

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

### 1. Background

The Connexions Partnership in West Yorkshire began operations on 1 October 2002. Connexions West Yorkshire is a sub regional partnership organisation. It is responsible for service delivery through sub-contract arrangements with suppliers and performance management of all Connexions resources in five local areas of West Yorkshire - Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, and Wakefield. Connexions West Yorkshire operates through a lead body arrangement with Leeds City Council on behalf of the five Local Authorities. Partners in each of the local areas are members of local management committees. Local management committees work in partnership with Connexions West Yorkshire service managers and Directors and alongside local suppliers to guide the deployment of resources to meet mutually identified local needs.

### 2. Resources

In 2006-07, a Connexions West Yorkshire resource commitment of some £6.7million has been made available to deploy Personal Advisers and fund key co-ordination roles in the Leeds area. Additional resources from Connexions funding have developed supporting activities through, Positive Activities for Young People, Engage (ex Neighbourhood Support Fund), Millennium Volunteers, Youth Justice Board, 16-19 Participation Trial, ESF supported activities, and more recently Treasury Pilots. Today, around 100 school, college, and community based Connexions Access Points are providing services in a range of host sites, including voluntary and community organisations, libraries, city and family learning centres, and youth centres. A modern and well equipped, frequently visited, and well-known flagship Connexions Centre in Leeds City centre exists to serve all young people through drop-in and appointment facilities as well as website access. The total Connexions West Yorkshire resource commitment into Leeds is £9.5million.

### 3. The Connexions Cohort in Leeds

- The Year 11 cohort has grown and it is projected to grow to 8,823 by January 2007. Continued growth is projected beyond that date as the young people population bubble builds and pushes through into the 16-18 cohort, declining thereafter. The 16-18 cohort as a consequence has grown by 1500 between November 2003 and November 2005 and this trend is projected to continue in the coming years to 2009.
- According to DfES Performance Tables, for 2004-5 Leeds had 323 Year 11 students with Statements (compared with 425 in 2003-4). There were 437 Year 9 students with Statements in 2003-4. There are no central figures for School Action lists, but the tables publish numbers for students described as SEN without statements. These numbers are self-assessed by the school. For Year 9 these amounted to 932 in

- 2003-4 (data for this year not published). For Year 11 there were 1038 students, compared with 859 in 2003-4.
- According to the 2005 Leeds Activity Survey, there were 659 (7.44%) Year 11 school leavers who were unemployed but active in the labour market, compared with 669 (7.67%) in 2003-4.
  - The black and minority ethnic population of the cohort amounts to 12.57%, based on numbers in the 2004 leavers cohort. While this group as a whole is not more likely to become NEET than the White British group, some groups are much more likely to do so. For example, White British 13.21%, White/Black Caribbean 26.83%, Other Mixed Background 23.53%, Black Caribbean 17.36%, Black Other 17.65%, Other 16.03%.
  - The 2001 Census shows the following social care statistics for Leeds;
    - There are 83 per 1,000 looked after children under 18 in Leeds, compared with 54 per 10,000 in England.
    - 35% are in education, training or employment after leaving care at 19, compared with 47% in England.
    - 26% of children under 17 receive a social care service (19% in England), and 4% of Asian children receive social services each week (3% in England).

**4. Learning in Leeds**

**4.1 Schools:** The fifteen schools with the highest levels of need serve either inner city communities or peripheral estates known to have high levels of deprivation.

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>POST CODE</b>	<b>RANKING</b>	<b>Nearest Index Deprivation ranking</b>	<b>ward of</b>
South Leeds Belle Isle	LS10	1	9	
Cockburn	LS11	2	7/8	
City of Leeds	LS6	3=	5/10	
John Smeaton	LS15	3=	2/29	
Agnes Stewart	LS9	5	1/3/4	
Intake High School	LS13	6	13	
South Leeds Holbeck	LS11	7	7/8	
Carr Manor	LS17	8	15/16	
Braim Wood	LS8	9=	1	
Farnley Park	LS12	9=	11/14	
West Leeds High	LS12	11	11/14	
Parklands	LS14	12	2	
Wortley High	LS12	13	11/14	
Primrose	LS9	14	1/3/4	
Allerton Grange	LS17	15	15/16	

The table above does not include:

- Six SILCs (Specialist Inclusion Learning Centres) and a special school for young people with hearing impairments
- Three pupil referral units plus a teaching and learning centre
- Two young offenders institutions and a secure children's centre

Since their students all require a higher level of support.

