

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 23 November 2020

Report Title: NEET Problem Solving Summit

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kathryn Flavell, Portfolio Holder Children and Families

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1. Introduction and Policy Context

- 1.1. Our Vision for children and young people in Cheshire East is that we work TOGETHER to deliver the best outcomes to empower young people to become independent, safe, skilled and happy.
- 1.2. The Coronavirus has brought some unprecedented challenges, no more than for our young people whose education and future planning has been “paused” while the nation attempts to deal with the crisis.
- 1.3. In Cheshire East we are determined to do all that we can to re-start the system for young people, to bring together several national and local initiatives to make sure young people are able to make choices about their short term, and their longer term ambitions as they move in to adulthood.

2. Background

- 2.1. Some young people face even greater challenges, our cared for children and care leavers face huge hurdles as they do not have the same nurturing parents who can help them to make their way into adulthood. It is all of our responsibilities to offer greater support to this group of vulnerable children as part of our coordinated efforts.
- 2.2. Also, our young people with Special Needs, Learning and Physical Disabilities will need extra support as they plan for the future. We need to be sensitive and flexible in our employment and training support offer of help, more than ever.

3. Briefing Information

- 3.1. On the 24 September 2020 we welcomed all agencies and sectors to the first Cheshire East Summit focussing on the current needs of our young people aged 16-25 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).
- 3.2. The first NEET Summit is the start of this journey and it is an important milestone in ensuring that we are joined up and coordinated in our shared vision to support NEET young people to thrive.
- 3.3. We want to emphasise the need for us to consider the impact of long term, intergenerational unemployment and poverty in different areas of Cheshire East. It is vital that we work hard to understand the impact of deprivation on the life chances of our young people and address the imbalance. To set some context in terms of NEET statistics, currently numbers are steadily increasing in Cheshire East:

NEET Info Sept 2018 to Sept 2020 across
Cheshire East

	2020	2019	2018
Neet 16 - 18Yrs	222	209	174
SEND	28	25	11

- 3.4. Figures from Welfare to Work partnership show in March there were 2,500 claiming universal credit, and now there are 12,000 claiming universal credit.
- 3.5. We have surveyed our young people in the Summer to ask them what they would like to do – results show they would like:
 - Care roles – childcare in particular but also care of older people
 - Construction – practical jobs
 - Working with animals
- 3.6. From the same summer survey young people telling us the barriers are:
 - Mental health
 - Not enough local vacancies
 - Not enough training opportunities
 - Confidence

3.7 Attached below is the action plan that came out of the first NEET summit and specifically in relation of what additional work the People's Directorate can do to grow our employment support offer to our children leaving care, children with SEND as they move in to adulthood and our vulnerable adults open to Learning Disability and Mental Health Teams where they would benefit for employment and work opportunities within the Local Authority.

NEET PROBLEM SOLVING SUMMIT - ACTION PLAN

Action	How?	Who?
Create a YP Providers Network for Cheshire East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virtual quarterly meetings via Teams - Focus to problem solve complex NEET work - Create a variety of options - Align the Journey First Workers to intensively manage cases 	Sarah Ramsey to set up and service the network
Consider the Council's role as a large Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to offer more opportunities for Apprenticeships, Kickstart Places, Workplace opportunities - Report to come to People's DMT in November 	Colin Jacklin
Promote Sharing of Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use existing networks to share what opportunities are available - Consider the creation of a Digital Jobs Board 	Colin Jacklin Sarah Ramsey
Create a virtual delivery "hub" between JCP and Youth Support Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JCP and IYSS to start planning for the creation of an integrated delivery hub to make Kickstart work for long term NEET 	Sarah Ramsey Elaine Parry
Promote existing virtual "job fairs" for targeted NEET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All attendees to receive details of upcoming job fairs before the end of October 	Colin Jacklin
Promote in advance CV and introductions for young people to employers in advance of job fairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each provider working with a NEET Young Person to prepare their interests and skills prior to Job Fairs to give them an added advantage to employers. 	Zoe Macey All
Understand better the skills, needs and preferences of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that training and skills opportunities are also showcased at Job Fairs - to create more flexibility and opportunity. 	All
Enable personal confidence building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Journey First to commission individual training and confidence building activity 	Phil McCartney

and self-esteem for those YP with the greatest challenges	into the programme offer	
Consider Social Enterprise and business start ups support package to promote entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a Business Incubator Model - All to consider self-employment as an option for YP 	Ali Stathers-Tracey & Dave Leadbetter to meet with Growth Company initially
Promote the role of advisors within schools and engage early with complex YP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore the Career Advice walls options across schools and join up the options earlier 	Mark Bayley