

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Report to Inner West Area Committee

Date: 25th March 2014

Subject: NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Update Report

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Armley , Bramley and Stanningley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report provides an update on the current NEET position with an update on activity that is taking place to support young people who are Not in Education, Training or Employment (NEET) whilst recognising that the majority of young people do successfully access the educational, employment or training opportunities available to them.

Recommendations:

2. The Area Committee is asked:

- To continue to facilitate partners working together (including Leeds West Academy, Swallow Hill, IGEN, Colleges, LCC Services, Third Sector – ACES and Bramley clusters) on activities which can demonstrate impact and is based on mutual support and challenge;
- To further promote and celebrate the success of young people from Inner West Leeds developing a positive and optimistic narrative about aspirations, behaviours and character;
- To develop a Destinations Team (made up of partners) working at an individual learner level to improve access to opportunities.

1 Purpose of this report

This report provides an update on activity that is taking place across the city and locally to support the reduction of numbers of young people who are Not in Education, Training or Employment (NEET). The report also provides an update on activities to improve access to employment opportunities across the area.

Children's Services have a statutory responsibility for young people aged 16-19 who are NEET. The Council's Employment & Skills Service also delivers and commissions complimentary services to support young people to develop skills and gain apprenticeships or employment, focusing on those living in the most deprived neighbourhoods. Both 16-19 and 19+ provision is enhanced by activities and services provided by a range of non-statutory providers. IGEN are the contract lead for the Connexions service and coordinate an area based team for the WNW area.

2 Background Information

Our ambition is to be a NEET free city.

Despite interventions which have undoubtedly made a difference to some young people the NEET numbers show a rise of 25 year on year (from 121 to 146). The not known category has improved year on year by 61 (from 180 to 119). The number of young people identified as NEET for over 6 month is 15 (this is a figure we have not had in previous years)

3 Service Updates

3.1 Children's Services – promoting universal information, advice and guidance.

Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) and Network

The CEIAG SAT devised by the local authority was launched at the Leeds CEIAG Network meeting on 20th November 2013. The SAT allows schools and college to assess their current practices in delivering CEIAG against Ofsted criteria and best practice guidance. There was an impressive attendance at the meeting of two colleges, IGEN and 24 secondary schools (including representatives from SILCs and PRUs). Attendees pledged to return to their schools and roll out the SAT with a target date for completion of Easter 2014. On 10th February, there was a second Network meeting of the academic year which provided the opportunity for schools to compare their initial drafts of findings and kick-start the buddying system to share good practice and deploy innovative ways of meeting their IAG duties.

The CEIAG Self-Assessment Tool is available on the New Teacher, Parent and Professional Area at www.leadstandp.org.uk. This is a new website linked to Leeds Pathways, bringing together information and advice to professionals and parents. Users can check out new blogs, presentations, news and the latest information by area – East North East, West North West and South East Leeds.

3.2 Destinations Team

In the summer 2013, Leeds West Academy, Farnley Academy and Swallow Hill, along with the Connexions Service, identified the Year 11 learners they were most concerned might become NEET or those in the area that were already NEET.

Anonymous learner information was collected and shared with some colleges and learning providers, with an appropriate lead Post 16 provider identified to work with the school and young person to plan a progression pathway into Post 16 learning.

Of the 72 young people reviewed, who were the young people the schools felt were most likely to be NEET, 47 of them (or 65%) were still engaged in Learning or Employment in November. This is a considerable achievement bearing in mind that as late as May/June of their final Yr11, schools were concerned that these young people were most likely to be NEET by the coming September.

The Yr12 Destinations Report (which measures the destinations of the previous year's Yr11's in November of the following Academic Year) showed that those who were NEET in the 3 schools had decreased from 6.82% in Nov 2012 to 2.85% in Nov 2013, a reduction of 30 young people. Engaging more young people from Yr11 to Yr12 should positively impact the progression and retention of these young people in education and learning, reducing the longer term NEET in the area.

