

CHILDREN'S SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

4 December 2008

YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 On 1 April 2008, responsibility for achieving the targets to reduce the percentage of 16-18 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) transferred from Connexions Services to Local Authorities. In Sunderland, the responsibility for the target is Children's Services. Targets were previously set by Connexions Tyne & Wear to achieve an outturn of 8.4% by 2011.
- 1.2 This report informs Review Committee of the progress towards this target and actions to be taken to ensure that the number of young people participating in learning and work increases.

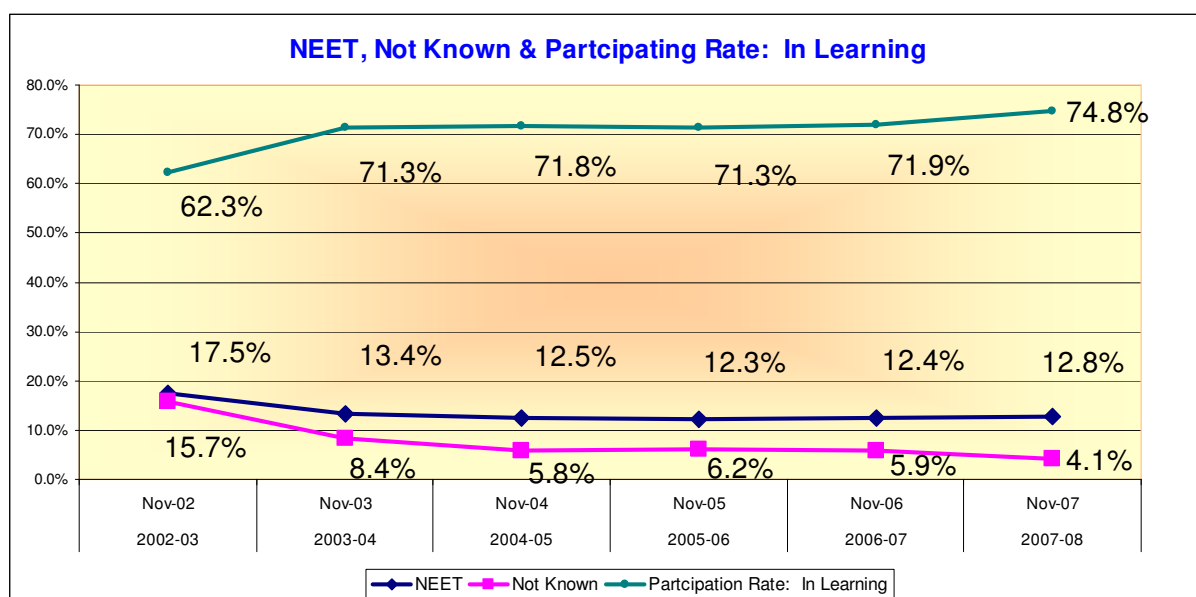
2 Background

- 2.1 A major issue for the Government and a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for Local Authorities is to reduce the percentage of 16-18 year olds who are NEET.
- 2.2 An associated target is to maintain the percentage of young people whose current position is Not Known to below 10%.
- 2.3 Sunderland's Local Area Agreement (LAA) target is to achieve reducing NEET 8.4% by 2011. The November 2007 outturn was 12.8%, therefore this is a significant reduction to achieve and will equate to reducing the NEET cohort by approximately 700 young people and sustaining them in Education, Employment or Training (EET).
- 2.4 A NEET Strategy Group (a sub-group of the 14-19 Strategy Group) has been in existence since March 2007 and includes representation from all key stakeholders within the Partnership. The group recently undertook a 'Challenge Event' which was reported on and recommendations were agreed.
- 2.5 The group also has a delivery / action plan which has been amended to give a greater focus on actions that will 'turn the curve' on NEET. Key actions from this will also be included in the 14-19 and Sunderland Learning Partnership plans which are also under review.
- 2.6 A Members' Learning and Skills Task Group is also meeting and will include NEET in its scope. Officers will welcome any recommendations from the group in relation to NEET.

