

**Economy and Enterprise
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

5 April 2013



**Update: Increasing Young People's
Employment Opportunities (18-24)
within County Durham**

**Report of Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and
Economic Development**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The report describes the progress made in relation to the recommendations made in the 'Increasing Young People's Employment Opportunities (18-24) within County Durham' Scrutiny review report published in June 2012.

Background

- 2 Members will recall that the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee commenced the 'Increasing Young People's Employment Opportunities (18-24) within County Durham' Scrutiny review in October, 2012 as a result of Members identifying as an area of underperformance RED PI 7, the number of 18-24 year olds claiming Jobseekers Allowance. Members of the committee were concerned at the continued increase within County Durham of young people aged 18 -24 claiming JSA.
- 3 In addition, as part of the refresh of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme undertaken in July 2011, Members identified the need for a focused piece of work to be undertaken looking at how Durham County Council and Partners could further develop partnership working to increase the employment opportunities of young people (18-24) within County Durham.
- 4 During the review evidence was gathered in relation to the following areas:
 - The national policy context and the implications for County Durham.
 - Employment trends within County Durham.
 - Details of various interventions available for young people aged 18-24 years of age.
 - Work currently undertaken to enhance employment opportunities for young people.

- Engagement activity with employers and issues/barriers experienced by employers in relation to employing young people.
- Case studies of young people engaged in various interventions and examples of best practice in relation to employer engagement.
- Visits to various providers to see the support currently available to young people in the 18-24 age group.

5 The review made the following key findings which were welcomed by the Regeneration and Economic Development Service Grouping and the County Durham Economic Partnership:

- Young people need to access the world of work at the earliest opportunity via work experience and various collaborative schemes focusing on key stage 4 (14-16).
- AAPs have significantly increased the employment opportunities of young people in County Durham via various local projects. There is a need to share details of the various projects amongst the AAPs.
- The need to continue to develop young people's less measurable employability skills via work experience, volunteering and pre-employment.
- The need to continue to promote and develop the apprenticeship offer within County Durham including the continued development of apprenticeships within Durham County Council.
- Continue to ensure that the information, advice and guidance provided to young people is sector relevant with employer input.
- The need to use existing transport networks/provision to benefit young people accessing training and employment opportunities.
- A number of models of good practice within County Durham were identified.
- Continue to monitor the development of the Youth Contract within County Durham.

Current position

6 The attached action plan (Appendix 2) provides information on the progress made in relation to the 12 recommendations contained in the review report and where appropriate identifies future planned actions to be undertaken.

Next steps

- 7 The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the systematic review process will receive a further update of progress made in relation to the recommendations contained in the review report at a future meeting in December 2013.

Recommendations

- 8 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider and comment upon the progress made in relation to the 12 recommendations contained in the Scrutiny review report.
- 9 That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting on the 9 December 2013 receive a further report detailing progress made against the recommendations contained in the Scrutiny review report.

Background Papers

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Review report – ‘Increasing Young People’s Employment Opportunities (18-24) within County Durham’.

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – A number of various funding streams, Single programme, working Neighbourhoods (WNF) and Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) have been abolished. In addition job creation schemes such as Future jobs Fund (FJF) no longer exist. The authority working in partnership has to look at accessing any new funding currently available from Government and any new job creation schemes.

Staffing – None

Risk – None

Equality and Diversity – Equality and Diversity issues will be addressed within the individual initiatives and schemes which provide employment support and job creation.

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation – Stakeholders who are involved in increasing employment opportunities for 18 to 24 year olds have been engaged in the review process and have contributed significantly to informing the review report

Procurement – None

Disability Discrimination Act – Disability issues will be addressed within any individual initiatives and schemes which provide employment support and job creation opportunities.

Legal Implications – None