

Skills & Employment : Update to May 2013 Report

Director Community Regeneration

1. Introduction

1.1 This paper provides an update on the Skills & Employment report which the Panel received in May 2013.

1.2 The paper sets out the progress that has been made against the key work areas outlined in the Report, headlines specific outcomes achieved and provides an overview of planned activity in 2014/15.

2. WORKLESSNESS Programme Team

2.1 The Worklessness Programme Team focuses on two particular broad client groups:

- Young People aged 16-25 leaving care, who are at risk of not being in Education, Training or Employment.
- Long term (1 years+) general out of work benefit claimants over 25 years old.

2.2 From April 2012 to April 2014 two Engagement Officers have worked with the Worklessness Programme Manager to develop a programme of effective engagement with the target client groups, achieving the following outputs and outcomes:

1. Successfully engaged **120+** (aged 16-59) clients both at early stage support, through to 6 months off out of work benefit or in Employment.
2. **47** individuals in over 16 hours Jobs and Apprenticeships, while taking an active role in increasing their paid hours and sustaining such clients.
3. Paid activity under permitted working on benefits under 16 hours for **circa 12** clients.
4. Delivering successful Forwards Work Clubs for General out of work benefit claimants (mainly DWP Work Programme Returners and Connecting Families), 14 of 28 attendees in paid work after significant support from Engagement Officer.
5. **Saved over 80K (Apr'12 to April'14)** in out of work benefit savings, and counting.
6. **Prevented** homelessness and custodial sentences for a number of clients.
7. Developing **innovative solutions** to enduring problems around economic wellbeing.

2.3 A further Skills and Employment Engagement officer for Young People Leaving care was recruited in February 2014 and is contributing to the overall team performance target for 2014/2015: **60 individuals into paid employment/ off an out of work benefit and/or starting significant accredited learning and training for people with Below Level 2 skills (5 GCSEs A* - C equivalent).**

2.4 Aside from work with wider long term out of work benefit claimants the team's number one priority is in developing effective solutions to the range of barriers for Care Leavers to achieving Employment and Training. One Engagement Officer for Young People 16-25 Leaving Care's has achieved (between April 2012 to April 2014) the following specific outputs from this developing programme of work:

- **20** Care Leavers off an out of work benefit and in paid employment/ apprenticeship.
- **17** Care Leavers maintained Staying Put, Supported Lodgings, Social Housing tenancy since engagement.
- **8** Started treatment/ interaction with DHI and/or Project 28/ reduced Drug and Alcohol misuse.
- Prevented **12** Care Leavers becoming Homeless and using Temporary Accommodation.
- Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour for **7** Care Leavers.
- Reduced General Offending for **5** Care Leavers.
- Prevented Remand and Custody for **4** Care Leavers.
- **2** Care Leavers offered Employment and Training as an alternative to a deliberate pregnancy.
- Reduced Presenting at A+E for **1** Care Leaver.
- **2** Care Leaver Admitted to Secondary Mental Health services but frequency and length of intervention reduced following engagement.

3. SKILLS & Employment

3.1 Access to a skilled workforce is a key consideration for businesses. Overall B&NES has a highly skilled workforce, however there remains a proportion of working age residents without qualifications and receiving lower than average wages. In addition, there is an on-going need to ensure pupils in education have relevant workplace skills.

3.2 The Economy, Enterprise & Business Development (EEB) Team within Community Regeneration has undertaken a range of initiatives during 2013/14 to address the local skills agenda.

4. Action

4.1 The B&NES Skills Plan is presently being produced to support the redraft of the B&NES Economic Strategy. It is also the key delivery mechanism in Community Regeneration's commitment to the B&NES Health & Well Being strategy, which seeks to **Create Fairer Life Chances priority by 'Improve(ing) Skills & Employment'**. The skills plan focuses on three Core Areas of:

- **Social Mobility including** - *Young People & prevention of low skills and worklessness & tackling unemployment*
- **Business Growth** – *Promoting employer led skills training, promotion of training for start ups and increasing the interaction of the business community with local schools.*
- **Councils Return on Investment** – *Ensuring that targeted recruitment & training opportunities are embedded into the procurement and planning process.*

5. Partnership Development

5.1 The EEB Team supports and provides funding for the B&NES Learning Partnership which bring together education providers and key labour market agencies operating in B&NES. The team also work closely with the skills team in the WoE Local Enterprise Partnership. The focus of this work is to make sure the needs of B&NES residents are met by education and job agency providers as well as being articulated through LEP economic and skills initiatives.