The process is now being reviewed with the expectation to roll out the successful project to other key areas of the city, and to build on the initial success by repeating the process in the West.

3.3 Youth Contract

Children's Services manages the devolved Youth Contract Support Programme to re-engage 16 and 17 year olds identified as NEET with learning or employment with training, on behalf of Employment and Skills for delivery in Leeds. The programme is primarily delivered through the Targeted IAG provider, IGEN, working in partnership with the Education Business Partnership. Supported by a key worker, participants engage in a rolling, structured programme of activities tailored to their needs. 758 young people in Leeds have joined the programme with 517 (68%) progressing into education, employment or training. To date 129 sustained this position for more than 6 months.

229 young people have joined the programme from the West North West area with 156 (68%) progressing into education, employment or training. To date 44 have sustained this position for more than 6 months.

The destinations have been as follows:

Apprenticeship	7%
EFA funded Work Based Learning	33%
Employment with non-accredited training	2%
Employment with Training	2%
Employment without Training	8%
FTE – Further Education	25%
FTE - Other post 16	2%

FTE – Schools Sixth Form	2%
FTE – Sixth Form College	1%
Other training (e.g. private training organisation)	17%
Temporary Employment	2%

3.4 Target Services and Cluster Work

The role of the Targeted Services Leader in each cluster is to secure the engagement of a range of local partners, including schools and services, in the development and delivery of a local action plan that will impact positively on NEET numbers as reducing NEET is one of the city's three obsessions.

These activities span the universal provision and offer in the cluster, the commissioning of more targeted services to address the specific needs in the local area in addition to identifying named lead practitioners to develop packages of individual support, based on the needs of the young person. The cluster action plan also incorporates activities that are preventative e.g. providing support for children who are already persistently absent before they reach year 11 as there is a strong correlation between poor attendance at key stage 4 and young people going on to become NEET and also targeting children and young people at risk of becoming NEET through vocational activities during school holidays.

As of January 2014, the Armley cluster had reduced the number of NEET by 29 since the start of the Children and Young People's Plan and Bramley had reduced by 17. The Families First programme also has a focus on NEET and, for example, in the ACES cluster, 79% of young people identified as NEET in the year 1 programme are now in EET.

Schools and services are able to access a range of individual support services such as family support and targeted mental health services through multi-agency Guidance and Support meetings.

Other activities and action plans in the cluster also cross-cut the NEET agenda e.g. work around the misuse of drugs and alcohol by young people and services that address the emotional health and well-being of young people where this might be a barrier to their continuing in learning and training.

3.5 IGEN

IGEN are the contract lead for the connexions service and coordinate an area based team for the WNW area of 24 staff. In the Inner West area we have a number of staff working for IGEN and Barca, in the high schools, community and as Youth Contract Key Workers.

Effective Transition Personal Advisors (ETPA's) provide support for vulnerable year 11 pupils from September through to the following November. This work in schools supports the young people to make choices and apply for post 16 options, essentially preventing them from becoming NEET. For those in Year 11 in

2012/2013 IGEN were 96.7% successful in supporting young people into EET destinations.

IGEN's community and specialist Personal Advisors support 35 young people each at any one time. With a variable turnover rate they support between 7 and 9 young people in to EET destinations every quarter. Since January 2014 IGEN have a Families First Lead Practitioner as part of the WNW team.

Targets:

- Reducing NEET and not known figures. Tracking by telephone or through NEET sweeps. City wide February figures hover around: 7% NEET and 5.5% not known. Last quarter (October to December) we visited 62 houses in LS12, 79 in LS13 and 43 in LS28 to sweep. They are also planning NEET and attendance sweeps with Armley and Bramley Cluster partners as well as utilising Facebook to contact young people.
- Outreach and drop in services have been reviewed in the WNW. A joint project with the Youth Service is taking place, using a youth bus to engage young people in the Wythers (LS12 2) area.
- One stop shop: Partners working with IGEN in the City Centre (1 Eastgate) providing a wide range of services for young people to drop into or make appointments.

