

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 15th March 2012

Subject: Increasing the number of young people in Employment, Education or Training.

Are specific electoral Wards affected? 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? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. To provide the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) with information requested at Session 1 of the inquiry on the 9th of February 2012
2. Present information relating to the Support for parents and carers of young people likely to become NEET
3. Provide the Scrutiny Board with an overview of the developments in Leeds
4. Information relating to the bids for Innovation and Youth Contract funding.

Recommendations

5. That the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):
 - (i) Consider the content of the report
 - (ii) Make recommendations where appropriate.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1** To provide the Children and Families Scrutiny Board with the additional information requested at the initial meeting of the Board on 9th February 2012. The report also provides an update on a number of recent developments that are relevant to the inquiry.

2 Background information

- 2.1** The Scrutiny Board Inquiry is looking at the range of support available to young people in Leeds who are NEET in order to help them access appropriate employment, education or training. This information is provided following Session one of the inquiry on the 9th of February 2012

3 Main issues

3.1 19-24 NEET data

During the 1st inquiry session the Board requested data relating to young people age 19 – 24 who are NEET. Unfortunately this data is not available on all 19-24 year olds who are NEET, as no service has responsibility to track all young people in this age group. Data published on National NEET rates for this age group is an estimate from survey data.

The data that is available is information on the number of young people claiming unemployment benefits. National research shows the numbers claiming benefit are lower than the numbers of young people who are NEET due to restrictions on benefit entitlements and an unwillingness amongst some young people to claim benefits. In January 2012 there were 7,420 Job seekers Allowance claimants aged 18-24. This compares to 7,200 the previous month and 6,255 in January 2011. This indicates that while the number of 16-19 year olds who are NEET has decreased over the past year, the opposite is true of young people aged 19+. The trend in terms of JSA claimants over the past three years, together with a breakdown by middle level super output area is included as Appendix 1.

3.2 Length of time young people are NEET and Sustained NEETS information

Data indicates that around one third of young people are NEET at some point between the age of 16 and 19. Of these young people, around 32% will be NEET for less than 6 months, 29% for 6 to 12 months and 39% for more than 12 months. Further information is included as Appendix 2 and further work to analyse the sustained NEET cohort in more detail is underway and will be presented to the Board at Session 3 of the inquiry in April.

3.3 Support for parents and carers of young people likely to become NEET.

The Employment and Skills Service are working with Children's Services in support of priorities within the Children and Young Peoples Plan and have developed a proposal to pilot a programme of learning for the parents and carers of young people who are at risk of becoming NEET, so they can help their children make informed choices which will support post 16 progression.

The aim of the provision is to give parents/carers the understanding, skills and confidence to develop positive relationships with their children and help them make informed choices which will support progression into education employment or training when they reach 16. The course also aims to raise the aspirations, skills and chances of sustaining employment for the parents/carers. The specification for the provision has been developed in conjunction with Children's Services and comprises a 30 hour, non-accredited course which will be targeted at parents/carers of young people who have been identified by the participating schools/clusters as being at risk of becoming NEET. The provision will form part of the Leeds Adult Learning Programme. Details of the specification are included as Appendix 3.

3.4 Developments in Leeds

- 3.4.1** A '**Leeds Guarantee**' is currently in development, which will be a commitment as a city to young people aged 16-19 (25) in Leeds to ensure that they all have a place in employment or further learning. This will include pathway planning that supports entry into learning or employment and is part of Leeds' aspiration to be a NEET-free city.
- 3.4.2** As part of the **Leeds Education Challenge** and in preparation for formulating the Leeds Guarantee, a post-16 project is being undertaken to review the current 16-19 provision in Leeds. This has been commissioned to provide an independent and impartial assessment of how best to ensure viable and sustainable learning provision with the widest possible range of choices for young people. An interim report is due in late March, with a final report due by the end of May.
- 3.4.3** Work is taking place with schools to prepare for their new duties to deliver **Careers Guidance** to young people from September 2012. Delivery of impartial information, advice and guidance to young people is a key part of ensuring that young people are equipped to make good choices about learning opportunities in order to progress into employment. Activity that is taking place includes:
- In March 2012 Leeds City Council is launching an Approved List of Careers Guidance Providers to help schools procure the careers guidance services they need. Support will be provided for schools by LCC to help them in the procurement and contracting process.
 - Professional development for school colleagues has included a series of seminars in the autumn and spring terms arranged by Prospects and Leeds City Council to help schools to prepare for the new duties. An online resource for non-IAG specialists who may be expected to answer questions about progression, transition and career planning is being developed. This will be available later by September 2012.
 - A bundle of services is being developed for September 2012 to help schools find the services they might need to plan and deliver innovative careers education, information and guidance services that meet individual pupil needs. These will be available through the teacher and professional pages on Leeds Pathways.