5.2 Activity in the last year has included the B&NES Skills Fair where:

- Over 1,500 visitors attended between ages of 15-25
- Footfall exceeded 2,500
- 300 exhibitors/ employers on 74 stands
- 35 different have-a-go activities with an estimated 2700 have-a-goes
- Attending Schools were Ralph Allen, Beechen Cliff, Hayesfield, Writhington, St Lawrence, Threeways, Fosseyway, Cirencester College, NRC and our students
- 6 people have so far gained employment directly through the event so far.

5.3 EEB team are working in partnership with both local colleges and the four UA's in the Youth Employment programme. This will seek to engage 90 B&NES young people who are not in education employment and training into sustained employment over the next 18 months.

5.4 A number of skills and business development events have also been organised in partnership with the LEP Skills Team these have included those for Low Carbon/ Retro fit and Manufacturing sectors. A joint partnership initiative is also underway to promote the Cultural Internship programme, where the **Fashion Museum has recruited a 6 month archive intern through the programme.**

6. Development Obligations and use of Section 106 Agreements

6.1 The EEB Team have been successful in securing a range of targeted recruitment & training (TR&T) outcomes on development sites including Crest Nicholson Bath Western Riverside development, where to date **10 apprentices, 14 unemployed skilled trades have gained employment, 26 Educational visits and a total of 201 up skilling outcomes have been achieved.** The Bovis Homes residential development on the old Purnells factory site in Paulton is providing work experience placements for Norton Radstock construction students for the next year. **This will see at least 20 students undertaking 2 day work experience placements on site.**

6.2 The EEB team has ensured that there is also a substantial S106 TR&T requirement on the Taylor Wimpey – Somerdale development. This includes:

Apprenticeship Starts	20
Apprenticeship Completions	10
Existing Apprenticeships	10
*Work Placements	80
Vacancies Advertised Through JCP	26
Skilled Job Centre Plus Clients	20

6.3 The EEB Team are presently working closely with Planning Policy on the development of the revised Planning Contributions SPD to ensure that skills and training obligations can be progressed as part of all major developments both during the construction phase and post-construction employment. **The contributions SPD will be adopted in Spring 2015.**

7. The Council as an Employer

7.1 As a major employer and procurer of services the Council can make a significant contribution to skills and employability and two initiatives are currently being developed:

7.2 Value Based Commissioning

- The EEB Team have produced a framework and tool kit for council officers when procuring works, goods and services which will ensure TR&T outcomes. This is being driven by the Council's newly adopted strategic procurement strategy and the Social Value Act. Key resident groups will include children leaving care and those on the Work Programme.
- This new framework and tool kit is presently being used in the procurement exercises to select a contractor for the **Collonades development and the leisure services contracts.**

7.3 The Council as Employer

The EEB Team delivered a policy to Cabinet in June 2013 to ensure that the Council operates to a corporate standard and looks to deliver a coordinated approach to engaging apprentices, work experience placements, internships and volunteers. There has been a significant increase in apprenticeship starts in the council from **4 in 2012/2013 to 18 starts in 2013/2014.**

8. Early Years/School Engagement

8.1 Engaging schools in understanding the scope and shape of future employment opportunities is an important element in the skills agenda. The EEB Team has worked with partners to engage with school students:

8.2 Severn Wye Energy's 'Your Green Future' two day event in March 2014 saw school children undertake interactive education sessions to understand future careers in the low carbon/environmental goods and services sector.

8.3 In the next year there is also a strategic aim to increase business participation in schools and dramatically improve the quality of Careers Advice and IAG to B&NES school students.

9. Targets for 2014/15

Key skills and employability targets for 2014/15 include:

- Delivering the Somerdale S106 agreement & Bath Casino TR&T strategy
- Delivering the West of England Youth Employment Programme
- Finalising and adopting the B&NES Skills Plan
- Developing joint working programmes and initiatives with the LEP Skills Team
- Ensuring continued support of the corporate policy on apprentices, work experience placements, internships and volunteers and engaging with the Public Services Board to encourage wider take-up across the public sector
- Adopting the Procurement & Planning Obligations policies and incorporating TR&T provisions in the revised Planning Contributions SPD