internal arrangements where schools are either employing trained careers/personal advisers or retaining an existing member of staff to deliver careers guidance.
- 3.62 The Careers Network, led by Children's Services, has run for another year and has been well attended by schools. Evaluation of the network has been rated by attendees as either Good or Excellent, and therefore it has been agreed to run the Network for another year free of charge to schools and colleges. The network has been an excellent platform for a buddying system where schools and colleges share good practice and deploy innovative ways of meeting their IAG duties.

### **3.63 Igen Targeted IAG Services & Families First**

Our targeted information, advice and guidance provider igen have continued to provide specialist staff dedicated to working with young people in care, young offenders, young people with special education needs and teenage parents. They also provide intensive support for young people who are experiencing multiple barriers to EET in year 11 and post 16, along with staffing and resourcing their street level Connexions Centre at Eastgate and associated online interactive services.

It is important to note, due to a reduction in funds from central government, the Connexions Service in Leeds has experienced a reduction in budget of 48% over the last three financial years. However, during this time, there has been considerable progress made in reducing the number of young people with a Not Known status, with it reaching an all-time low of 2.4% in July 2014. The reduction of Not Known has been incorporated as a key element of the Targeted Information Advice and Guidance contract that igen were successful in securing.

Further to budget cuts already experienced, a further reduction of 15 % from April 2015 means that Leeds City Council will be unable to maintain the current level of funding per annum on supporting Year 11 targeted IAG services in schools. However, in order to ensure a smooth transition and the best chance of the excellent IAG work continuing in the future, Leeds City Council are proposing to fund 50% of the cost of the current Year 11 service delivered in schools for the 2015/16 financial year, if schools agree to match this contribution. We are currently collating responses from school head teachers about these proposals, and Igen and Children's Services will work with schools over the next year to move to these new arrangements.

Igen also have a small Families First contract where they are working with families who have a young person who is NEET. This provides confidence that there is synergy between how the need for targeted services for young people is being identified and has enabled targeted resources to be pooled effectively to work with families.

At the end of July, Aspire-i Ltd took over igen Ltd, thus the TIAG contract will novate to aspire-i. The takeover provides some new opportunities, including: bringing together of universal (chargeable) and targeted IAG services under one umbrella, and a direct link up with the National Careers Service as it is developing.

### **3.64 Youth Hub & Youth Information Hub**

Planning is underway for future delivery of services to young people in the city centre. Moves to integrated working are already taking place through the interaction of staff delivering different services within the Connexions Centre. Work is being undertaken to identify additional staff teams that could deliver from the centre and look at new ways of working, including how initial greetings of young people happen and signposting / referral mechanisms within the centre.

This will be undertaken by different services and front line staff working together in a solution focused way to develop new ways of working to deliver services more effectively to young people accessing city centre premises.

### **3.65 Data (Recommendations 2, 4, 13)**

An overview of the data that is collected and shared to support the monitoring and tracking necessary to support the reduction of NEET rates is included as Annex 6.

### **3.66 Tracking young people with a not known status**

The reduction of 'Not known' has been incorporated as a key element of the Targeted Information Advice and Guidance contract held by igen. The contract includes an element of payment by results based on reducing the level of 'Not known'. igen are taking a lead role in coordinating activity across a wide range of partners and have introduced a number of initiatives that have continued to bring down 'Not known' to record levels.

### **3.67 NEET Data Board and Data Sharing Agreements with Partners**

Partners across the city continue to come together with Children's Services to form the NEET Data Board. Since the removal of Universal IAG services and associated tracking contracts, the Board have focussed on developing a tracking calendar and agreeing key data that needs to be shared with partners in order to identify those young people who are NEET and vulnerable of becoming NEET. Throughout the last academic year the local authority has worked closely with schools and colleges to try and lessen the data burden experienced by schools in previous years in regard to September Guarantee, and to enhance the quality of our reporting back to the DfE. A review of the new process will take place with schools and colleges at the next Careers Network meeting in October 2014.

