

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

10th JUNE 2014

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an update on progress with implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression (YE&P) Framework in Bridgend.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The implementation of the YE&P Framework will be key in reducing the number of young people in the county who are not in education, employment and training (NEET) which is a key priority for the Council and its partners.

3. Background

- 3.1 A multi-agency workshop was held on the 28th November 2013 to review progress and next steps with Bridgend's 2011-2014 NEETS strategy. At the same time, Welsh Government developed and published the YE&P Framework and models of good practice. Topics for the workshop were developed with implementation of the Framework in mind as it was clear that this would be the best vehicle to replace the NEETS strategy moving forward.
- 3.2 The workshop was well attended with over 40 delegates from a range of partner agencies including the Department of Work and Pensions, Careers Wales, Families First, Communities First, Work Based Learning Providers, Voluntary Sector and Bridgend College.
- 3.3 The overarching aim of the Framework is twofold: to prevent young people becoming NEET in the first instance and to re-engage those who find, for whatever reason at a particular point in time, that education, training or work is not for them.
- 3.4 The six key elements of the YE&P Framework are:
- Earlier identification of young people most at risk of disengagement
 - Better brokerage and co-ordination of support
 - Stronger tracking and transition of young people through the system

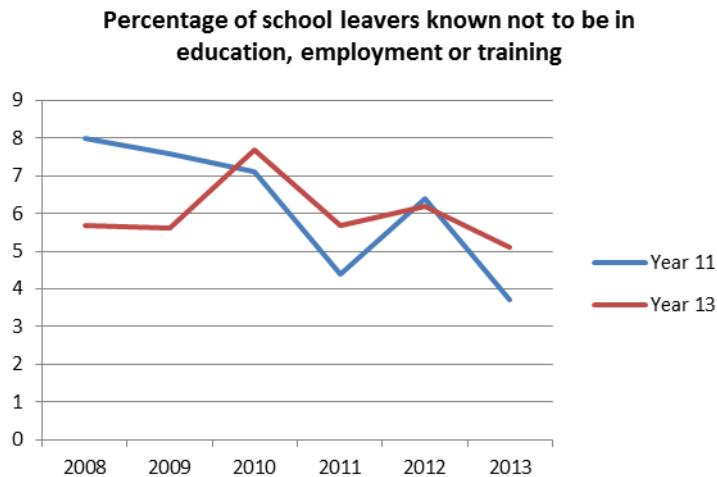
- Ensuring provision meets the needs of young people
- Strengthening employability skills and opportunities for employment
- Greater accountability for better outcomes for young people

3.5 There are also two new offers to young people through the Framework:

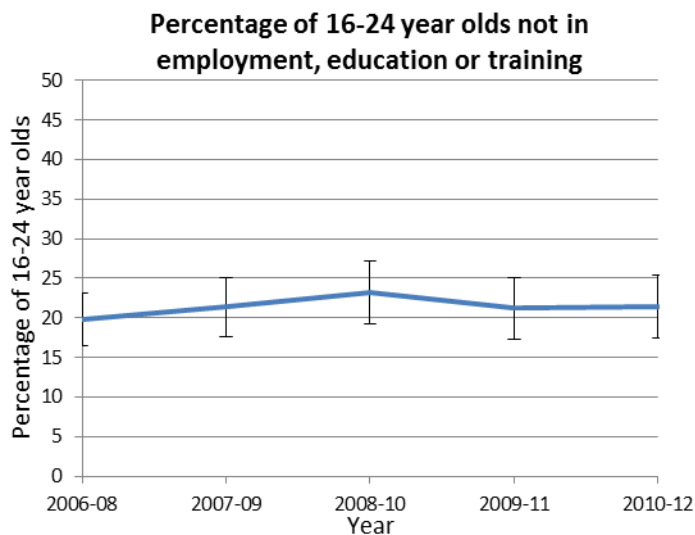
- the first is an allocation of a single point of contact (a lead worker) to the most at-risk young people to help ensure that support is delivered in a joined up and coordinated way that works to meet their needs
- the second is the development of a Youth Guarantee to ensure every young person has access to a suitable place in learning post-16

4. Current Position / Proposal

- 4.1 As part of the Framework, Welsh Government requested each local authority to complete an action plan by the 14th March 2014 (the actions of which were pre-populated by Welsh Government) outlining how they were going to take forward implementation of the Framework. In Bridgend, this was developed by a multi-agency task and finish group and is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 4.2 **Appendix 2** to this report outlines the basis of the Youth Engagement and Progression model with a full version of Welsh Government's guidance available at www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills
- 4.3 To assist with implementation of the Framework Welsh Government have allocated £50,000 to each local authority. The guidance suggests that each local authority should develop the role of an Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator to improve the co-ordination of services which contribute to the implementation of the Framework. The funding will be used to create this position, initially on a fixed term basis.
- 4.4 Work to develop a more focussed implementation plan will continue via a strategic multi-agency group which met for the first time on the 22nd May 2014.
- 4.5 To put the challenge into context for the Committee some of the more recent performance linked with NEETs in Bridgend is outlined in the graphs that follow. Whilst this is an improving position, more work needs to continue to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.



Source: Careers Wales



Source: Annual Population Survey

- In Bridgend the percentage of Year 11 school leavers known to be NEET was 3.7% in 2013. This is in line with the Wales average.
- The percentage of Year 13 school leavers known to be NEET is 5.1% in 2013. This is higher than the Wales average of 4.7%.

- Indicators of NEET are gained from annual population surveys and from Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) data.
- The latest data from the annual population survey suggests that in the period 2010-2012 21.4% of 16-24 year olds in Bridgend were NEET.
- In March 2014, 795 18-24 year olds in Bridgend County were claiming JSA. This is less than in March 2013 when the number of 18-24 year old claimants was 1,035. This suggests a reduction in NEETs.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 The work of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental well being in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 No equality impact assessment has been completed at this point as some of the specifics linked with the implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework are still being considered nationally.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The £50,000 Welsh Government grant will be used to employ an Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator on a fixed term/secondment basis to improve the co-ordination of services which contribute to the implementation of the Framework.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1. It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this report.

Report Author: Nicola Echanis - Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships

Contact Details: Nicola.echanis@bridgend.gov.uk Tel: 01656 - 642617