

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee



26 June 2018

DurhamWorks Programme – Youth Employment Initiative

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

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the DurhamWorks Programme - Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), prior to an update 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. It was originally envisaged that DurhamWorks would be a four year programme, with an end date of July 2018. However, as a result of a delay in receiving final approval from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the programme did not commence until April 2016.
- 4 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive regular updates on the progress of DurhamWorks, the most recent of which took place on 26 September 2017.
- 5 Linda Bailey; Strategic Lead: Progression and Learning will attend the meeting on 26 June 2018 to deliver a presentation that will focus on the progress made to date in relation to: programme outputs, financial performance, programme evaluation and the future of DurhamWorks.

Programme Outputs

- 6 The overall target is to engage 5,830 young people into DurhamWorks. The latest performance data (May 2018) shows:
 - 4,882 young people are registered on DurhamWorks of which 4,606 are verified participants registered on the programme;

- 2,763 (60.0%) of verified participants are male, 1,830 (39.7%) are female and 13 (0.3%) are transgender;
- 2,256 (49%) participants are 16-18 years of age and 2,350 (51%) participants are 19-24 years of age;
- 1,941 young people are currently in receipt of wrap-a-round support;
- 362 young people are currently participating in an intervention through a delivery partner;
- 2,977 participants have progressed into education, employment and / or training.

7 It is anticipated that the overall target will not be achieved by the original end date of the programme (31st July 2018), with the latest projection showing that 4,830 outputs will be achieved by then. The delayed start of DurhamWorks and the subsequent reduction in the delivery timeframe explains why the overall target will not be met. However, if there is an extension to YEI funding, it is expected that the original outputs (as well as additional outputs) will be met.

Financial Performance

8 Cumulative expenditure to the end of March 2018 was £11.003m. If the programme ends in July 2018, it is estimated that there will be an underspend of £2.88M. This is as a result of the delayed start of the programme, as well as underspending by some of the Delivery Partners.

Programme Evaluation

9 A research company called York Consulting has been procured to undertake an in-depth evaluation of the programme. Activities such as consultations with DurhamWorks Delivery Partners, Transition Advisors, young people, as well as a forensic analysis of data, have been undertaken. These have been used to inform the delivery of the Programme.

10 Three key features of the DurhamWorks delivery model are:

(a) Comprehensive Careers Information, Advice and Guidance and targeted sustained wrap-a-round support that is provided to young people for as long as they want support and can continue when they enter education, employment and/or training;

(b) Encouragement of collaborative working between Delivery Partners to ensure young people can access provision and support from whichever Delivery Partner can best meet their needs at specific points in their journey to employment. The delivery model enables this as Delivery Partners are not funded on outcomes; and

(c) Targeted support for priority groups, including those with Special Educational Needs, Care Leavers and those supervised by the County Durham Youth Offending Service.

- 11 Initial evaluation has found evidence that (a) targeted sustained wrap-a-round support for young people is resulting in participants progressing into a positive destination. There is also evidence that some young people purely want wrap-a-round support and are experiencing 'programme fatigue' in the sense that they do not wish to engage in further activities to develop employability skills.
- 12 In a survey of participants, the overwhelming majority of young people were very positive about the sustained wrap-a-round support they were receiving. Comments included:
- 'The best thing about DurhamWorks is that your Advisor really listens to what you want and gives you guidance about getting a job.'
 - 'It's really helpful to have someone in your corner who is prepared to go that extra mile to help you gain employment.'
 - 'I have had a lot of help from DurhamWorks. They have helped me apply for a college course that I didn't think I would ever do.'
 - 'When I first started working, they gave me all the help they could with travel etc. until I got my pay sorted.'
- 13 In relation to (b) encouraging collaborative working between Delivery Partners, initial evaluation suggested this was proving to be challenging with more recent feedback suggesting it is improving. This was expected with partners being more familiar with working in a competitive rather than collaborative environment. Actions taken to improve collaboration to benefit young people have included:
- Implementation of a comprehensive communication strategy – ensuring all partners and wrap-a-round support staff are aware of what delivery partners and sub-contractors can provide;
 - Challenging DurhamWorks Delivery Partners to demonstrate that their provision is leading to positive outcomes;
 - Undertaking regular performance reviews with Advisors; and
 - Establishing locality groups to enable Delivery Partners and Advisors to exchange information, share good practice and discuss key issues relating to programme delivery. Attendance at these meetings has been good and feedback about their effectiveness has been positive.
- 14 In respect of (c) - targeting support for priority groups, the evaluation suggests this has been successful so far. This is demonstrated by the significant number of participants (2,316) who have self-declared that they belong to a priority group (such as SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disability, Looked After, Care Leaver, Young Parent, Ex Offender etc.) A focus group exercise undertaken with participants who have a wide range of SEND characteristics found that they valued the emphasis on work experience and there was a reported increase in their self-confidence.

