



CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE
29 November 2016

ITEM 7

Report of the Strategic Director of People
Services

NEET and Participation Strategy Review

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The city has had a NEET and participation strategy in place for 2 years, which has aided improvements in performance in relation to the numbers of young people who are engaged in recognised forms of education, training or employment (EET) when they leave school.
- 1.2 The strategy was refreshed in April 2016 to ensure it remained fit for purpose and built on the success of the first 2 years of the strategy. In July 2016, DMT agreed to a 2 year strategy and action plan with a review after 12 months, given that performance had improved and there were no foreseeable risks of performance slipping in the near future.
- 1.3 This report provides an outline of the progress that has been made against the strategy action plan in the past 3 months.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 For the progress made against the NEET and Participation strategy in the past 3 months to be considered and commented upon by the Corporate Parenting Committee.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure the Departmental Management Team are provided with an opportunity to comment upon progress made.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The NEET strategy has been in place for 2 years and in that time it has made a positive impact locally on key measures and outcomes pertaining to the NEET agenda, such as reducing the NEET figure for the city to 4.8% and the unknown destination figure to 4.9% by August 2016, which are the last available performance figures. This is in line with the aims of the NEET strategy of maintaining NEET and Unknown figures below 5%.

Raising the Participation Age (RPA) performance has been maintained over the past 12 months, with performance at 88.75% in August 2016, which has been a relatively consistent figure over a number of months and slightly above the 88.06% performance of this time 12 months ago.

In relation to Derby's quarterly average performance for NEET and Unknown figures compared to national, east midlands and comparator performance, Derby is:

0.3 % behind the national NEET average, which is a 0.2% gain from the July DMT report.

0.5% behind the east midlands average which is a 1.3% gain from the July DMT report.

0.7% ahead of the comparator average, which is a 1% gain from the July DMT report.

These figures relate to quarter 1 of 2016-17, which is the most up to date performance data available.

Derby is ahead of the national and east midlands averages for Unknown destinations by 0.3% and 1.7% and behind the comparator authorities by 0.7% respectively.

4.2 We have made progress against a number of actions contained in the NEET strategy action plan as outlined below:

- School IAG staff are now aware of the full range of post 16 options across Derby, as Space@Connexions representatives attend Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) meetings quarterly.
- Derby Schools now have access to an electronic Training Provider directory to ensure they have the most up to date set of post 16 options available to young people in the city.
- Information from Derby's network of training providers is now sent to schools IAG meetings to ensure they are aware of developments in the city with regard to post 16 provision.
- Enterprise for Education (E4E) have recruited 235 employer volunteers in addition to an existing 140 volunteers, they have provided 7,654 employer interactions, including: 1800 mock interviews, 1180 CV writing workshops and 1,189 pupils have received career talks.
- E4E have also launched a new mentoring programme, with 42 active mentors working with local pupils.
- E4E have developed and launched an Employability Passport (e-resource for schools) and supported most Derby secondary schools to develop an employability and careers action plan (CEC) based around a common framework.

- A process is in place to ensure workers are notified when a young person drops out of provision, which is taken from leavers lists that are supplied by providers. Connexions Advisors are notified of this by the NEET Performance Coordinator and will re-engage young people from all vulnerable groups, i.e. those identified under the Fisher Family Trust tool, those home educated, Care Leavers/Children in Care, those supervised by the Youth Offending Service, young people with SEND.
- Community engagement events have taken place in localities but were not well attended. A city centre based event has since taken place at the Space@Connexions and was very well attended by young people and providers. The next event is planned for January 2017 in Sinfen, this is a time of year when a number of young people can drop out of provision and Sinfen is a NEET hotspot area.
- 3 Care Leavers are in City Council apprenticeships (2 moved from Traineeships into an apprenticeship) and one has now been employed by DCC after being on an Apprenticeship) (the aim is for 6 by April 2017). For the remaining cohort of care leavers, 31 were NEET when we began work to engage more care leavers in apprenticeships and since then, 7 have secured employment and 1 is due to begin University next year, having deferred for a year as they are in full-time employment and one young person is in a work experience placement.
- We have made contact with DCC teams who have committed to give Care Leavers apprenticeships in more 'hands on' areas of work, such as catering, parks, leisure and Street pride. We are now in the process of following up these leads.
- We have worked with Derby College to ensure Care Leavers were signed up for places and we have shared their names with the College's Vulnerable Learners Team to ensure that where there is any risk of drop out, support is put in place to reduce this risk.
- We organised a bespoke programme for teen parents with Twenty-Two (city based training provider). However the referral rate was too low to continue the programme but it could be re-invigorated at a later date dependent upon the level of interest.

