

**Economy and Enterprise
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Increasing the Employment Opportunities of Young People (18-24)

Terms of Reference of Project

Background and rationale for the Review

Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee have agreed to undertake a review focusing on the work of the Authority and Partners undertaken to increase the job opportunities for Young people in County Durham.

This topic was selected by the Committee as a result of the following:

- A refresh of the work programme within the context of the “Altogether Wealthier” priority theme of the Council Plan 2011-2014 identified within the current Committee work programme the following gap;
 - Increased numbers in employment with a focus on Young people.
- Quarterly performance reports to the Committee identified RED PI 7- Number of 18-24 year olds claiming JobSeekers Allowance (JSA), as underperforming on a quarterly basis, continuing to give members concern. For Quarter 4 (March 2011), the figure was 4,715 equating to 35.7% of the total number of JSA claimants, much higher than the proportion of the resident population of the same age which equates to 9.4% and is higher than the national average of 7.3%.
- At the Committee meeting held on the 2 June 2011 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from Ken Jarrold, Independent Chair of the County Durham Economic Partnership, which highlighted areas of potential focus identified in the County Durham Economic Assessment (CDEA) which included youth unemployment.
- In addition the Committee considered a report and presentation at the meeting on the 15 July 2011 focusing on the County Durham Economic Assessment (CDEA). At the meeting Members of the Committee were informed that in preparing the Assessment, baseline topic reports had been produced focusing on Business, People and Places. Implementations plans have been produced for the above areas which outline priorities, interventions and practical mechanisms which can be used to improve our assets within the County.

Young people feature as Priority 1 within the People Implementation Plan - which seeks to ensure that Young people gain the skills and experience they need for successful careers and to meet the needs of County Durham's employers by changing attitudes to work, raising expectations and aligning career choices with sub-regional and regional economic characteristics.

Members were informed that it was intended that in order to achieve the above priority work would be structured around:

- Educational support in schools - Review of support and how to continue/refine for the future.
- Enterprise in Schools - Improved training for teachers in enterprise education and increased placement take up. Consider the expansion of existing projects in this area together with the roll out of new qualifications in enterprise.
- School Leaver Employability – There is a need to better understand employers' requirements of employability of young workers. Explore scope to develop accredited employability qualification. Work more intensively with local secondary school Head Teachers to encourage school - employer links.
- Pre-apprenticeship Support - Explore expanding existing Young Apprenticeships programme, the Connexts Model and work experience for the Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) group. In addition there is a need to investigate accrediting work experience placements.
- Work with Schools, FE Colleges and Employers to better prepare young people for the world of business and enterprise, ensure they have the skills required by Employers.
- Apprenticeships – Working with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and partners to influence provision, identify good practice and increase employer participation. Developing role of public sector as work placement provider and influencer.
- At a Special Meeting on the 8 September 2011, Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report which provided information on the national policy context, identifying points of policy which will impact upon the design and delivery of support in County Durham, local policy priorities, resource availability and Partners/Services currently involved in the delivery of support. In addition a presentation was provided which provided information in relation to unemployment trends, current NEETs position, previous Young Persons Guarantee, Future Jobs Fund, current approach to apprenticeships, DCC involvement with apprenticeships, challenges and opportunities.

In relation to challenges the following areas were highlighted:

- Employer engagement.
- Raising the profile of apprenticeships.
- Demonstration return on investments by employers.
- Embedding as real alternative to academic studies.

Latest figures for the three months to July 2011 show that the number of people unemployed in the UK rose by 80,000 to 2.51 Million, the largest increase in nearly two years, the jobless rate now stands at 7.9%. Youth unemployment also rose sharply by 78,000 to 973,000 with the total number claiming JSA rising by 20,300 in August to 1.58 Million.

Review Purpose

To identify how Durham County Council and Partners can further develop Partnership working to Increase the Employment Opportunities of Young People (18-24) by improving how we support/engage with employers in County Durham.

Objectives

- (1) To provide an overview for the review group in relation to:
 - The national policy context including specific points of policy which will impact upon the design and delivery of support in County Durham – Apprenticeships, “Get Britain Working” measures, work programme, training entitlement - impact upon Employers, Wolfe Review, English Baccalaureate (E-BAC), “All-Age” Careers Service, proposals to help learners, Welfare Reform, radical changes to regional economic development policy and organisational arrangement and the co-design approach to employability.
 - Local policy priorities –employment trends including figures in relation to JSA claimants in County Durham, 18-24 JSA claimants, NEETs figures for County Durham, Future Jobs Fund figures (FJF) and various projects which support young people into employment - Apprenticeship brokerage service (East Durham), Esh Connexs, Future Business Magnates and Young Ambassadors, Business Enterprise Partnership, Targeted Recruitment and Training Programme, development of a follow up programme to the successful Future Jobs Fund (FJF) and the development of projects to link in with Hitachi.
 - Resource Availability including European Social Fund, The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Innovation Fund and Adults, Wellbeing and Health securing funding for delivery of apprenticeships.

