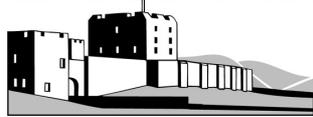


**CARLISLE
CITY COUNCIL**



www.carlisle.gov.uk

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Report

Public

Date of Meeting: 24 March 2011

Title: Activities contributing to supporting young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS)

Report of: Assistant Director (Community Engagement)

Report reference: CD/03/11

Summary:

This report describes activities, joint working arrangements and proposed new ways of working to improve wellbeing and address worklessness in young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS)

Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:

1. Members are asked to comment on the current activities and proposed new ways of working to support NEETs

Contact Officer: Margaret Miller

Ext: 7330

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report highlights how the Community Engagement directorate supports young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and through this contributes to the employment priorities outlined in the corporate plan. It references partnership working, programme management and direct delivery. The report is in two parts. Part one focuses on the current programmes and activities. Part two contains a proposal for a more coherent joined up approach, making better use of resources, new structures and ways of working.

2.0 Part one : Current Work

2.1 Within Community Engagement, individual teams currently enable, facilitate and/or deliver a wide range of programmes to children and young people aged between 0 – 19 and up to 25 if they have a learning difficulty or a disability. None of the current programmes are specifically targeted at young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs), although NEETS do access the programmes. We do not formally report outcomes for NEETS though it is clear there are positive impacts in terms of confidence, self esteem, motivation, acquisition of new skills and increased take up of education and employment opportunities.

2.2 *Project Overview*

The Community Housing and Health service is contracted to provide services to young people through Cumbria Youth Support Services Contracts (CYSS). This is funded through the County Council and managed by the lead contractor Connexions. The range of services delivered includes:

- BASE library drop in
- Accredited learning
- Schools partnerships
- Skateboarding and BMX skills and coaching
- Outreach services to Gypsy and Travellers
- Youth Newsletter (abstract magazine)

In addition to CYSS contracts, Community Housing and Health also works with NEETS through the following programmes:

- Youth/ SAFE clubs
- HALO – football skills for homeless men
- Healthlands project
- Attendance Centre

2.3 ***BASE library drop-in***

BASE library drop-in, attracts young people who are NEET, but is not exclusive to them. It offers a safe informal space for people to talk to youth workers about their options and access information and support. It provides the opportunity for young people to use computers to develop and enhance their CV's, write job applications and complete any school/college/university work. This service also allows staff to signpost young people onto other service, such as Connexions.

2.4 ***Accredited learning***

Through a variety of different projects it enables young people to access alternative curricular nationally accredited and recognised qualifications such as Open College Network. 'Health and Safety' was delivered on request by some young people after consultation sessions, because they wanted to enter employment and recognised that this certificate would aid them in their success.

2.5 ***Schools partnerships***

The service has worked closely in partnership with different schools within Carlisle. Trinity school approached the Service to work alongside groups of year 11 (school leaving age) young people who were at risk of social exclusion and/or disengagement and therefore at risk of becoming NEET. The teachers wanted to deliver programmes that would inspire, motivate and highlight the importance of learning outside of the formal education system, emphasising that education can be fun. The aim of this was to re engage in the hope that the young people did not fall into the NEET category when they left school. Accredited courses delivered with these groups included environmental awareness (11 young people obtained this) and bike maintenance (14 young people obtained this). Reflecting on the work that took place, one of the teachers stated that:

“For the pupils that took part in the bike ability, it was a really good opportunity for them to learn more about bikes and be able to fix them when something went wrong, instead of just throwing them away. Overall their engagement increased in other lessons as a knock on from this. Many of the pupils are from dysfunctional families and struggle to manage a full timetable in school, so this course helped them a great deal. They attended every one and were never late. There were rarely any problems from them, where in other lessons they regularly get into trouble. If you have anything else like this happening in the future please let me know, we are always looking at doing alternative education with targeted groups of young people.”