- 2.7 This is a particularly challenging target given that 195,000 residents live in the top 30% of deprived wards in the country and 37,000 residents within the city are on benefits.

3 Current position

- 3.1 Participation in EET has been steadily rising, from 62% in 2002 to 74% in 2007. NEET has been falling from the highest point of 17.5% in 2002, remaining in the main unchanged since 2004 around 12.8%. Not Knowns, however, have fallen significantly – from 15.7% in 2002 to the lowest point in 2007 of 4.1%. It is clear that the reduction of 11% in Not Knowns has had a significant impact on the NEET figure, as young people who become Known generally become NEET.



♣ DCSF apply a formula to the figures to take into account lapsed EET; this was 8.1% for Sunderland, therefore the above percentages do not equate to 100%

NEET & Not Known – Tyne & Wear Comparison November 2007 – January 2008

Local Authority	NEET	Not Known	Total
Sunderland	12.8%	4.1%	16.9%
Gateshead	10.4%	5.8%	16.2%
Newcastle	9.3%	6.3%	15.6%
North Tyneside	8.8%	5.1%	13.9%
South Tyneside	10.6%	7.3%	17.9%

- 3.2 Whilst the position in relation to Not Knowns is accepted by Government Office North East (GONE) and the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF), the imperative nevertheless remains that NEET figures must be reduced to ensure Young People in Sunderland are economically viable.

***NEET and Not Known - Sunderland 16-19 year olds
Data by geographical area***

Area	NEET	Not Known
DH4	137	5
DH5	110	5
NE37	112	7
NE38	127	6
SR1	47	3
SR2	232	17
SR3	245	19
SR4	339	20
SR5	336	43
SR6	60	4
TOTAL	1745	129

- 3.3 The highest proportion of NEET Young People live in SR5 (34% of NEET cohort):
- Carley Hill;
 - Castletown;
 - Downhill;
 - Hylton Castle;
 - Hylton Red House;
 - Marley Pots;
 - Southwick;
 - Town End Farm;
 - Witherwack.
- 3.4 The DCSF has recently designated Sunderland a “NEET Hotspot”. The “NEET Hotspot” designation is used where the Department perceives that an area needs to make a step change forward in relation to reducing the levels of NEET and has the capacity and capability to do so. Through this initiative, additional support will be given to the City Council in the form of £25,000 and consultancy time. Representatives from Sunderland have met with DCSF who agreed with the actions that we have already taken and future plans.
- 3.5 A further partnership event with DCSF and partners is planned in January 2009. Though this event, a detailed strategy and delivery plan will be agreed.

4 Future Action

- 4.1 Transformational change is required if the LAA target is to be achieved. The following NEET actions have been agreed which require further work to be undertaken:
- Developing more opportunities for employment through Intermediate Labour Market and Apprenticeship provision. An application will be made to the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, for these interventions, in December 2008;

- Focussing support on those schools whose young people have the greatest likelihood of becoming NEET at 16. The data for this has been produced;
- Tracking young people more closely and encouraging work between partner organisations eg Job Centre Plus and Connexions to ensure that effort is appropriately targeted;
- Ensure robust information about young people who are NEET is provided on a regular basis for interrogation and interpretation to inform effective action to support young people;
- Ensure providers work together to maintain young people in learning once they have engaged and actively track drop-out;
- Providing mentoring services for young people to support their transition and to help them settle in to new learning environments;
- Developing a culture of collective responsibility:
 - Sharing information,
 - Developing knowledge and understanding;
- Developing more responsive and better connected services.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Within the 14-19 Partnership there is a determination to deliver the required step change that is pledged in the LAA, expected by the DCSF, and required by the City's young people. Without this positive change one eighth of the City's young people will have an increased potential to experience a number of inhibiting disadvantages including: unemployment, lower income, poorer health, and depression. Children's Services Leadership Team are absolutely committed to achieving the outcome that young people in our City deserve.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are asked to:
- note the content of this report; and
 - advise on any additional actions that will enable the NEET target to be met.

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