

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 November 2022



Support for Young People who are Not in Education, Employment or Training

Report of John Pearce, Corporate Director Children and Young People's Service

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information on programmes available to support young people into employment, education and training in County Durham.

Executive Summary

- 2 Young people who are NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) can access support through DurhamWorks, which is a brand name for a number of programmes that are available for young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.
- 3 Figures for County Durham show there are 579 young people aged 16-17 who are NEET which equates to 5.2% of an overall cohort of 11,170 young people (June 2022). Of the figure of 579 young people who are NEET, 424 are available to the labour market and 155 are not available to the labour market. There are 73 young people whose education, employment or training destination is Not Known, which equates to 0.7% of the overall cohort of 16-17 year olds.
- 4 DurhamWorks is a £12 million programme to support young people aged 16 -24. The preventative element – DurhamWorks Programme for Schools supports young people aged 15 -16 who are identified at risk of becoming NEET to make a successful transition into post 16 education, employment and training. The re-engagement element – DurhamWorks supports young people aged 16 -24 who are NEET with transitional support, opportunities to obtain qualifications in English or maths and

access a range of provision to support their progression into education, employment and training.

- 5 DurhamWorks3 supports vulnerable young people and is focused on securing employment for young people within a defined timeframe thus making employer engagement activity a key feature of this programme. DurhamWorks Futures supports young people in identified vulnerable groups as young people in these specific cohorts are more at risk of experiencing significant labour market disadvantage than their peers, there is a focus on providing intensive support in order to develop motivation, confidence and work ready skills.
- 6 DurhamWorks Futures is a £1.23m programme funded through the Youth Futures Foundation to support 290 young people. This is being delivered to young people in identified vulnerable groups, including those who have previously received a Social Care intervention, those identified as SEN Support in school, those who have previously been excluded from education, and those who have previously attended alternative education.
- 7 DurhamEnable is a supported employment service for individuals who have learning, physical or mental health barriers. It is for individuals aged 18 and above who are unemployed or inactive with an aim to support individuals to obtain a job in the labour market that is paid at a prevailing wage.

Recommendations

- 8 Members are asked to note and comment upon the information provided within this report and the accompanying presentation.
- 9 That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to receive further progress reports on participation in learning and programmes available to support young people into employment, education and training in County Durham.

Background

- 10 Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed its work programme at its meeting on 7 July 2022. Included within the work programme is an item providing detail and information on the support provided by Durham County Council and Partners to help young people into employment, education, or training.
- 11 In accordance with that decision, arrangements have been made for Helen Radcliffe, Strategic Manager: Progression and Learning, to attend a meeting of the committee to provide members with the information they have requested. As this is a cross cutting area of work with the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee,

members of that committee have been invited to attend the meeting for consideration of the item.

- 12 Helen Radcliffe will deliver a presentation that will focus on the current situation regarding young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in County Durham and programmes that are available to support young people. Helen will also provide an update on DurhamEnable, which is a supported employment service for individuals who have disabilities.
- 13 There are 579 young people aged 16-17 who are NEET in County Durham, which equates to 5.2% of the overall cohort of 11,170 young people (June 2022). There are 73 young people whose education, employment or training destination is Not Known, which equates to 0.7% of the overall cohort of 16-17 year olds.
- 14 Young people who are NEET in County Durham can access support through DurhamWorks. This is the brand name for a number of programmes that are available for young people who are NEET or are at risk of becoming NEET.

Participation in Learning

- 15 The following table shows the current performance in relation to the proportion of 16-17 year olds in County Durham who are participating in learning, the proportion who are NEET, and the proportion whose education, employment or training destination is not known compared to regional, national and statistical neighbour averages.

16-17 year olds	County Durham	North East	England	Statistical Neighbours
Participating in Learning	89.7%	90.5%	92.4%	91.2%
NEET	5.2%	4.9%	2.8%	4.2%
Not Known	0.7%	1.2%	2.0%	1.1%
NEET + Not Known	5.8%	6.1%	4.8%	5.3%

Department for Education: Local Authority Client Caseload Information System, June 2022.

- 16 The overall 16-17 cohort in County Durham is 11,170 and the number of 16-17 year olds who are NEET is 579. Of these, 424 are available to the labour market and 155 are not available to the labour market. The number of 16-17 year olds whose education, employment or training destination is not known is 73. Data from June 2022 has been used for the purpose of this report because the 16-17 year old cohort is more stable at this point during the academic year.

- 17 The following table shows the trend in participation in learning of 16-17 year olds in County Durham across the previous three years. This covers the period during which the labour market was significantly affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes witnessed during this time included an initial increase in the proportion of young people participating in full-time education combined with a decrease in the proportion of young people in employment-based destinations, including Apprenticeships. However, this situation has now reversed, with an increasing proportion of young people in employment-based destinations, including Apprenticeships and jobs without training.

