

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee



26 September 2017

DurhamWorks Programme – Youth Employment Initiative

Joint Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships and Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Services

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with detail of the progress of the DurhamWorks Programme - Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), prior to a presentation by Linda Bailey; Strategic Lead: Progression and Learning; Children and Young People's Services.

Background

- 2 DurhamWorks is a European funded, Durham County Council led partnership programme that supports young people aged 16-24 who are NEET / unemployed.
- 3 The total funding available to support unemployed young people who are resident in County Durham is £17.04m. This consists of £6.39m YEI funding, £6.39m ESF, and £4.26m of required match funding.
- 4 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive regular reports and presentations detailing the progress of the DurhamWorks Programme, the most recent progress update took place on 13 January 2017.
- 5 Linda Bailey; Strategic Lead: Progression and Learning will attend the meeting on 26 September 2017 to deliver a presentation that will focus on the progress made to date in relation to: programme outputs, financial performance, marketing and communications, employer engagement, participant voice, and programme evaluation.

Programme Outputs

- 6 The overall target is to engage 5,830 young people into the DurhamWorks Programme. The latest performance data (July 2017) shows there are 2,721 participants registered on the Programme who have been verified as eligible. In terms of age and gender, 48% of participants are 16-18 years of age and 52% of participants are 19-24 years of age; 59.9% of participants are male, 39.9% of participants are female and 0.2% of participants are transgender.

- 7 The Programme is currently performing on or above target in relation to the following outputs:
- Total number of participants whose eligibility has been verified;
 - Participants who are male;
 - Participants with disabilities;
 - Participants who are members of an ethnic minority;
 - Participants who are unemployed / long-term unemployed.
- 8 The Programme is currently performing below target in relation to the following outputs:
- Participants who are female;
 - Participants who live in a single adult household with dependent children;
 - Participants who are inactive.
- 9 A number of measures have been put in place to increase the number of participants in those priority groups where performance is currently below target. These include commissioning targeted learning provision and reviewing data recording.
- 10 In terms of progressions, 1497 participants have progressed into an opportunity, with the most popular destinations being full-time employment and apprenticeships.
- 11 In recognition of the fact that a higher proportion of young people in certain vulnerable groups are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) compared to the rest of the 16 – 24 year old cohort, specialist DurhamWorks Transition Advisors have been deployed to work with Looked After young people and Care Leavers, young people who have SEND, as well as young people who are supervised by County Durham Youth Offending Service. Performance data shows that there has been increase in the proportion of young people in these vulnerable groups who are participating in learning and a reduction in the proportion who are NEET.

Financial Performance

- 12 The total expenditure claimed in the most recent quarterly claim (April 17 to June 17) was £1,463,147.09 - made up of £1,096,624.77 salary costs plus £202,028.44 other direct costs and £164,493.88 indirect overhead expenditure. The project is currently £2,305,913.46 behind profile. Reasons for this underspend include the late defrayment and late claims by Delivery Partners. The DurhamWorks central team is working closely with Delivery Partners who are posing a risk to the Programme and action will be taken if their performance does not improve. In addition, the DurhamWorks central team and Delivery Partners have had difficulties in filling staff vacancies in a timely fashion due to the short duration of the contracts and the future uncertainty of ESIF (European Structural and Investment Funds) funded provision. In order to address this issue, the DurhamWorks central team is working with colleagues in Durham County Council's Procurement Service to fill vacancies with agency staff / secondees (in line with ESIF procurement rules).

- 13 In order to maximise spend and delivery, negotiations have taken place with a number of existing Delivery Partners to increase activity, including the extension of the Learning Working Earning Grant through new 6 month awards. There are two new Delivery Partners (Derwentside College and East Durham College) and additional sub-contracted provision has been procured.