Additionally, schools in Leeds have and are experiencing significant change. The formation of Federations, amalgamations of neighboring schools, and the modernization and/or building of new schools new builds of schools - including the development of a new academy - has impacted and will continue to influence learning provision and the personalization of learning provision in the future.

**4.2 Further Education:** The eight further education colleges in Leeds serve approximately 77,000 students (Leeds Economy Handbook 2005). According to the most recent data available from the Leeds Federation of Colleges, in the period 2002-2003:

- 6000 16-19 year-olds studied full-time at the Leeds colleges
- 5000 16-19 year-olds studied part-time
- 20% of these students were studying at entry or Foundation level
- almost 40% were on level 2 courses

The FE sector in Leeds is the subject of a significant review. The consultation period for this review ended September 2006.

**4.3 Work Related Learning:** According to data provided by the West Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council, there were on average 1,421 16-18 year olds in work related learning during the year to August 2005, of which Advanced Modern Apprenticeships amounted to 492, Foundation Modern Apprenticeships 839, and NVQ 90. Overall qualification rates had improved: AMA 53% (55% in 2004), FMA 43% (31% in 2004), and NVQ 61% (37% in 2004).

## 5. Leeds Economy

- Between 1998 and 2003, 31,400 additional employee jobs were created in Leeds - the 4<sup>th</sup> largest increase among major cities. Total employment is 442,200 with almost 404,000 employees and 38,500 self employed.
- Job gains (1998-2003)
  - Construction up 4,300
  - Distribution, hotels and restaurants up 3,300 (all gains in retail, with drops in other sectors except hotels and restaurants which was stable)
  - Transport and communications up 3,000
  - Finance and business services up 12,700 (gains in all sub-sectors)

- Public administration up 15,200 (largest gains in health/social care)
  - Other services up 2,500
- Job losses 1996-2001
  - Energy and water down 1,700
  - Manufacturing down 7,800
- Between 2005 and 2015
  - Total employment is projected to grow by 7.1%, creating an additional 31,600 jobs. Full-time employees will increase by 17,500, part-time by 10,100 and self-employment by 4,000. Finance and Business services will account for half of the total net employment growth.
  - Over the next decade, a significant increase in the Leeds population of working age and a projected reduction in unemployment will lead to a 20,000 increase in Leeds residents in employment. Net in-commuting is expected to increase by 10,000, while the number of people working in Leeds will increase by over 30,000.
- Skill needs
  - Employment growth will occur in managerial/ professional occupations, with smaller increases in admin/secretarial, sales and personal services and elementary occupations.
  - Skilled and operative occupations will continue to decline. Consequently, there will be growth in demand for individuals qualified to NVQ levels 3, 4 or above.
  - There are significant numbers of young people at or below entry level 1.
- Labour Supply
  - The unemployment rate (ILO definition) in Leeds was 4.9% in February 2005 (latest reliable data). This is the same as West Yorkshire as a whole, and 0.6% lower than Great Britain. However, this comparatively low rate hides pockets of very high levels of unemployment.
  - The latest available data for specific groups is the 2001 Census. The unemployment rate for Bangladeshi men was 4 times that of the White population. Those of mixed ethnicity, Pakistani, Other Asian, Black, and Other Ethnic Groups all had significantly higher rates of unemployment than the White population.
  - There is also considerable variation between Wards. The claimant rate for Leeds was 2.7% in April 2005. But City and Holbeck (7.9%), Chapel Allerton (6.6%), Harehills (6.5%), University (6.5%), Burmantofts (6.3%), Richmond Hill (5.9%), Seacroft (5.4%), and Hunslet (5.2%) all had rates over 5%.
  - Males were more likely to be unemployed than females. Geographically, the highest rates of unemployment for the Connexions cohort were, in descending order, LS10, LS3, LS12, LS9 and LS5.