Unemployment Data

- 15 The following table shows the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and the proportion of 16-18 year olds whose destination is not known from 2014-15 (prior to the commencement of DurhamWorks) to 2017-18.

	NEET	Not Known
2014-2015	6.5%	3.5%
2015-2016	6.0%	2.9%
2016-2017	6.0%	2.7%
2017-2018	6.1%	3.4%

Source: Local Authority CCIS (Client Caseload Information System), December to February average.

- 16 During the same period (2014-15 to 2017-18), there has been an increase in the proportion of 16-18 year olds progressing into employment, as the following table illustrates (please note: employment with training includes Apprenticeships). Developing employment opportunities for young people has been a key priority of DurhamWorks.

	All Employment	Employment with Training	Employment without Training
2014-2015	15.9%	11.1%	4.8%
2015-2016	17.1%	11.8%	5.3%
2016-2017	18.1%	12.4%	5.7%
2017-2018	19.1%	12.5%	6.6%

Source: Local Authority CCIS (Client Caseload Information System), December to February average.

- 17 The following tables show the proportion of 16-18 year olds in identified vulnerable groups who are NEET and the proportion of 16-18 year olds whose destination is not known from 2014-15 to 2017-18. It is important to note that the size of these cohorts fluctuate every year which has an impact on percentages.

SEND

	NEET	Not Known
2014-2015	12.5%	3.7%
2015-2016	12.00%	3.7%
2016-2017	10.7%	2.2%
2017-2018	11.6%	3.2%

Source: Local Authority CCIS (Client Caseload Information System), December to February average.

Care Leavers

	NEET	Not Known
2014-2015	40.1%	4.6%
2015-2016	42.7%	5.2%
2016-2017	29.2%	4.9%
2017-2018	31.7%	5.0%

Source: Local Authority CCIS (Client Caseload Information System), December to February average.

Supervised by County Durham Youth Offending Service

	NEET	Not Known
2014-2015	30.0%	5.7%
2015-2016	29.6%	3.6%
2016-2017	25.6%	1.7%
2017-2018	29.5%	4.8%

Source: Local Authority CCIS (Client Caseload Information System), December to February average.

- 18 The following table shows the estimated number of unemployed 16-24 year olds from December 2013 to December 2017 (latest data). This data is based on a sample survey, which means it provides an estimate of population characteristics rather than an exact measure. Therefore, confidence in the data can be variable. For example, the data relating to December 2016 is considered unreliable because the group sample size was small.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
16-24 year olds unemployed in County Durham.	11,800	7,600	6,200	4,800	6,200

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey – December 2013 to December 2017.

- 19 A direct correlation cannot be drawn between unemployment / NEET data and the impact of DurhamWorks given the multiple factors that impact upon youth unemployment, as well as issues concerning the validity of some of the data, as outlined above. Therefore, as part of the evaluation of the programme, a cost benefit analysis will be undertaken. This will seek to capture the wider social benefits as well as economic and fiscal benefits. A SORI (Social Return on Investment) model is being constructed which will consist of three strands: fiscal, economic and social. The intention is to demonstrate whether DurhamWorks has resulted in generating more than £1 of value for every £1 invested.

Future of DurhamWorks Programme

- 20 A call for proposals under ESF Investment Priority 1.2 “Sustainable integration into the labour market of young people in County Durham” was announced in September 2017. This is focused on increasing the participation, achievement and progression of young people aged 15-24 in County Durham who are NEET, whilst also reducing the number of young people who are at risk of becoming NEET. The total value of the project is £7.98m, consisting of £4.79m ESF funding and £3.19m required match funding. Durham County Council has submitted a full application in May 2018.
- 21 However, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) recently informed Durham County Council of a possible extension to the timeframe for the delivery of YEI, as well as a potential opportunity to pursue additional funding. Therefore, Durham County Council has submitted a request to DWP for an extension of time to July 31st 2021 and additional funding of £12.0M (£9.0M YEI/ESF and £3.0M match funding) to achieve current targets plus an additional 4,100 outputs. If YEI is extended, then the ESF Investment Priority 1.2 will be withdrawn, in order to avoid a situation of having two ESF programmes being delivered in County Durham at the same time.

Conclusion

- 22 Although there have been a number of challenges, significant progress has been made in delivering a successful DurhamWorks programme, which is resulting in nearly 5,000 unemployed young people resident in County Durham receiving support to help them to progress into a positive outcome. The scale and complexity of YEI is providing a very useful evidence base which will be used to influence the design and delivery of future programmes to support unemployed individuals.

Recommendations

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

Contact:	Linda Bailey, Strategic Manager - Progression and Learning	
Tel:	01325 375 940	E-mail: linda.bailey@durham.gov.uk
Author:	Stephen Crass, Progression and Learning Manager	
Tel:	01325 375 944	E-mail: stephen.crass@durham.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – N/A

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