Marketing and Communications

- 14 Regular marketing campaigns are being undertaken, the latest of which commenced in August 2017. These utilise multiple channels (including radio and bus advertising) and are targeted at specific geographical locations and groups (e.g. employers). An on-going marketing campaign undertaken with the Northern Echo newspaper is resulting in an increased number of enquiries about the DurhamWorks Programme.
- 15 The DurhamWorks website and Facebook page are very effective in terms of raising awareness of and engaging young people onto the Programme. For example, there were over 19,000 page views on the website during the period April to July 2017 and 772 Facebook followers at the end of July 2017.
- 16 A successful DurhamWorks Achievement Awards event took place in May 2017, with prizes awarded in the following categories:
- Achieving through work;
 - Employer award;
 - Inspirational individual;
 - Inspirational mentor;
 - Making an impact – group award.

Employer Engagement

- 17 A comprehensive employer engagement strategy is being implemented with activity taking place across County Durham. Business Advisors are engaging with local employers and examples of activity include:
- Attendance at network meetings such as the North East Learning Provider Network and liaison with organisations such as Business Durham, the North East Chamber of Commerce, and Northumberland Business Services, in order to source potential work experience and job opportunities for young people.
 - Support for employers to understand the impact of Government measures such as the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy;
 - Publicity and promotion through publications such as the Peterlee Business Park and Aycliffe Business Park newsletters.
- 18 The DurhamWorks Learning, Working, Earning Grant is proving to be very popular with employers and at the end of July 2017, it was supporting 252 participants to the value of £1,090,640.
- 19 A number of employment sector-based routeways have been developed in partnership with Job Centre Plus (a DurhamWorks Strategic Partner) to provide opportunities for participants. These include:

- Teleperformance – developed in partnership with Gateshead College, this routeway focuses on the Call Centre sector, leading to a guaranteed interview with a global telecommunications outsourcing company.
- Durham County Council Sports and Leisure – developed in partnership with Bishop Auckland College, this routeway provides opportunities for participants to obtain qualifications, whilst undertaking a placement at Durham County Council Sports and Leisure Centres.
- ResQ Call Centre – developed in partnership with Durham Employment and Skills (Durham County Council), this routeway provides opportunities for participants aged 18 and above in the Call Centre sector, leading to a guaranteed interview with ResQ, a leading UK Call Centre that promotes Responsible Telemarketing.

- 20 A further three additional sector based routeways have recently commenced, providing direct pathways into employment. These are:
- Optimum Skills – engaging 860 young people across various employment sectors;
 - First Point – providing specialist routeways to 40 young offenders and young people in or leaving Care;
 - RAW Digital – providing a bespoke package of digital marketing, online design and social media marketing training to 210 young people.

Participant Voice

- 21 A number of measures are in place to ensure the views and opinions of DurhamWorks participants are captured and utilised in order to inform delivery of the Programme. These include the launch of an online questionnaire that participants are encouraged to complete, as well as regular focus group meetings with groups of participants following their completion of a DurhamWorks activity.

Programme Evaluation

- 22 Evaluation of the DurhamWorks Programme commenced in April 2017, following the procurement of York Consulting LLP. To date, a number of activities have been undertaken including the development of analytical and evaluative frameworks; consultations with Delivery Partners, DurhamWorks advisors and young people; as well as a forensic analysis of DurhamWorks data. These activities will inform the first evaluative quarterly report, which will be published in the very near future.

Conclusion

- 23 Significant progress continues to be made in delivering a successful DurhamWorks Programme, as reflected in the increasing number of unemployed / NEET young people who are being supported into education, employment and training.

Recommendations

- 24 Members are asked to note and comment upon the information provided within the report and during the presentation.
- 25 That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to receive further progress reports on the delivery of the DurhamWorks Programme at future meetings of the Committee.

Background Papers:

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Report – YEI – update – 13 January 2017.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – To continue monitoring expenditure and financial performance monthly, taking action to maximise spend. The position will be reviewed at the end of the calendar year in order to determine whether re-profiling to the end of the programme (July 2018) is necessary.

Staffing – N/A

Risk – A risk register is regularly reviewed.

Equality and Diversity – N/A

Accommodation – N/A

Crime and Disorder – N/A

Human Rights – N/A

Consultation – N/A

Procurement – N/A

Disability Discrimination Act –N/A

Legal Implications – N/A