	June 2022	June 2021	June 2020	June 2019
Participating in Learning	89.7%	89.2%	90.5%	89.6%
NEET	5.2%	5.8%	5.0%	5.5%
Not Known	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%	1.4%
NEET + Not Known	5.8%	6.4%	5.7%	7.0%

Department for Education: Local Authority Client Caseload Information System

- 18 The following table shows the proportion of 16-17 year olds in County Durham undertaking an Apprenticeship, compared to regional and national averages across the previous three years. This illustrates the fact that an increasing proportion of young people are in employment-based destinations.

	June 2022	June 2021	June 2020	June 2019
County Durham	8.5%	5.5%	6.8%	7.8%
North East	7.6%	6.0%	6.9%	7.6%
England	4.7%	4.1%	5.1%	5.8%

Department for Education: Local Authority Client Caseload Information System

Programmes to support young people

- 19 As outlined in a previous Briefing Note ('DurhamWorks and Participation in Learning', March 2022), funding was successfully secured from ESF / Youth Employment Initiative, as well as the Youth Futures Foundation to develop and continue support for young people through DurhamWorks. As a result, there are currently three programmes in County Durham: DurhamWorks, DurhamWorks 3, and DurhamWorks Futures. These are led by Durham County Council and are being delivered in conjunction with partner organisations.

DurhamWorks

- 20 DurhamWorks is a £12m programme to support 6,900 young people aged 15-24. This consists of a preventative element (DurhamWorks Programme for Schools), as well as a re-engagement element (DurhamWorks).
- 21 DurhamWorks Programme for Schools supports young people aged 15-16 who are identified as being at risk of becoming NEET, to make a successful transition into post-16 education, employment and training. Young people identified as vulnerable are prioritised, including: young people who have SEND (with an Education, Health and Care Plan), young people who are Looked After, young people who are supported by the Education Health Needs Team, Young Carers, young people who are supervised by the Youth Justice Service, as well as young parents.
- 22 DurhamWorks Programme for Schools is delivered in identified mainstream secondary schools, special schools, as well as alternative education provision. There is a focus on schools located in geographical areas that traditionally have higher than average rates of young people who are NEET, as well as schools that have a high proportion of young people identified as vulnerable.
- 23 Young people who are engaged in the Programme receive a combination of careers guidance, one-to-one mentoring support, as well as the opportunity to participate in a range of activities that are focused on transition support, improving motivation, and Work Related Learning and Enterprise. Delivery of these activities are supported by Business Ambassadors, who are volunteers from local businesses and organisations.
- 24 Funding has recently been secured from the Poverty Action Group to embellish the support provided to vulnerable young people at school who are at risk of becoming NEET through a new Work Places Programme. This will provide opportunities for young people in Year 10 and Year 12 to gain a valuable insight into the world of work and find out about the skills and aptitudes that employers value through bespoke visits to work places. They will learn about specific employment sectors, different job roles within those sectors, as well as recruitment processes. They will also spend time with employees to find out about their pathways into work, in order to show them that employment is an achievable goal.
- 25 The re-engagement element (DurhamWorks) is supporting young people aged 16-24 who are NEET. Young people who are engaged with the DurhamWorks Programme receive transition support, the opportunity to obtain English and maths qualifications, as well access to

a range of provision to support their progression into education, employment and training.

- 26 In terms of performance, 2,724 young people have been supported through DurhamWorks so far, of which 2043 have been engaged by the DurhamWorks Programme for Schools and 681 have been engaged by the DurhamWorks re-engagement element. Overall, 859 young people have successfully progressed into education, employment or training.

DurhamWorks 3

- 27 DurhamWorks 3 is a £4.0m programme to support 1,191 vulnerable young people, including those who have SEND, are Looked After/Care Leavers, accessed Social Care interventions, young parents, were excluded from education and/or accessed Alternative Education, are offenders/at risk of offending, young carers, as well as those with mental health issues. DurhamWorks 3 is focused on securing employment outcomes for young people within a defined timeframe. Therefore, employer engagement activity is a key feature of the programme.
- 28 DurhamWorks 3 has engaged 304 young people so far. Of these, 25 young people have progressed into employment and one young person has progressed into education or training.

DurhamWorks Futures

- 29 DurhamWorks Futures is a £1.23m programme funded through the Youth Futures Foundation to support 290 young people. This is being delivered to young people in identified vulnerable groups, including those who have previously received a Social Care intervention, those identified as SEN Support in school, those who have previously been excluded from education, and those who have previously attended alternative education. As young people in these specific cohorts are more at risk of experiencing significant labour market disadvantage than their peers, there is a focus on providing intensive support in order to develop motivation, confidence and work ready skills.
- 30 As the Youth Futures Foundation is a new source of funding for County Durham, there is a strong emphasis on evaluation, in order to test the effectiveness of the support model. To this end, there is an initial target to engage with 150 young people who will form part of the formal evaluation of the programme. So far, 96 young people have been engaged by DurhamWorks Futures. Of these, 5 young people have progressed into employment.