The NEET Data Board have also managed to secure a data sharing agreement with the DWP so they are able to provide Leeds local authority contact details for any young people who currently have a status of Not Known, yet may be making a claim.

In addition, a city wide data sharing agreement has been drawn up between schools and colleges to allow the direct transfer of information about young people to support their transition to Post 16 learning. A new Privacy statement has also been agreed and distributed to schools to encompass the changes required by law in regard to Raising of the Participation Age. Both of these have enabled the 'Move on' process (detailed below) to gain momentum and be ready for implementation.

### **3.68 Data sharing within clusters**

**3.69** Reports showing NEET data at a local level are now regularly distributed to clusters and areas. This data is central to informing the use of Youth Contract Cluster Innovation Funding and area-level NEET plans.

**3.70** A 'Moving On' process will also be established in each of the areas (ENE, WNW, SSE) that will involve periodic "Learning Destination Meetings" between Schools,



Connexions Targeted Service, Target Support Services, and learning providers. These parties will work together on a task and finish basis each academic year to identify and encourage the take-up of a suitable learning pathway for young people. The 'Moving On' process will be implemented on an area basis and will focus on groups of schools in areas of highest NEET. Two groups of schools will be identified in each area. The young person will be offered a detailed 1:1 discussion, facilitated by the school, with the nominated learning provider to discuss the offer of learning. At this stage the young person may opt to explore alternative routes and providers, if the initial offer is not found to be appropriate.

3.71 If the young person chooses to take up the offer, his/her progress will be followed through the enrolment process, making a start on the provision and the initial phase of learning. Providers will feedback progress to the school or Connexions.

3.72 The proposal is to introduce the Moving On process on a phased basis:

- End September 2014: Pilot the Moving On process for recently enrolled Year 12 students (17/18 year olds) at Leeds City College.
- February – April 2015: Run the Moving On process in nominated schools for Year 11 students at risk of not making a successful transition to further learning.
- End September 2015: Expand the FE Moving On process to cover all FE colleges and Year 13/14 students (18/19 year olds).

### **3.73 Destination measures**

3.74 In September 2015, the Destination Measures for Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 will be used for the first time in school performance tables. Over the past two years the Destination Measures have been published, but not used for judgements by Ofsted. The latest data shows the percentage of the 2010/11 Key Stage 4 cohort going to, or remaining in, an education or employment destination in 2011/12 and the percentage of students in 2010/11 who entered an A Level or other Level 3 qualification, going to, or remaining in, an education or employment destination in 2011/12.

3.75 After the end of Key Stage 4 proportionally fewer young people in Leeds went on to a sustained education, employment or training destination compared to national rates. However after the end of Key Stage 5 a higher proportion of Leeds young people went on to a sustained education, employment or training destination than did so nationally.

3.76 This data relates to activity from three years ago, so is best understood as a baseline measure and future annual releases will allow trend data to be compiled.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.2 The scrutiny process underpinning this report meant that members were able to have face to face consultation with schools, FE colleges, IAG providers, council services and young people. The recommendations are based on their engagement in this process.
- 4.3 Children and young people were involved in the process of awarding the contract for the targeted information, advice and guidance service that began in April 2013.
- 4.4 The process underpinning the recent scrutiny inquiry into NEET meant that members were able to have face to face consultation with schools, FE colleges, IAG providers, council services and young people.
- 4.5 The NEET Data Board have consulted with schools and colleges to make improvements to tracking and September Guarantee Processes.
- 4.6 The Apprenticeship Information Evening held on 26<sup>th</sup> June, took into account feedback on questionnaires from previous events run by the Leeds Apprenticeship Hub and consultation with schools, colleges and other Apprenticeship Providers.
- 4.7 Young People continue to play a key role in the development of Leeds Pathways and have recently been involved in the production of video clips for the website, and the design and naming of the Youth Information Hub.