- Partners/Services currently involved in delivery, 14 -19 Partnership, Adults, Wellbeing and Health, Derwentside Training, Area Action Partnerships, Education Business Partnership and the Prince's Trust, Duke of Edinburgh scheme.
- (2) To provide an overview in relation to unemployment trends (general), 18-24 JSA claimant trends, current NEET's position in the County, previous youth employment schemes (Young Persons Guarantee, apprenticeships (general) and challenges/opportunities within County Durham .
- (3) To gain an understanding of what is happening locally in relation to the various interventions to increase employment opportunities for young people, funding available, various schemes/work undertaken to enhance employment opportunities for the 18-24 age group in the County and case studies on a local and regional basis.

Various interventions:

- Overview of the various interventions available for 18-24 age group including work clubs, volunteering, pre-employment and work placement (through Service Academies and work experience), Work Programme (tailored support) apprenticeships, higher educational opportunities, vocational training (including the implications of the Wolfe Review), self employment (Including the Young Business Magnates) and various schemes introducing young people to the world of work i.e. "Learning the Business".

Funding:

- European Social Fund – Funding available within the County and regionally including the ESF/ Department of work and pensions co-financed programme.
- Innovation Fund.
- Funding for Apprenticeships including AWH securing funding to deliver frameworks.
- Skills Funding Agency (SFA) £50 Million.
- Any additional funding on a national or regional basis directed at (18-24 age group).

Various schemes/work undertaken within the County to enhance employment opportunities for young people:

- Work of the 14-19 Partnership in relation to participation, Learner entitlement, Learner support, employer engagement and infrastructure and the implications of the Wolfe report in relation to vocational training.
- Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) - Work undertaken within various Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) who have identified NEETs, Young people and unemployment as a priority including engagement undertaken with employers and the sharing of good practice.
- Work of the Business Enterprise Partnership undertaken with employers and schools, providing a number of support schemes introducing young people to the world of work i.e. "Learning the Business".
- Development of a follow up programme to the successful Future Jobs Fund (FJF), linking in with the extended 12 week (apprenticeship) work trial offered under the "Get Britain Working" measures and builds upon the relationships established via FJF.

Examples of case studies and best practice involving young people on a local/regional basis focusing on:

- Apprenticeships.
 - Work experience/work placements.
 - Introducing young people to the world of work.
 - Volunteering.
 - Self employment.
- (4) An understanding of the Partnership working in relation to employer engagement undertaken within the County including:
- Mapping exercise to identify all the various Partners within the County who engage with employers in relation to 18-24 age group.
 - Examples of how Partners and the Authority engage with employers including:
 - The work of the CDEP in relation to promoting apprenticeships, assessing employers skills requirements and encouraging employers to participate in projects focusing on young people/ establishment of an Employer Engagement Forum.

- The work of the FE Colleges, engaging with local employers to ensure that the training on offer to young people meet the needs of local employers. Also how FE colleges have become more competitive in relation to transport provision to attract young people.
 - The role of Jobcentre Plus in developing the strategy to align skills development with local employment needs.
 - The role of Durham County Council in relation to engaging with employers i.e. Area Action Partnerships, TRT, Business Enterprise Partnership, Derwentside Training and the Adult Learning Strategy – delivery of apprenticeship frameworks by AWH.
- (5) An awareness of employers issues/barriers in relation to employing young people.
- (6) Visits will be undertaken to some of the projects currently available within the County allowing members the opportunity to see first hand the support provided to young people.

Focus

Building upon the above objectives the review should seek to identify the following outcomes:

- Raise awareness of the Government's proposals in relation to young people and unemployment.
- An awareness of the unemployment trends (general), 18-24 JSA claimant trends, current NEETs position in the County, previous youth employment schemes (Young Persons Guarantee, apprenticeships (general) and the challenges/opportunities facing County Durham .
- To gain an understanding of what is happening locally in relation to the various interventions for youth unemployment, funding , examples of Partnership working(including members visiting some of the schemes currently available within the County) and case studies and examples of best practice on a local and regional basis.
- To raise awareness of Partnership working in relation to employer engagement undertaken within the County, including examples of how various Partners and the Authority engage with Employers.
- An awareness of employers issues/barriers in relation to employing young people.

A Project Plan is attached identifying how the Review Group will gather its evidence to support the focus of this Review.

Reporting Arrangements

The Overview and Scrutiny review group will report to the County Council's Assistant Chief Executive's Management Team, Corporate Management Team (CMT), the County Durham Economic Partnership, Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on its findings and recommendations.

Timescale

The review is to complete its research period by January 2012 and report its findings to Cabinet in February/March 2012.