## 6. Performance

- The Connexions West Yorkshire local delivery plan and NEET and Not Known Strategy for Leeds adopted a preventative strategy combined with effective cost control to maximise personal adviser numbers deployed particularly in schools and colleges and for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional Personal Advisers were deployed within community-based organisations to work with older elements of the NEET cohort. As a result of this resource deployment, Leeds met its November 2004 NEET target achieving 9.3% (2,086 young people) but exceeded its Not Known target achieving 9.8% (2,366 young people). At time of writing Leeds % NEET(adjusted) performance was the best in the West Yorkshire sub region (10.1% August 2006) and the 8<sup>th</sup> highest in the Yorkshire and Humber region. In the same period, the number of young people in learning grew from 67.0% to 70.1% an increase of approximately 1,000 young people against a background of only a slight increase in the 16-18 cohort.
- The effective tracking of the 16-18 year old cohort is an essential element of the NEET strategy in Leeds. Keeping the Not Known figure under control is essential to validate statistical reliability and requires all young people to be followed up and have their destination (i.e. current situation such as employment) confirmed within a specified timescale. Failure to confirm their destination results in the expiry of that situation and they lapse into Not Known. Historically, this figure has been higher in Leeds than in other areas of the sub region. Consequently, additional dedicated resource in 2005 led to concerted work in 2005-06 to address this issue. This work was successful in reducing the number of Not Knowns from a high of 42.2% (10,926 young people, September 2004) to 35.0% (9,347 young people) in September 2005 - the Year 11 follow up peak intensity period. This good performance continued through to November 2005 when a low of 8.4% (2,118 young people) was achieved – a reduction of over 7,000 young people and below the November 2006 target. Alongside the effects of a general increase in the numbers of NEET young people nationally, the work on reducing Not Knowns inevitably resulted in higher numbers of adjusted NEET being identified in Leeds.
- Through further effective local delivery planning in 2006 there has been a continued focus in further reducing the number of Not Known young people. Young people identified as lapsed NEET or lapsed EET have been specifically targeted and follow up conducted. In the past 4 months, Not Known levels have been reduced from a peak of 14.9% (2,839 young people) to a low of 9.5% (1705) of young people in August 2006. PAs focused on NEET activity in the community have worked diligently to respond

to those young people identified as NEET during this period. Consequently, there has been little increase in NEET numbers in the same period. An additional feature of the work has been the high numbers of lapsed NEET and lapsed EET. The work has shown that considerable numbers of young people were in fact in an EET destination when contacted. Data sharing has improved since the inception of the partnership with coherent protocols established amongst partner agencies for sharing data. Nevertheless, the size and the complexity of Leeds - 41 high schools and a large number of colleges and work based learning providers and specialist inclusion units/special schools – provides for particular challenges in Leeds that require further work and attention. The partnership recognises this finding and further work is underway to improve data sharing on young people. Early indications are that agencies and institutions are collaborating around data sharing and that this work is beginning to impact as we move towards November 2006.

- NEET patterns within Leeds have changed in the past two years. The strategy to deploy resources preventatively into schools and colleges has constrained the flow of young people into NEET and Not Known post year 11. School leaver NEET and Not Known percentages are demonstrably low. However, an increase in 17/18 year old NEETs has been experienced. Of particular note is the rise of white 17/18 year old males represented in the NEET group. Hot spots of NEET activity arise in specific community locations in Leeds (Middleton, Richmond Hill, Seacroft) heavily populated by young people from a white background.
- More young people left EET to join NEET in the previous 12 months than joined EET from NEET suggesting further work is required regarding the quality and appropriateness of learning provision and employment. The latter appears to be an important factor as many 17/18 year old white males from the NEET group have traditionally entered jobs without training. Whilst a relatively buoyant economy with high levels of job vacancies Leeds has reported reducing levels of vacancies in jobs without training and this has adversely impacted the figures. Increasing levels of immigration of well qualified people from a variety of overseas locations including increased mobility from Eastern Europe is believed to be an exacerbating factor in the figures.
- Additional resources through the Treasury's activity and learning agreement pilots have been warmly welcomed. These resources will undoubtedly help us with our NEET work in Leeds. We have experienced recruitment difficulties primarily as a consequence of process, CRB checking, and salary banding issues. Nevertheless, close working between Connexions West Yorkshire and Leeds City Council is gradually overcoming the hurdles.

