

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Reduction in numbers of young people not in education employment or training (NEET) 2012/13 and Youth Employability Service (YES) work programme 2013/14</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>14 October 2013</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Pinaki Ghoshal, Executive Director for Children's Services</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Philip Ward</b>	<b>Tel: 29-4270</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>philip.ward@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 Brighton & Hove, through its Youth Employability Service (YES), has achieved its lowest ever level of young people aged 16 to 18 who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET). This is an important indicator which forms part of the Corporate Plan. This complies with the Department for Education: *Statutory Guidance on the Participation of Young People in Education, Employment or Training for Local Authorities*. March 2013.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the committee notes the progress in reducing the 16-18 NEET percentage
- 2.2 That the committee endorses the future priorities of the work of the Youth Employability Service as set out in sections 3.8 and 3.9.

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 Brighton & Hove City Council, through its Youth Employability Service (YES), has a statutory responsibility for the delivery of targeted Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) support for 16-18 year olds who are NEET in the city, or at risk of becoming so. This contributes to a key performance indicator in the Corporate Plan and to the emerging Early Help Strategy by providing early support to young people up to the age of 19 (24 if they have special needs) who are most vulnerable. YES works with partners to minimise the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).

- 3.2 Because NEET statistics fluctuate across the year, the Department for Education (DfE) measures a local authority's annual performance against the 16-18 NEET and Not Known indicators as an average of November, December and January figures. DfE data for 2012 – 2013 give the annual NEET performance figure at 6.7% against a target of 7.2%, showing that Brighton & Hove has achieved its best 16-18 NEET figures since the Department started to measure annual performance using the 3 month average in this way. The full range of results from 2004/5 to 2012/13 is shown in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 As well as the NEET percentage itself, it is important to consider the level of 'Not Knowns' i.e. not knowing what a young person is currently doing: the higher the Not Known figure, the less valid / reliable the NEET figure. DfE considers anything more than 5% Not Known makes the NEET figures statistically invalid. For 2012/13 we achieved 4.6%. We can say with justification that in Brighton & Hove we knew what 95.4% of our 16-18 population are doing – something which many local authorities cannot claim. We also should bear in mind that DfE changed the way the NEET and Not Known figures are calculated in 2011, moving from actual age to academic age i.e. based on the school year. By definition this now encompasses more young people who have turned 19, and, as older learners are more difficult to contact and engage, has made it more challenging to achieve these results.
- 3.3 National figures verified by DfE show that when the levels of young people who are NEET and Not Knowns are taken into account together, we were the most improved authority in the South East and one of the most improved in England. However, compared with the 2012-13 NEET figure for England at 5.8% there is still more to do. By contrast, the Not Knowns figure for England was 10.8% compared to the BHCC figure of 4.6%.
- 3.5 Statistical neighbour comparator statistics published by DfE in June 2013 show that Brighton & Hove, at 6.8%, is performing better than the mean of our statistical neighbours in terms of the NEET figures (7.1%) and better than several individual comparator authorities - Bristol (10.7%), Portsmouth (7.7%), Reading (7.5%), and Plymouth (9.4%%). We are also performing better in terms of not knowns (3.2% compared to the mean of 6.6%) so our NEET statistics are seen as very reliable. By way of comparison, Bournemouth 'not knowns' is at 10.0%, Bristol at 12.9%, and Southampton at 9.6%. Locally, East Sussex is at 6.7% and West Sussex at 13.4% not knowns.
- 3.6 The recent Local Government Association (LGA) report *Hidden Talents II: re-engaging young people, the local offer*, includes a case study on YES and some of the innovative solutions the service has developed to achieve these results. The report is available on the LGA's website: [www.local.gov.uk/hidden-talents](http://www.local.gov.uk/hidden-talents). As a result of this, YES, representing BHCC was invited to an LGA workshop in April as one of three 'expert councils' to share our expertise and approaches to reducing the Not Known figure with 28 other councils.

### **3.7 Challenges**

- 3.7.1 The current economic climate is likely to impact on the NEET agenda in Brighton & Hove over the coming years. Youth unemployment remains a challenge within the city and links to the city's regeneration strategy and the City Employment and Skills Plan (CESP) are important. Key issues include the lack of low skill work opportunities, the relatively low take up of 16-18 apprenticeships and the number of graduates who remain in the city. These often take up lower level jobs and

'block' opportunities for young people with level 3 and, as a consequence, level 2 and level 1 qualifications. This latter group forms the majority of 16-18 young people who are NEET.

