

Report to the West People Board

9th September 2014

Support for Young People 14 – 16

1. Background

- 1.1 Area Committee are currently supporting an Apprenticeship programme to support NEET young people to access apprenticeships. The programme has undergone an evaluation and the findings identified a need to offer support at an earlier age to support young people and ensure they do not become NEET.

2. Previous Recommendations

- 2.1 Develop a process to identify young people at risk of disengagement or becoming sustained NEET.
- 2.2 Develop pastoral support that offers the young person and their families to offer appropriate interventions at the earliest point to prevent escalation of issues.
- 2.3 Develop alternative vocational/training offer for 14 – 16 year olds.
- 2.4 Consider joint work with East to capture schools that have young people from both areas.

3. Joint Working

- 3.1 East Area Committee has been considered how they work with young people in secondary education to improve their education and employment prospects post 16.
- 3.2 As a result of this work a proposal is being presented to the East People Board to deliver a pilot programme at Thornhill School delivered by a number of VCS organisations based within the East. The pilot school was decided based upon performance information on NEET young people and which schools bought into the Connexions Service offered by Sunderland City Council.
- 3.3 As the proposed programme within the East is in place it is not going to be possible at this stage to join up working across East and West. Although the evaluation of the East programme will be built into future reports to the West People Board.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 Consider and make a recommendation to Area Committee on the project brief attached at Annex 1, which would be advertised to West Area Voluntary and Community Sector Groups.
- 4.2 Consider and recommend the number of young people to be supported as part of the project brief:
- 60 young people at a maximum overall budget of £100,000
 - 30 young people at a maximum overall budget of £50,000

West – School Opportunities Project Brief: TWO YEAR PROJECT

Sunderland West Area Committee would like to invite local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups to submit a full application that will deliver dedicated support, guidance and a programme of work to help develop learning and employability skills to support West young people, at risk of becoming not in employment, education or training (NEET) and prior to them being able to access support opportunities post 16. Applications will be considered from VCS groups who have a management committee, constitution and bank account with dual signatories. VCS groups must adhere to accounting requirements in accordance with the Companies/Charities Act.

1. Introduction and Background

There is an opportunity for local VCS groups with a track record of successful delivery in supporting young people in the West, established relationships with local schools and employers, successful delivery of employability skills and training for young people to submit a full application to deliver a project on behalf of Sunderland West Area Committee.

Sunderland West Area Committee identified the need to support the priority of job prospects and activities for young people in their work plan for 2014-15.

The West People Board was tasked with identifying and agreeing programmes to address this priority.

The People Board have discussed in detail the current context and major issues facing young people seeking work in the West of the City. Members concluded that they wanted to explore how West Area Committee could support young people to help young people remain engaged in education and develop knowledge and experience that would enhance their opportunities for continuing learning, training or moving into employment post 16 to reduce the risk of becoming NEET.

Research has been undertaken with secondary schools and local young people within existing programmes and identified that there is a need to work in schools with Year 10 and 11 pupils, within the 3 schools in the West –who are identified by their schools as at risk of becoming NEET. These young people will receive dedicated and targeted support through this programme.

The project will:

This project will enable work with young people aged 14 – 16 years of age in secondary education. The project will enable a minimum of 60 Year 10 and 11 pupils who are identified by their schools as at risk of becoming NEET or disengaging, to receive dedicated and targeted support within school. The project

will also link with Year 9 through the school's options process as appropriate. This will be in addition to any current curriculum based support Connexions provide in schools.

The project seeks to enable Year 10 and 11 pupils, and Year 9 where appropriate, and their families to access individual targeted interventions prior to leaving school. The project will be run with 3 of the West Schools (Farrington Community Sports Academy, Sandhill View and Academy 360) each young person will be identified in partnership with the school to identify a progression route from mandatory education, supported by a Mentor. Together the young person and mentor will identify 'influences' and 'barriers' within the young person's life and how this impacts on their personal progression. The project will work individually with each young person to help them to make their own decisions about their career path, understand what progression they need to complete to achieve this goal and to map this agreed journey so achievement can be identified, discussed and celebrated. The Programme is flexible however some of the agreed pathways to progression may include:

- Attending work placement as part of the school curriculum tied to attendance at school and potentially additional supported learning in key areas such as basic skills and personal development
- Attending out of school diversionary to build motivation and confidence and team working skills and as appropriate to participate in processes to accredit those skills
- Attending vocational education opportunities within or outside of school to build and enhance knowledge, experience and skills.
- Developing employability led skills to meet the needs of the employers
- Undertaking volunteering outside of school hours

Relevant support pathways will be identified as the mentor works with the individual young person and their families. Any support for the young person and their family is intended to identify and address any barriers they may face. A number of projects and initiatives have identified issues such as employed status not being welcomed by the family because of potential loss of benefits. A key driver in enabling young people to aspire to work will be provided through the employer engagement relationships that will be fostered. The mentor will help identify vocational routes of interest for each young person and support provided to enable the young person to follow these vocational routes and establish relationships with employers. Employers will be encouraged to provide structured work placements to those young people in Years 10 and 11 following the programme whose destinations after school are unclear.

The work placements will be fundamentally different to the work experience week each young person attends within their curriculum as part of Year 11. Employer relationships will be identified in response to the plan and agreements reached with young people within their 'contracts' and will reflect their interests and hobbies and is intended to enable them to experience a number of different

occupational areas prior to leaving school to help inform their choices regarding work being a real option for them when they leave school. In parallel to working with the young people the project will also work with employers to understand if the work placement opportunity operates in line with expectations, any barriers or challenges experienced in terms of delivery or the young person.

- Work with the schools in the West to determine the scope of the project and to identify young people who are or anticipated to experience long term disengagement, floating/undecided young people and young people who are in transition who are open to learning.
- Work with schools to implement a risk indicator to be completed with young people in year 9 to inform the process and the interventions required for each individual young person (pastoral support, mentoring/coaching, vocational opportunities etc)
- Work closely with parents, families and carers and peers of the young person to gain engagement from a cohort of young people who historically have not accessed services such as Connexions.
- Help develop employability skills which will increase options when leaving school and will increase opportunities to access employment.
- Work closely with and have clear links to current initiatives and services (including but not limited to Connexions Support, Work Discovery Week etc)
- Work with and engage employers to identify and encourage vocational routes for young people resulting in structured volunteering, placements and apprenticeships that address any barriers or issues that might impact on delivering a positive pathway and outcome for the young people.

The outcomes of this project will include:

- Appointment of a dedicated worker to deliver the project.
- Identification of a minimum of 60 suitable young people aged 14 – 16 attending schools in the West area of the city.
- Reduce the % of young people who leave school in the West without a clear destination and becoming NEET.
- Work with employers to understand their needs and support our young people to understand their role in the workplace and the skills required.
- Enable young people to consider opportunities or options for accessing employment at the age of 16 as a realistic option and to understand how learning enabled through traineeships and apprenticeships or bespoke 'organisational' learning will enhance their employability skills.
- Increase the number of young people leaving school that remain in their option of choice rather than leaving within a short period of time of starting their progression path
- Support for Year 10 young people to 'reintegrate' into school life and move them 'out of risk' by Year 11. This will enhance the number of progression paths they have to select from when leaving school at 16.

- Detail how the project would add value to existing provision in the West of the city and avoid duplication.
- The application will detail the type and level of support that will be provided to the young people, schools, families and employers in order to achieve the identified outcomes.
- The project will have a lifetime of 2 years from the date of approval.
- All young people taking part in the project will attend schools in the West area of the city.