- The staffing for the Activity Agreement Pilot was original intended to be 1 Senior Keyworker and 4 Keyworkers, but we are expanding this latter number to 5 Keyworkers as our calculations suggest there are sufficient young people reaching 20 weeks NEET to justify increased capacity. We currently have the SKW and 3 KWs in post, and offers have been made to two recently interviewed candidates for the remaining two vacancies. Over the full two-year Project period, the Activity Agreement Pilot would bring more than £300k into the Leeds area for spending on young people's programme activity provision, their weekly allowance (£20 pw for up to 20 weeks) and associated expenses. This spending is based on the 'draw-down against actual' principle, so will be pro-rata to the performance against targets.
- The staffing for the Learning Agreement Pilot is intended to be 3 Senior Keyworkers and 21 Keyworkers. At the time of writing there are 2 SKWs in post and 1 vacancy, and 1 KW in post but 18 offers have been made to recently interviewed candidates. The Learning Agreement Pilot is being Project Managed jointly between Connexions West Yorkshire and the Learning & Skills Council, with the latter holding the budget for Training Provision. A contract for some 80% of the Leeds area share of this budget (more than £1.1 million over the two year Project period, again based on the 'draw-down' principle) is expected to be signed imminently.
- Work with targeted groups, such as leaving care, travellers, refugees, young offenders, pregnant teenagers and LDD has continued. During 2005/06 (2004/05 figures in brackets)
  - 717 (710) 'section 140 assessments' were produced with young people with LDD leaving education. 537 (415) transitions reviews were attended, pre and post 16.
  - 74 (59) travellers received PA support.
  - 728 (666) young people in public care received support
  - 109 (114) refugees received support
  - 501 (381) young offenders were worked with by 4 specialist PAs at Wetherby YOI
  - 168 (43 - we now have 2 specialist PAs) pregnant teenagers received support from a dedicated PA
- Our annual destinations report has been published and widely disseminated which includes ethnicity, age and gender analyses. Figures continue to show BME young people are more likely to remain in post compulsory education (82.5%) than their white counter parts (67.3%) and are less likely to enter employment or training (5.7% BME and 18.9% white). In 2004, for comparison, 80.6% BME and 65.1% white Year 11 leavers remained in

education and 6.6% BME and 21.7% white entered employment or training. More girls (75.4%) than boys (63.1%) remain in post compulsory education though the difference is more marked in school sixth forms than in colleges. In 2004, the equivalent figures were 72.7% for girls and 61.7% for boys. PAs continue to address these issues with schools through activities jointly negotiated in delivery agreements such as use of positive role models, challenging stereotypes and inclusion of equal opportunities sessions in careers education programmes.