The Communities Housing and Health team has also worked within Richard Rose Central Academy, supporting young people who are interested in pursuing a career in media. ‘Producing a Video’ open college network accreditation was delivered to 14 students, which will support their CV’s when applying for employment and applications to 6th forms, colleges and training. Again, this type of alternative education will help reduce the number of young people who could potentially end up as NEET.

2.6 *Skateboarding and BMX skills and coaching*

Young people who are NEET regularly access the outdoor skate park facility and as a result have got involved in the development group’s activities. For example, in August 2010, 67 children and young people took part in the Skate Jam competition with 27 young people accessing coaching. Partnership working with Carlisle Leisure Limited delivered an event in January 2011 for 130 skaters, and BMX bikers. The event received positive press publicity. The SoC (Skaters of Carlisle) group, who have some NEET participants, have produced their own merchandise and raised their profile through articles in the News and Star, Carlisle Living and the Cumberland News. The group, (through Carlisle City Council) have accessed level 1 coaching courses and now contribute positively to society by coaching skateboarding to younger children alongside City Council Youth workers. These skills enhance the young people’s employability and chances of finding training or accessing further/higher education. Through face book, 1600 members of the skate group contribute to ideas and developments.

2.7 *Outreach services to Gypsy and Travellers*

Many Gypsy and Travellers are identified as NEET as they might not access education or training and are not registered as employed. Through multi

agency working with Cumbria Travellers, we have engaged with groups on multi media projects. This is designed to reduce negative stereotypes, generate a better understanding of Traveller's heritage and reduce NEET status.

2.8 ***Young Persons magazine***

Young people are also involved in the development of a young person's magazine with the second edition of 'Abstract' due out at the end of March. The magazine is written by young people and is for young people, focusing on youth homelessness and school related topics, targeting specific NEET groups such care leavers.

2.9 ***Harraby Youth Club***

Communities, Housing and Health are currently running Harraby Youth Club in partnership with Connexions Cumbria. Many young people who are at risk of being NEET or who are NEET attend these sessions on a Thursday evening from 6:30pm – 8pm. From 25th November to date, 36 young people have accessed the youth club and have been signposted to college courses, training opportunities and apprenticeships. The extension of the SAFE (Sport, Activity, Fitness, Exercise) programme into Harraby ward, will extend our offer to young people and reduce the levels of anti social behaviour in the Harraby ward,

In July 2010, Carlisle City Council provided a wellbeing project in partnership with MIND SET called 'Chill Out'. It attracted over 20 young people over a period of 3 weeks. Due to the positive feedback, evaluations and demand for such a programme, we have now launched the sessions again. One young person stated that: *"They (the sessions) relieve stress after a long day at school...there was someone to talk to and it taught me to be positive about myself"*. Sessions are delivered at the Purple Lotus in the centre of Carlisle. Sessions include: zumba, nia dance, yoga, tai chi and body confidence. This has attracted NEET young people who are looking to restore self esteem and confidence before integrating back into education, training or employment.

Communities Housing and Health also provide the opportunity for young people to volunteer (over the age of 18) on some of the projects we deliver, for

example, the indoor skate events. To date we have had 3 local schools approach us to take on work experience students; one from Richard Rose Central Academy, one from Richard Rose Morton Academy and the other from Brampton's William Howard school.

2.10 **HALO**

Communities Housing and Health, the HALO Project and Carlisle United Football Club work in partnership to deliver the HALO Football project targeted at homeless men aged over 19. Its purpose is to reduce isolation in a hard to reach group by improving access to playing football and support to engage in training and volunteer opportunities. This will in turn boost an individual's confidence, increase their skills and employability and in turn will have a positive impact on the local community and economy by reducing the chances of them becoming NEET. The project can demonstrate positive employment outcomes and positive press feedback.