## **5 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 5.1 Some young people are statistically more likely to be NEET such as those with learning difficulties and disabilities, care leavers, young offenders, poor school attenders, those attending the BESD SILC, PRUs or off-site learning, young parents, young carers, pregnant young women, homeless young people and those living away from their family. NEET rates vary significantly in different areas of the city, with the areas of highest NEET levels closely correlating with the areas of greatest deprivation. The purpose of all the strategic and operational activity associated with increasing participation in employment, education or training is to reduce the inequalities that prevent young people from making a successful transition from school.

## **6 Council policies and City Priorities**

- 6.1 NEET is one of the three Children's Services obsessions. It is a multi-faceted issue that in some way links to almost every aspect of partnership activity across the city including the work of all five high level boards of the Leeds Initiative, not least the Sustainable Economy and Culture Board. It also relates directly to the partnership work at a Leeds City Region level, particularly around employment and skills, and business development and innovation.

## **7 Resources and value for money**

- 7.1 The investment on increasing the number of young people in employment, education and training is partly a spend to save model, as it will lead to a reduction in future welfare spending. It will also have a positive impact on the economy leading to a consequent increase in council income.

## **8 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 8.1 There are no relevant legal implications to this response to this report.

## **9 Risk Management**

- 9.1 Increasing participation employment, education and training is vital to the economic and social success of the city. Failure to deliver on this priority would have serious consequences for the economic prosperity and social fabric of the city.
- 9.2 It has been confirmed by the DfE that the Devolved Youth Contract will cease in April 2015. Whilst an extension to claim outputs has been granted, there will not be any further funding in addition to that already secured. It is hoped that the joint bid to the DWP for the Youth Engagement Fund will be successful and will enable us to build on the success of the Devolved Youth Contract.
- 9.3 As the Council's statutory duties have come to focus increasingly on the targeted group of vulnerable young people, separate services have converged and collaborated on this group. The Youth Offer has been restructured during the past year and the Connexions Service has undergone reductions over a number of years as it will continue to do so. Efforts to ensure the data used to track young people is accurate and shared timely is ever more crucial to enable resources to be deployed to targeted front line services swiftly.
- 9.4 There are a number of consequences to this changing landscape. The question of how we engage, for instance, with the voluntary sector in delivering services in the future is at risk of being dealt with on a piecemeal basis. There is a risk of gaps in services opening up because changes are not being planned holistically.
- 9.5 Colleagues in Children's Services recognise this issue, and have produced an initial report requesting a mandate for a review of all support services for young people. Discussions are taking place with Heads of Service and Service Leads to ensure that all relevant services are taken into account. The mandate will go to the council's Children's Services Leadership Team for discussion and approval before any change project starts.

## **10 Conclusions**

- 10.1 Only through all partnership groups and individual partners fully appreciating their role around reducing NEET will we be able to achieve our ambition as a city for all young people aged 16-19 to be productively engaged in education, employment or training.

There is clear evidence that we have started to turn the curve with regard to increasing participation/reducing NEET, but there is still a long way to go if we are to deliver on our ambition to become a NEET free city. The work iGen and partners across the city have undertaken to reduce the number of young people in the city with a not known status is a tremendous success. The figures submitted to the DfE in August (July performance) show's NEET as 7.4 %. Whilst this is an increase of 95 young people compared to the same month last year, those young

people with a Not Known status is at a record low of 2.4%; 566 young people less than in the same month in 2013. As a city we are in a far better situation than in previous years as we have confidence in the data, and have a better understanding of where our young people are and how we can help and support them into learning or employment. We look forward to continuing to reporting on our success as a city around increasing participation in employment, education and training.

## **11 Recommendations**

- 11.1 The Board are requested to note and comment on the progress to reduce the risk of young people not accessing appropriate employment, education or training.

## **12 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 12.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.