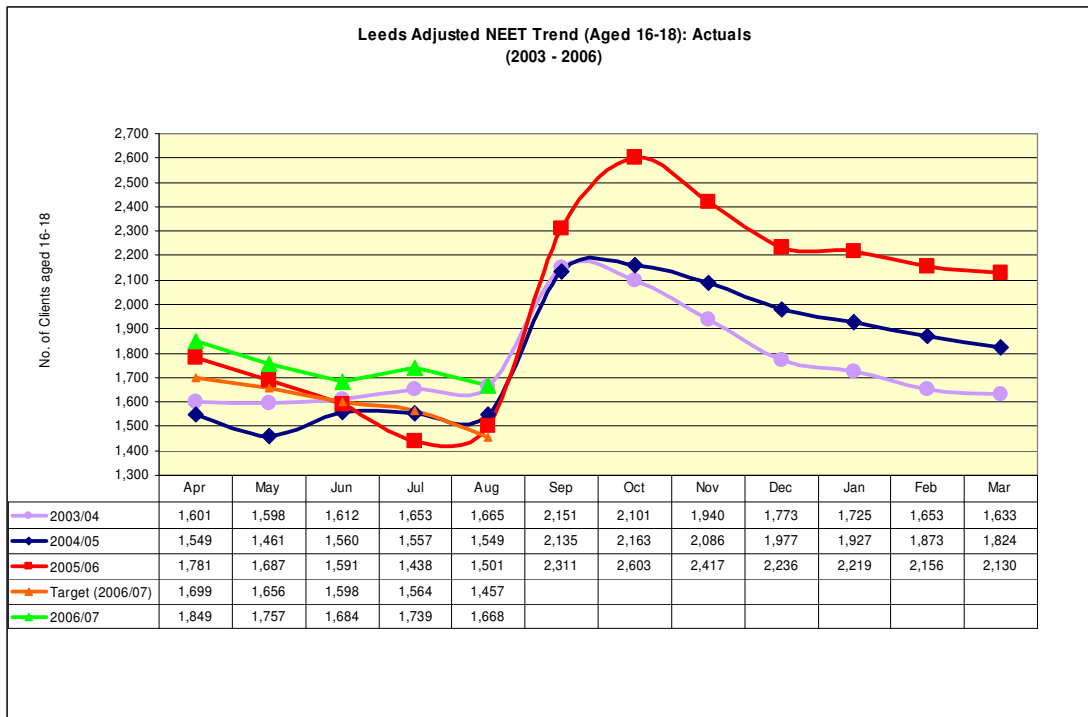
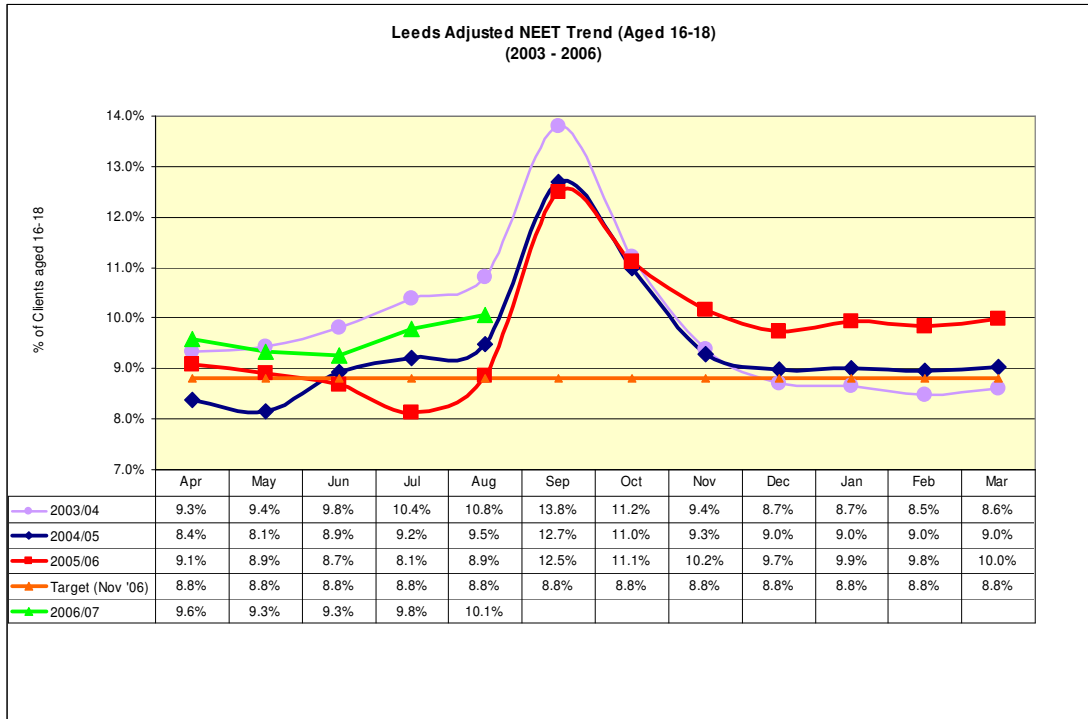
- Our placing (i.e. specific submissions of young people to a notified vacancy, as distinct from more general signposting to potential employers/training providers) figures show the following 2005/06 (2004/05 in brackets):
  - 501 (636) young people were placed into jobs, of which 452 (580) offered training.
  - 45.3% (36.5%) placed into jobs were female and 10.4% (6.9%) were from BME backgrounds. 44% (34.7%) placed into jobs with training were female and 9.7% (6.4%) were from BME backgrounds.
  - 750 (659) young people were placed into Work Based Learning opportunities.
  - 40.8% (41%) were female and 16.8% (13.8%) were from BME backgrounds.
  