- 3.7.2 Changes in government education policy have been designed to have a major effect on young people's transition at 16. In particular, raising the participation age (RPA) to 17 years of age in 2013 and 18 years of age in 2015 may serve to reduce the number of NEET young people. The RPA agenda is a key element in supporting young people in Brighton & Hove back into employment, education and training; Brighton & Hove City Council, including YES, has the main responsibility for achieving this in partnership with schools, colleges, learning providers and employers.
- 3.7.3 The rates of participation in all forms of learning in Brighton & Hove for 16 & 17 year olds (94.8% & 90.2% respectively – DfE July 2013) are relatively strong. However those who are not participating will frequently have already begun to become disengaged in school or face significant personal challenges. Engaging these young people requires further development of innovative and often non-mainstream provision, pre-16 as well as post-16, and strong mechanisms for early identification and ongoing individual support.
- 3.7.4 Since September 2012, schools have had the statutory duty to secure access to independent careers guidance for pupils in Years 9 - 11. Supporting pupils to make informed decisions has become increasingly important, especially in light of raising the participation age and the increased range of provision available to young people. This is an area which the local authority School Improvement Team, via the Secondary Partnership Adviser, should raise with secondary school heads in order to achieve a consistent standard of information, advice and guidance (IAG) to prepare all students for transition at 16 and beyond.
- 3.7.5 Unlike many other authorities, Brighton & Hove has retained from its former Connexions Service a well-qualified Youth Employability Service (YES) which focuses on supporting young people who are NEET, or at risk of becoming NEET, into employment, education & training. Providers work closely with the YES team and recognise it as a single point of contact with these young people.
- 3.7.6 YES has recently extended its remit taking the strategic choice to work with targeted, vulnerable young people pre-16 as well as post-16. The service now works with those young people at risk of NEET as well as those already NEET and includes linking with schools to offer early help and support to young people in year 11 who are at risk of not making a successful transition into employment, education or training at 16. Support is also being offered to young people in care by allocating a YES adviser to the Virtual School for Children in Care. Close working links have been developed with Jobcentre Plus, the Youth Offending Service, the Stronger Families Stronger Communities Intensive Team for Families (ITF), the substance misuse service (RUOK), the Family Nurse Partnership to support teenage parents and supported housing organisations and hostels.
- 3.7.7 The work of the YES team also directly impacts on the council's child poverty and the Stronger Families, Stronger Communities strategies. NEET young people within workless households have worse educational outcomes than their peers. The work of the YES team will form a key part of the emerging Early Help Strategy within Children's Services. Young people leaving NEET to access work or training are less likely to become involved in anti social behaviour and crime or require costly interventions by the Social Work teams. There are also community

cohesion benefits to residents, family and friends in supporting their young people into secure work and training and there will also be a benefit to the community in the reduction in the costs caused by worklessness.

### **3.8 Strategic / Partnership Initiatives 2013 - 14**

- 3.8.1 **City Employment and Skills Plan (CESP):** To strengthen links between learning providers, employers and support agencies for NEET young people via the Brighton & Hove Apprenticeship Group (BHAG) and the Investing in Young Brighton & Hove Programme which forms part of the CESP.
- 3.8.2 **Apprenticeships:** All agencies supporting NEET young people to work within the agreed Single Apprenticeship Pathway for Brighton & Hove.
- 3.8.3 **Progression Pathway:** YES to support BHCC to work with post-16 learning providers to investigate a broader Vocational Options programme to address the issue of some learners becoming NEET at 16 in the first 6 weeks of their course and some learners not progressing and so becoming NEET at 17.
- 3.8.4 **Joint working with Jobcentre Plus:** YES and DWP (Jobcentre Plus) to work closely to develop effective data sharing and joint programme delivery in accordance with recently produced draft guidelines 'Working together to support Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)'.
- 3.8.5 **Social Media:** YES to further develop the use of social media, including Facebook and Twitter, for which the service has already gained national recognition, and a YES iphone app, which is being designed with the active participation of NEET young people.
- 3.8.6 **Youth Contract Support for Vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds:** YES to develop delivery of the government's Youth Contract Programme to support vulnerable 16 and 17 year old NEETs. This will provide an increased level of support and mentoring for young people once they have engaged in a learning opportunity.
- 3.8.7 **Young People Leaving Care:** YES to support BHCC in supporting young people who are looked after and care leavers through the continued allocation of a YES adviser to the Virtual School.
- 3.8.8 **Stronger Families, Youth and Communities:** YES is now part of SFYC and is working on several joint strategic initiatives including the design and implementation of the Single Youth Pathway process.
- 3.8.9 **Youth Information Advice and Counselling Services (YIACS):** The Service Manager YES will lead the proposed development of YIACS as a single point of access for young people across the city.
- 3.8.10 **Child Poverty / Welfare Reform:** Strategic links to be developed between the SFYC and youth employability agendas and BHCC's approach to reducing child poverty and incorporating the key changes in the Welfare Reform Bill.