4.3 There have been a range of challenges at an early stage of this strategy. Namely, that we had a new recording system implemented in March 2016 and migration of data has been slower than anticipated, the system is not giving us the depth of data we had anticipated, which has made analysis less helpful than we had hoped to date. We are working to migrate outstanding data, which can help us to develop more in depth analysis of NEET groups.

We have not had an apprentice in place since August 2016, as we took the decision to wait to recruit a new apprentice, as August – October (the time of year when we recruit a new apprentice), is our most busy in terms of gathering and inputting data (due to statutory performance work). By recruiting in January, we will have an apprentice to support data gathering and inputting throughout our most busy period of

the year going forward.

We also have a gap in resource for NEET data in the Performance and Intelligence Team, due to a staff member moving to the delivering differently programme which has created some gaps in data over the late summer/autumn. We had recruited to this post but the candidate dropped out and we now have to advertise this post again.

We have been unable to gather accurate data on NEET in the Roma community, mainly because Roma young people tend to categorise themselves as White European other on school census data due to the perceived stigma associated with the Roma community, so we have no reliable data on how NEET affects this community. We are however planning to work with the New Communities Team to assess need and identify appropriate support.

- 4.4 There has been changes by DfE from 1 September 2016 to reduce the amount of information Local Authorities must collect and record in Information Systems and submit to the DfE in monthly extracts. Local authorities are now only required to submit extracts of information about young people of academic age 16 and 17, and are no longer required to collect and record information about young people beyond the end of the academic year in which they reach their 18th birthday. However, in Derby we have made the decision to collect this information to inform our own performance locally.

The changes made by the DfE features a new headline measure which combines NEET and unknown figures for 16 and 17 year olds, which they feel gives a more accurate picture of local authority performance in tracking and support for young people.

The strategy is being operationally led by X 2 Team Managers both with a Connexions and Post 16 background, including arranging and chairing strategy steering group meetings. The strategic lead meets with the operational leads on a regular basis to review the action plan and ensure work remains on target.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 A one year strategy could have been agreed but given that performance has been relatively stable, it appears that a 2 year strategy is more appropriate. The work to move some of the more vulnerable groups into successful EET destinations will take time to yield positive outcomes and I would suggest the next DMT review take place in 6 months to ensure oversight on progress.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	N/A
Financial officer	N/A
Human Resources officer	N/A
Service Director(s)	Maureen Darbon
Other(s)	N/A

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Background papers: List of appendices:	None Appendix 1 - Implications
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Appendix 1

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 There are no significant financial implications at this point in time; the resources delivering the strategy are in place already. It is a matter of continuing to utilise these resources consistently and continuing to seek opportunities to join up work streams and resources. It is hoped that continued success in the strategy can reduce local costs relating to out of work benefits for young people who are NEET.

Legal

- 2.1 The Local Authority completes returns to central Government on NEET and Unknown numbers as part of legal requirements and information is shared between agencies involved in this strategy following legislation (the Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Education Act 1996) and local policy/information sharing agreements.

Personnel

- 3.1 There are no implications as regards requesting additional personnel to continue to deliver this strategy. The personnel are in place already.

IT

- 4.1 There are no IT implications in relation to continuing to deliver this strategy. The IT is already in place.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 The impact of the strategy should be a positive one in relation to its focus on groups who are more vulnerable to NEET, such as care leavers, children with disabilities, teenage parents, those from BME backgrounds and those involved in youth crime. The focus is on improving life chances for these groups with the resources available.

Health and Safety

- 5.1 There are no significant health and safety implications brought about by this strategy.

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.1 There are no significant environmental sustainability implications brought about by this strategy.

Property and Asset Management

- 7.1 There are no significant property and asset management implications brought about

by this strategy.

Risk Management

- 8.1 There is a risk of further scrutiny from central Government brought about by any inability to maintain the numbers of unknown destinations for young people. This is likely to impact on confidence in Derby's ability to provide effective EET advice, support and guidance. I would however consider this to be a low risk.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 9.1 Corporate objectives from the council plan that are linked to this strategy are:

Protecting vulnerable children, young people, adults and older people.
Making sure that we take action to safeguard vulnerable adults and children that require higher levels of support including; our looked after children and vulnerable adults with learning disabilities. This will involve early intervention and prevention wherever possible.

Raising achievement and skills.
Supporting children in being ready to start school, raising educational attainment at all levels and creating a city where we have the skills to meet the needs of local employers promoting the employability of Derby people. We will also seek, alongside businesses, to maximise the apprenticeship opportunities for our young people making sure they have access to employment, education or training.