Challenges

- 31 There are a number of inter-related challenges that are impacting on participation in learning and the number of young people who are NEET, as well as the performance of current DurhamWorks Programmes. These include increased levels of economic inactivity, with mental health being a significant factor; an increasing number of young people who are entering jobs with no training (as referenced in paragraphs 11 and 12), which tend to be lower paid, insecure and potentially more at risk of future economic downturn in the economy; as well as an increasing proportion of young people who are unwilling to engage with programmes such as DurhamWorks and / or support offered through DWP Jobcentre Plus.
- 32 In order to mitigate against some of these challenges, a number of measures have been put in place, including new methods of engaging young people, establishing routeways into specific employment sectors that are experiencing labour shortages and have opportunities available, including Apprenticeships and jobs with training; signposting to financial support for young people and their families who are experiencing hardship in order to remove barriers to progression into learning, including a DurhamWorks Flexible Fund; as well as creating a team of mental health employment practitioners to support young people and adults who are identifying mental health as a factor that is preventing them from accessing the labour market.

DurhamHELP

- 33 Durham County Council has recognised the need to support individuals whose mental health is acting as a barrier to them from progressing into employment. As a result, a team of three Mental Health Employment Practitioners, funded through Public Health, have been appointed and are supporting individuals who are engaged with DurhamWorks, DurhamEnable, and Employability Durham. This support is called DurhamHELP.
- 34 DurhamHELP supports individuals aged 16 and above who are experiencing mental health issues and are seeking employment, training, and/or volunteering opportunities. The role of the Mental Health Employment Practitioner is to assess the needs of the individual, support them in overcoming their mental health issue, build their resilience and signpost them to appropriate services. They also offer advice, support, and training to staff and act as a link between employers and individuals to identify any barriers, create reasonable workplace adjustments and promote positive change.
- 35 The Mental Health Employment Practitioners deliver evidence-based psychological interventions that support individuals to manage their mental health and make positive changes. The interventions last for

approximately 12 weeks and are delivered either in person or online. Each Mental Health Employment Practitioner will hold a caseload of around 60 individuals per year, across a two year period. This will result in 360 individuals being engaged and supported. To date, they have worked with 73 individuals of whom 31 have been under the age of 25.

DurhamEnable

- 36 DurhamEnable is a Supported Employment Service for individuals who have learning, physical and/or mental health barriers. The Service received £3.6 million of ESF funding to support 900 County Durham residents to move into or closer to employment.
- 37 DurhamEnable is for individuals aged 18 and above who are unemployed or inactive and included in the categories below (recognising that many people may be included into more than one category):
- Eligible/potentially eligible for Adult Social Care support
 - Learning Disability and/or Autism
 - Disability – physical/sensory
 - Those with primary/Low Level Mental Health support needs
 - Hold or previously held an EHCP/Statement.
- 38 DurhamEnable's aim is to support individuals to obtain a job in the labour market that is paid at the prevailing wage. The Service engages, places and provides longevity of support to individuals and employers. The expectation is that the Service gradually 'fades' support out of the workplace as both the employer and individual become confident and comfortable. This longevity of support, following successful recruitment into work, ensures that individuals have continuous access to flexible support until they are able to sustain their employment.
- 39 The service has supported 364 people to date of whom 67 have progressed into employment across a wide range of employers across County Durham. 162 participants have been between the ages of 18 and 25 (44.5%).
- 40 The Service has recently been successful in achieving accreditation by the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) for the national Supported Employment Quality Framework.
- 41 Durham County Council has been successful in securing funding through the Government's Local Supported Employment Initiative. It is one of 24 local authorities that will receive grant funding across the next three years to provide support to individuals with learning disabilities, autism or both to move into competitive employment and provide the help they need to maintain that employment. As a result, 100 individuals will be supported between November 2022 and March 2025.

They will receive extensive one-to-one Job Coaching, using the five stage BASE accredited supported employment model.

Conclusion

- 42 This report has provided the latest information regarding participation in learning in County Durham, compared to regional, national and statistical neighbour averages. It has also provided information about programmes that are available to support young people into education, employment or training through DurhamWorks, DurhamEnable and DurhamHELP. The report also highlights some of the existing challenges that are impacting on participation in learning.

Background papers

- 43 None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Finance

ESF funding for DurhamWorks, DurhamWorks 3 and DurhamEnable ends on 31st December 2023. Youth Futures Foundation funding for DurhamWorks Futures also ends on 31st December 2023. Funding for DurhamHELP ends on February 2024.

Consultation

Not applicable

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Current employment programmes are focussed on support for groups with protected characteristics or the most vulnerable. These include young people, women returners, over 50s, ex-offenders and those with a disability.

Human Rights

Not applicable

Climate Change

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Staffing

Not applicable

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

The ending of funding in December 2023 generates significant risk. Without further funding, the contraction of delivery will reduce the support available to young people who are NEET, at risk of becoming NEET and young people and adults with disabilities. The Council will lose considerable staff expertise, knowledge and experience at strategic and operational level.

Procurement

Not applicable