3.4.4 Each cluster is currently carrying out an **Outcomes Based Accountability** (OBA) planning session in order to identify actions and processes that will reduce the number of young people who are NEET within their area, allowing for actions to be developed which fit with the needs of the local community. From these sessions, local action plans are being drawn up which are owned and delivered by the cluster partners.

3.4.5 The restructure of Children's Services means that new delivery arrangements are being put in place for **targeted work** with vulnerable young people on an area and cluster basis. The Head of Targeted Services and the Targeted Services Area Leads are leading on the planning of work with vulnerable children, young people and families with the aim of reducing the number of young people who become NEET. It will include consideration of the needs of vulnerable groups of young people in the planning for RPA and ensuring that consideration of engagement in learning until age 18 is part of planning at a cluster level.

3.5 Funding to support young people into employment, education or training

3.5.1 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has invited applications for interested organisations to bid for **Innovation Fund** opportunities. This is a scheme whereby an investor (the council, possibly jointly with partners) funds projects for 14 to 15 year-olds to develop their employability. If the young people subsequently get jobs during the three-year programme, the investor is able to claim back the funding from the DWP. The investor cannot be a delivery partner, therefore there is an expectation that the majority of delivery partners would be from the voluntary, community and faith sector. The Children's Services are progressing a bid under this scheme that will be aimed at priority groups that have particularly high levels of NEET.

3.5.2 As part of the Government's **Youth Contract**, Leeds (alongside Bradford and Wakefield) is being awarded funding to contract to providers that support 16 and 17 year olds into education, work, apprenticeships or training. Leeds-Bradford-Wakefield are one of three areas (the other two are Liverpool and Newcastle-Gateshead) that are being allocated their own funding as part of the Government's City Deal agenda. For all other local authorities, the funding is retained by the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), who will be responsible for awarding contracts. Leeds will be able to contract to organisations, including voluntary, community and faith sector organisations, that have a successful track record in delivering support to young people from a variety of backgrounds, although the details are yet to be negotiated and will be subject to due process with the DfE and the DWP. The scheme will potentially deliver an additional £5.6 million to help address NEET over a three year period, shared between Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield.

3.6 Raising of the Participation Age

The DfE is currently consulting (until 13 April) on those elements of how RPA will work in practice that will subsequently form the regulations. These include definitions around ways of working (for example, how volunteering and self-employment would be treated); financial penalties for employers who employ 16 and 17 year-olds and who do not provide training that leads to an accredited

qualification; and how local authorities should use such fines. Children's Services are working on a response to the consultation in collaboration with 11-19 (25) Learning and Support Partnership. Statutory guidance will be issued to local authorities later in 2012.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.6 This section is not relevant to this report

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 During the conduct of the Scrutiny Inquiry there may be positive equality, diversity, cohesion and integration outcomes for groups and individuals who are or could be NEET this would be reflected in the Scrutiny Inquiry Report once published.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 Young People's Plan obsession – increasing the number of young people in Employment, Education and Training.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 Any implications for resources or value for money

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This report does not contain any confidential or exempt information

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 This section is not relevant to this report

5 Conclusions

5.1 Progress has been made over the past year around increasing the number of 16-19 year olds entering employment, education or training and there are a number of exciting new developments that should make a significant contribution to our ambition of becoming a NEET free city.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- (i) Consider the content of the report
- (ii) Make recommendations where appropriate

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.