

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

15 December 2014



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

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 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, 2011 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 As part of the refresh of the Committee's work programme for 2011/12, Members agreed that a focused piece of work should 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 recommendations contained in the review report and where appropriate identifies future planned actions to be undertaken.

Recommendations

7 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider and comment upon the progress made in relation to 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'.

Contact: Graham Wood, Economic Development Manager
Tel: 03000 262 002 **E-mail:** graham.wood@durham.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

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 – None

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