Specific area related challenges:

The principle of practice for our work is based on engaging with individual young people to address their needs and challenges. It is therefore difficult to suggest particular issues related to the Armley, Bramley and Stanningley areas. IGEN are becoming increasingly aware of mental health barriers for young people preventing them engaging outside of the household and are working to develop training and resources to help staff to work with these young people. In addition they are working with a wide variety of partners (Youth Service, Community Safety, Cluster teams) to address issues in areas with greater numbers of NEET and unknown young people, for example in the Wythers estate and New Wortley.

3.6 Employment and Skills

Apprenticeship Hub and Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA)

The Leeds Apprenticeship Hub was established in July 2013. Current and planned activities focus on awareness raising with pupils ahead of their eligibility to apply through delivery of the school and academies engagement programme; delivery of guidance events for young people and for those who are eligible to apply, 'make a winning application workshop' sessions which will be held across local venues. Hub activities delivered in West Leeds include:-

- Between September 2013 and January 2014 there were 3 application workshops delivered at Armley One Stop Centre for young people that had made numerous unsuccessful apprenticeship applications. 12 young people received one to one support.
- October 2013 West Leeds Academy Year 11. Sessions with students to support them to register on and learn how to make best use of the National Apprenticeship

Service on-line vacancy system to search for and successfully apply for an apprenticeship.

- November 2013 – The first of a series of area based events for young people to raise awareness of apprenticeships and the support available to access these and speak directly with employers and young apprentices. School students from years 11, 12 and 13 at Crawshaw, Pudsey Grangefield, Swallow Hill, City of Leeds and Farnley Academy attended along with a number supported by Full Circle Learning and BARCA. 181 young people attended and follow up sessions are being scheduled with individual schools.

To January, the Hub / ATA had collectively achieved 118 SME engagements and 53 apprentice starts.

There is still work to do with schools/academies for year 11 and 13 pupils appropriate for Apprenticeship opportunities, ensuring they receive the right information and guidance at the right times. It remains the case that there are challenges in promoting Apprenticeships where they are perceived as competing with 6th Form opportunities.

3.7 Complimentary activity

A range of complimentary wrap-around activities focused on those aged 19+ is managed/delivered through the Employment & Skills Service.

Head Start' programme

Working with Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership £1.2m has been secured for delivery in Leeds of the Young Talent – Headstart programme. It will provide 800 18-24 year olds furthest from the labour market, with a 'head start' into work through a supported work experience placement for up to 8 weeks including training. The programme will start in March 2014 and run for 2 years.

The programme will focus on those in receipt of Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA) for 6 months and will include an intensively supported work experience placement for up to 8 weeks with a local employer, plus 2 weeks training and a guaranteed job interview. In addition, each young person will receive employability information, advice and guidance through the Council's Jobshops to enable them to compete more effectively in the market place.

The programme will be managed through the Council's Employment and Skills Service in partnership with Jobcentre Plus. The support element of the programme will be delivered by an external provider. All activities must start by March 2014 and the programme in Leeds will run over two years.

3.8 Education Business Partnership

Between September and January 2014 the EBP delivered a further 36 school events to 3041 young people aged 13-18 supported by 297 business volunteers. To date, 5100 young people in schools and through interventions on the Devolved Youth Contract have improved employability skills. A further 1903 young people have been involved in a mentoring programme. 625 business volunteers have been engaged in activity supporting employability programmes in schools and on the youth contract and of these 149 have accessed training to better support these young people.

A range of other support has been provided including mentoring provision for 100 Looked after Children, support for the integration of Employer Engagement across the curriculum; delivery of the Post 16 Network Forum focusing on employability (including 2 schools from Inner West).

February sees the launch of the 'Young Chefs' team challenge in conjunction with the Institute of Hospitality, Leeds Metropolitan University and ASK Restaurant. This is open to all high schools. The final will be held on 15th May. One school in Inner West (Leeds West Academy) will be taking part.