2.11 **SAFE Clubs**

SAFE (Sport, Activity, Fitness, Exercise) Clubs aim to deter anti-social behaviour by offering localised sporting activities on different nights of the week for 11-18 year olds. SAFE clubs currently operate in four wards in Carlisle. Trinity, Belah, Morton and Brampton. The programme offers support services through Connexions and the police to engage those in the NEET group. Trinity is the most popular of the SAFE clubs running, currently attracting over 100 children per week, engaging them in activities such as Swimming, Football, Basketball and Fitness and Exercise in the gym. There is documented evidence to prove that SAFE Clubs are successful in tackling anti-social behaviour and re engaging with hard to reach young people through Crime Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP annual reports and feedback from Prevent and Deter meetings. The SAFE scheme was also held up as Best Practice and has been rolled out county wide.

2.12 **Heathland's Project**

Recently the Heathland's Project and an "Identity Project" has offered the opportunity for young people (such as young homeless people, young carers, young travellers) to develop personal skills and social cohesion. In relation to worklessness in particular, the pathways project that was ran in March/April 2010 supported young people into full-time education and employment.

Through the performing arts, staff have worked with people who often sit outside 'mainstream society'; including people with mental health problems and people who have been out of work for a long time. Staff have engaged people through a number of mediums, including creative workshops & performance based sessions and events that encourage skill sharing, confidence building, cohesion, self awareness.

In 2009/10 Community Engagement staff worked with 93 young people aged between 14-18, referred in through the magistrate's courts and Youth Offending service to address offending behaviour. 90% of the young people are NEETS. Through engagement and practical help with life skills including CVs, budgeting, healthy eating, addressing risky behaviour (drugs, alcohol, sexual health), certificated first aid, some young people are able to change their behaviour and have gone on to education and training.

3.0 Part two Future Work: A strategic joined up approach

Transformation and the creation of the Communities Housing and Health team provides the opportunity to look carefully at our work to date and build on successes. Obviously this is being done when the City Council and its partners are facing difficult challenges including budget reductions. Working in partnership, prioritising key activities and looking to complement and support rather than duplicate will be fundamentally important.

Work linked to supporting NEETS (including with schools and Connexions around prevention) will be part of our programme to deliver against our priorities for employment and the prevention/alleviation of homelessness.

A more strategic approach to working with young people will require good joint working between service teams in housing, homelessness and wellbeing and with external agencies. These arrangements will vary between partners but will include enabling around pathways to work, outreach and referral. Partners working with the City Council in supporting NEETS programmes into 2011/12 include:

- Carlisle Youth Zone
- Community Resource Centre (contractor)
- Carlisle Leisure Limited
- Secondary Schools - (includes the new Richard Rose sporting academy)

- Connexions
- The Job Centre Plus
- Cumbria Police (North BCU)
- Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service

Many of these partners are represented on Carlisle's Sport and Physical Activity Alliance (SPAA) that reports in to the Carlisle Partnership. Reporting in through this framework raises awareness and contributes to improved employment prospects and will stimulate new opportunities for joint working and/or funding.

3.1 ***Carlisle Youth Zone and existing youth clubs etc***

Carlisle 'Youth Zone' is due to officially open in April 2011, and be introduced to the young people through a series of workshops and introductory sessions before becoming fully accessible in June 2011. This is a key opportunity to multi agency work. With the Youth Zone, effort needs to be focused on support young people to access this city centre facility in line with, not at the expense of, existing neighbourhood based provision. Building aspirations and developing enhanced skills and confidence will be an important bridge and impact on the number of NEETs.

City Council officers and The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) are currently in discussions with the Youth Zone and youth clubs in the city about potential summer schemes for 2011. Strong partnerships with existing youth clubs, City Council Community Development and community safety officers and the Youth Zone is a priority.

3.2 ***Responding to local need/supporting local work***

During 2011/12 schemes will be supported in areas where intelligence suggests there is a need or lack of positive youth engagement. Areas of work will be considered through for example:

- Neighbourhood forums, Councillor feed back forms, surveys and community feedback.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Statistics and Police analysis problem profiles-highlighted at the CDRP task group meetings.
- Locality based problem solving meetings in partnership with other local agencies.