### **3.9 Operational Developments 2013-14**

- 3.9.1 **Early Help Strategy:** YES to work within BHCC's Early Help strategy by building on the RONI and other awareness indicators to offer support to vulnerable young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET via the emerging Single Youth Pathway.
- 3.9.2 **RPA:** YES to support BHCC in its responsibility for the delivery of the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).

3.9.3 **Planned Transfer Process:** YES to develop measures to address drop-out from post 16 learning at age 17 and in-year. This requires joint working with the learning provider.

3.9.4 **Early Leavers:** From April 2013, learning providers have a statutory duty to inform the local authority (YES) about young people who leave their post-16 learning early, without finishing the course.

#### 4. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

4.1 A client feedback survey was carried out in August 2013.

4.2 A joint project with the Lewes Road Community Group was delivered in Moulsecoomb in July 2013. This involved a group of NEET young people working with Mears Construction and others to renovate local sporting facilities in Hodshrove Lane, Moulsecoomb.

#### 5. **FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

There are no Financial Implications as a result of the report proposals / recommendations.

*Finance Officer David Ellis*

*Date: 03/09/13*

##### Legal Implications:

5.2 Local authorities in England are under duties to provide targeted support to vulnerable young people NEET and to secure sufficient suitable education provision. Local authorities have existing responsibilities to support young people into education or training, which are set out in the following duties:

- Secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people aged 16-19 and for those aged 20-24 with a Learning Difficulty Assessment in their area (sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996 (as inserted by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009)).
- Make available to young people aged 13-19 and to those aged 20-24 with a Learning Difficulty Assessment support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training (Section 68 Education and Skills Act (ESA) 2008).

5.2.1 In order to discharge this duty, local authorities must collect information to identify young people who are not participating, or who are at risk of not doing so, to target their resources on those who need them most.

5.2.3 As indicated in the report there are two new duties placed on local authorities by Section 68 of the ESA 2008 relate to 16- and 17-year-olds. These are:

- to ensure that its functions are (so far as they are capable of being so) exercised so as to promote the effective participation in education or training of persons belonging to its area to whom Part 1 of ESA 2008 applies, with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training;

- to make arrangements to enable it to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of persons belonging to its area to whom Part 1 of ESA 2008 applies but who are failing to fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.

5.2.4 Part 1 of ESA 2008 places a new duty on young people themselves: The duty to participate in education or training applies to all young people in England (from 28 June 2013) until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17; and from 26 June 2015, to their 18th birthday.

5.2.6 Local authority staff must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State in exercising their functions under this section.

*Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson Date: 01/10/2013*

Equalities Implications:

5.3 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out in January 2013. Results of that assessment have been incorporated into the delivery programme for the service.

Sustainability Implications:

5.4 There are no sustainability implications apart from the Financial Implications set out above.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 The proposals in this paper fully support the prevention of crime and disorder as set out in the Corporate Plan, 2013 – 2014.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 Financial and legal risks are set out above.

Public Health Implications:

5.7 There are no public health implications.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.8 These proposals take account of key corporate and citywide proposals, specifically those set out in the Corporate Plan, 2013 – 2014.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

6.1 There are no alternative options

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 To continue to enable BHCC to discharge its statutory responsibilities around post-16 participation and support for vulnerable young people in terms of NEET reduction.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. 16-18 NEET Performance in Brighton & Hove 2012-13

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

1. LGA Report: Hidden Talents II: re-engaging young people, the local offer
2. Department for Education: *Statutory Guidance on the Participation of Young People in Education, Employment or Training for Local Authorities*. March 2013.  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/home/schools/guidanceandadvice/g00222993/stat-guide-young-people-edu-employ-train>

### **Background Documents**

1. None