3.9 Current challenges and barriers

- Mismatch between Young People's skills and attitudes, and expectations of employers and apprenticeship entry levels;
- Providing appropriate CEIAG to young people and engaging them in appropriate provision that is destination led;
- Ability for services to capture positive progression for the most vulnerable NEET cohort, even when they don't achieve EET status
- Ensuring that practitioners have the right skills and knowledge to support parental training and employment and that access to adult employment services, such as Pinnacle People, is maximised
- Information sharing arrangements across health services and broader partners
- Currently out of 1500 Not Knowns – 1100 have no address and telephone number. Ongoing work is happening locally and strategically to try and improve this situation;
- Support needs within the cohort: Individual young people are in need of more intensive support over a longer period of time;
- Reduction in Careers / Universal Connexions provision: Some young people accessing the Connexions Centre indicate they are not receiving guidance whilst at school;
- Demand versus Supply: IGEN caseloads are balanced at the moment, although we have seen occasions where we have needed to use waiting lists for our services.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

In preparation for the 2013 to 2015 contracting of the connexions service, a significant amount of consultation was carried out by LCC . In addition as part of the bid process igen ran a wide range of participation activity to help shape and direct the tender. Over 200 young people were asked about their needs, wants and expectations for the service, and a range of interviews, focus groups and sessions were delivered to engage young people in planning delivery. The connexions centre at Eastgate was designed by young people for young people and is proving to be a successful space for young people and practitioners.

Within the connexions service which includes the Youth Contract work we undertake, regular feedback is receive following sessions and interventions, with case study, interviews and workshops being used to provide ongoing feedback to help shape the service. Igen also have an annual stakeholder survey for young people, parents, partners etc.

Whilst feedback mechanisms are a positive way of improving, involving service users and responding to need, we want to look towards improved data to provide us with the additional information to target resource. As more sophisticated information becomes available about areas, groups of young people and need, we will analyse and respond appropriately.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Evidence from the last recession and the current data indicates that increased unemployment has disproportionately impacted on inner city neighbourhoods with the highest levels of claimants. Targeted support to enable those individuals seeking to improve their skills and secure paid work will reduce their benefit claim period, help them to develop the skills to secure, stay and progress in work and improve their lives.
- 4.2.2 Equality Impact Assessment screening was undertaken to support the development and implementation of the programmes of activity commissioned by the service. Data relating to service users will be captured and monitored and activity plans reviewed to ensure the needs of equality groups are met to access these services.

4.3. Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The information contained in this report contributes towards the achievement of the objectives set out in the Best Council Plan 2013-17, namely “becoming a NEET free city” and ‘promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth by improving the economic wellbeing of local people and businesses’ with a specific focus on helping people into jobs and tackling poverty.

4.4. Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 There are no specific decisions arising from this report. Expenditure on existing programmes delivered by the Council referenced in this report was taken in accordance with the Council’s financial and decision-making policies and procedures.

4.5. Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. This report is not subject to Call In. The report is accessible to the public.

4.6. Risk Management

- 4.6.1 Existing programmes of delivery are supported by risk management plans which are reviewed on a regular basis.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1.1 Despite improvements in reducing NEET and increasing participation of young people in learning, in the past year the NEET figure has remained stubbornly high

within the inner West. Resources and activities have been put in place to work with young people at an individual learner level.

- 5.1.2 The demand for the services in the Inner West will be mitigated if we can improve the learning offer across all ages. The planned work of the Area Committee will support this area by bringing partners together to work collaboratively about how to better address the needs of young people in the Inner West area.

6.0 Recommendations

- The Area Committee is asked:
- To continue to facilitate partners working together (including Leeds West Academy, Swallow Hill, IGEN, Colleges, LCC Services, Third Sector – ACES and Bramley clusters) on activities which can demonstrate impact and is based on mutual support and challenge;
- To further promote and celebrate the success of young people from Inner West Leeds developing a positive and optimistic narrative about aspirations, behaviours and character;
- To develop a Destinations Team (made up of partners) working at an individual learner level to improve access to opportunities.

7.0 Background documents¹

- 7.1 There are no background documents.

¹ 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.