- Connexions PAs working to ensure effective post compulsory education transition for Teenage Parents work with young people who are planning to go to college and support them while on courses. They deal with students of other colleges too and have set-up referral mechanisms including liaison with professionals within Education Leeds, Health, Social Services and the voluntary sector. Support is provided in applying to college, arranging childcare, housing, benefits etc. With other agencies they have been involved in group sessions with young people on issues like study skills, parenting etc.. our PAs supported 139 C2L applications in the period Sept 05 – Sept 06, of which only 2 did not start courses. In the period April 06 to Sept 06 there were 82 C2L applications with 79 being taken up. Our data showed that 165 young people were Teenage Parents of which 107 were in learning. PAs have worked with the Health Initiatives Team to set up a group for parenting skills, career plans, etc. We are planning a special event with partner agencies specializing in this work in the New Year.
  
- Between a quarter and a half of rough sleepers were in care. Young people in public care in Leeds were two and half times more likely to be teenage parents, 4 times more likely to become drug users and to have mental health problems. Many young people in



care are still on a developmental journey to access education training and employment. Connexions PAs work alongside colleagues from Leeds Social Services Pathway Planning and from Stepping 2 Success - an ESF funded programme to offer intensive support to care leavers and improve their motivation, study and independent living skills. A robust referral process is in place and weekly drop in sessions are offered from the Pathway Planning sites. Educational development is being hindered by disruption to schooling before and after being taken into care, concerns about home life, and the negative attitudes from peers and others in their circle of influence, and a lack of confidence as a consequence of low academic attainment. In 2004, 5% of children in care in Leeds achieved 5A\*-C. In 2005, 14% of these children achieved 5A\*-C, a significant improvement. The target for 2006 is 15%. Further developments are underway, e.g. awareness raising events with the Federation of Colleges, joint planning days for shared activities, quality assurance of independent living skills training, workshops from the Princes Trust, networking opportunities, and preparations for National Care Leavers week in October.

- A number of actions have been identified in the NEET and Not Known strategy for 2006-07 and are underway. These actions are at the heart of the strategy to address the NEETs and Not Knowns in Leeds.
  - Continued focus on Not Knowns with intensive follow-up activity on evenings and weekends
  - Robust data sharing arrangements between suppliers in the Connexions family
  - The formation of a rapid reaction team targeting hot spots of NEET activity
  - The recruitment of a NEET PA coordinator to support caseload management and follow-up activity
  - Improved data sharing with learning providers and employers
  - A NEET and Not Known strategy group focused on the November 2006 indicative target to drill down on specific issues
  - Embedding and activating additional key worker resource from the Treasury activity and learning agreement pilots within the support provision in Leeds
- As we move forward in Leeds into Children's Trust arrangements, it is envisaged that closer collaboration and improved joint working across the 0-19 age range in Leeds will lead to continuously improving outcomes for young people. It is the commitment of the Connexions partnership to play its full part in the evolution of Children's Services under the Leeds Director of Children's Services and contribute to the effective delivery of the Children and Young People's plan.

**LEEDS Adjusted NEET (16-18 year olds) - Trend**



**LEEDs Not Known (16-18 year olds) - Trend**