Resources are being put in place to supporting a number of ongoing programmes which will be co-ordinated in conjunction with, for example with youth clubs, in Currock, Harraby, Burgh – by- Sands. Here and elsewhere the City Council's team will seek to encourage collaboration around the delivery of educational support, such addressing risk taking behaviour via drug and alcohol awareness courses and the young fire fighters scheme.

Alongside this, some initiatives will run approximately every 6 weeks to address specific referrals, for example, individuals identified through the prevent and deter panel. These events will aim to challenge behaviour in a positive way.

Other programmes already timetabled include the summer and Easter Splash 2011 events, which are designed to engage young people in positive youth activities. This will commence in April and involve the police, Connexions, Riverside Housing, and the City Council. Last year Morton Youth Club was closely involved and it is hoped this can continue this year. (The Summer Splash 2010 attracted over 487 participants in 6 weeks).

Looking further ahead, Operation Roman Candle will take place in October/November 2011 will include the City and County Council, police, the fire and rescue service and Riverside Housing. In 2010 Operation Roman Candle resulted in a 25% reduction in calls for service relating to ASB (746 to 557 incidents) and a 9% reduction in deliberate fire setting (33 fires to 30 fires).

Linked to this *City Safe Events* will continue to be led by the City Council in 2011. (The flagship City Safe Event in autumn 2010 attracted over 200 people to the City Centre).

3.3 Social Inclusion Programmes

SAFE (Sport, Activity, Fitness, Exercise) Schemes.

The successful SAFE programme is delivered across the city at a number of community based facilities (Trinity Leisure Centre, St Augustine's Church Belah, William Howard School Brampton, Morton School and Harraby). It funded through 2011/12 and will continue to be an important mechanism for working with young people, who might not otherwise be involved in structured activity. The 2011/12 programme will of course be able to sign post towards and complement Youth Zone activity.

MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) Schemes

A programme of delivery on 4 MUGA sites (Hammonds Pond Upperby, Melbourne Park Botcherby, Petteril Bank and Raffles) will continue to take place in evenings during term time and activities are co-ordinated through the school holiday periods. Trinity Church site in Castle Ward is due to be completed this year and a programme of activity will be in place

3.4 *Work with Housing and Homelessness team*

Communities Housing and Health, the HALO Project and Carlisle United Football Club will continue to deliver the HALO Football project through 2011/12.

In addition, a new focus will be given to working more closely within the City Councils housing and hostel team. It will consider in particular the needs of young people at risk of becoming homeless. A priority will be ensuring that young people have the independent living skills to support themselves to work, train or achieve in education. Development officers (and in particular the Young Persons Champion), will work to ensure that service users have the correct benefits and are secure financially (to the best of their ability) in order to support themselves and remain motivated to continue working towards their future and not end up NEET. The letting of the contract for the new Community Resource Centre and developing a young person's foyer will be a key platform for this work and allow new improved provision in a vital area.

3.5 *Schools and Connexions*

Ensuring links with local schools remain strong will be in helping young people move into employment, training or continue in education. Connexions will be the lead agency here and its collaboration with the City Council is recognised as valuable focusing on the curricular-extra curricular link and particularly around preventative activity.

3.6 *Young person's magazine*

The successful young person's magazine will be continued. Funding is in place for the project to move into its second year with two new editions are planned for 2011/12. The programme draws in involvement from young peoples across the city and will be supported by students from the University. There is considerable opportunity for this to be developed into a social media

platform and into a new way of the City to involve and engage young people for all sectors.

4.0 **Conclusion**

- 4.1 The City Council has a strong track record helping to either prevent or reduce the NEET statistics in the area and more generally supporting the needs of young people from across all communities. We plan to continue this moving forward. In the future the emphasises will be on a more strategic and joined up approach with a clearer focus on Corporate and Community Plan outcomes

Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	No	
Disability	No	
Race	No	
Gender/ Transgender	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
Religion or belief	No	
Human Rights	No	
Health inequalities	No	
Rurality	No	

If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:

Effort is being made to ensure there is no negative impact on key groups as a result of any changes in working programming moving forward.

If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.