

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

2 February 2011

Addressing NEETs

Recommendation

To agree that there is a need for continued support across the county for young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), with a particular focus on areas where NEETs are disproportionately high.

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 NEET rates have reduced over a number of years and those young people who are NEET remain a key performance measure for the County Council. Significant improvements in reducing NEETs in the north of the County have been achieved but numbers are still high. Changes to legislation, the economic climate and government budget savings will impact further on this group. The need to continue to target support across the county and particularly in the north is outlined in this report.

2.0 Key issues and policy implications

- 2.1 This report – requested by the Committee – considers the strategies being undertaken to reduce the number of NEETs within the county, and how the Local Authority is addressing the disproportionate lack of opportunities for young people in Nuneaton & Bedworth and North Warwickshire.
- 2.2 A range of issues could affect the work which is undertaken with young people in the future.
- 2.3 The Education Bill became an Act in November 2011 and the Local Authority duty to provide a universal careers service to all young people aged 13-19 has been removed with effect from September 2012. The Local Authority continues to have a statutory duty to:
- Deliver the ‘September Guarantee’ of an offer of a place in education or training to all young people in years 11 and 12
 - Undertake section 139a assessments for young people up to age 25 with learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD)
 - Maintain support to 16-18 year olds who are NEET

- Ensure successful transition post-16 to all young people who are deemed to be vulnerable. A copy of the locally agreed definition of vulnerable learners in relation to Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) is detailed at **Appendix A**.

2.4 The duty to provide impartial careers information advice and guidance to young people in statutory schooling will transfer from the Local Authority to schools with effect from 1 September 2012. The new Education Act also introduces a New National Careers service. This is primarily a service for adults, although young people can access certain elements of guidance online.

2.5 Currently, the Local Authority discharges its statutory responsibility for information, advice and guidance through a contract with the Connexions service, funded from the Early Intervention Grant. Over the past two years, budgeting constraints has meant that this fund has substantially reduced leading to reductions in staffing and resources and the scope of the service offered.

2.6 The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), which was historically paid to low-income families, has been replaced by a national, more targeted, 16-19 Bursary Fund. However, the overall national budget has reduced from £560m to £180m. There is a planned national evaluation that will monitor the take up and impact of the new fund in 2012.

2.7 The Entry to Employment Programme (E2E) was a work-based learning programme catering mainly for young people aged 16-18 in the NEETs category. This has been replaced by the Foundation Learning programme. Learning providers have advised the Local Authority that this programme is not as attractive to young people due to the emphasis on qualifications and not employment and is difficult to deliver and costly to administer.

2.8 The county's transport policy for post-16 learners accessing a place of learning has been subject to consultation and review resulting in an increased contribution of £660 (from £400 in 2010/11) for an annual travel pass, although this change is halved for those young people from families on low income.

3.0 Context

3.1 The Government is committed to reducing the numbers of young people who are NEET and tackling youth unemployment. The national NEET strategy is based around three components:

- Early identification of young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET
- Personalised guidance and support to ensure that young people know how to access education, training or employment and to enable them to overcome barriers to learning

- Provision of a full range of courses/programmes in order to meet the needs of and engage all young people, through sufficient provision at every level and in every style of learning, e.g., work-based learning.

3.2 The Education and Skills Act 2008 raised the age that young people remain in compulsory education or training to 17 by 2013 and up to their 18th birthday from 2015. Young people will be able to participate in a way that best suits their needs and aspirations; for instance, in full-time education at school or college, on an apprenticeship or part-time if they are also working or volunteering full time.

4.0 NEETs in Warwickshire

4.1 There are three key components that identify and monitor the progression of young people:

- Destinations at the end of Year 11
- September Guarantee of an offer of learning for Years 11 and 12
- The number of 16-18 year olds who are NEET

4.2 Destinations at the end of Year 11

4.2.1 The Year 11 Activity Survey is an annual survey undertaken in November that reports the educational/employment statistics of young people, educated in Warwickshire, who completed statutory education at the end of June. The table below shows that, in 2011, 95.7% of Warwickshire young people in Year 11 entered a positive destination and provides a breakdown by district.

Percentage of students in Year 11 securing a positive destination

Status	North Warks	Nuneaton & Bedworth	Rugby	Stratford	Warwick	County
Continuing in Education	86.5%	87.5%	89.6%	91.2%	91.0%	89.5%
Training (Non employed)	0.7%	0.9%	0.7%	0.2%	0.9%	0.6%
Employment	5.6%	5.7%	5.1%	5.2%	4.3%	5.1%
Voluntary & P/T Activities	1.6%	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	0.1%	0.5%
Positive	94.4%	94.4%	95.7%	97.2%	96.3%	95.7%
NEET	3.8%	3.3%	2.6%	2.5%	3.1%	3.1%
NALA*	1.8%	2.3%	1.7%	0.3%	0.6%	1.3%
Negative	5.6%	5.6%	4.3%	2.8%	3.7%	4.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Year 11 Activity Survey 2011, Connexions. Percentages rounded to one decimal point - this may make sub-totals appear erroneous.

*Not Available or Left Area – young people who cannot be contacted, moved out of the area and unknown

As can be seen by the above table, the proportion of Year 11 students entering a positive destination in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton & Bedworth fell behind the other districts.

4.2.2 2006-2011 Warwickshire destinations at the end of year 11

Status	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Continuing in Education	80.3%	80.6%	83.4%	88.1%	89.2%	89.5%
Training (non-employed)	2.4%	2.5%	2.8%	2.3%	1.8%	0.6%
Employment	9.7%	10.9%	8.9%	5.8%	4.9%	5.1%
Vol & P/t Activities	1.2%	0.9%	0.7%	0.8%	0.4%	0.5%
Positive Outcomes	93.5%	94.9%	95.8%	97.0%	96.2%	95.7%
NEET	5.6%	4.4%	3.7%	2.7%	3.2%	3.1%
NALA	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	1.3%
Negative Outcomes	6.5%	5.1%	4.2%	3.0%	3.8%	4.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100.0%

Source: Year 11 Activity Survey 2011, Connexions. Percentages rounded to one decimal point - this may make sub-totals appear erroneous.

As can be seen by the above table, there has been a slight decrease over the last two years from 2009 when 97% of Warwickshire young people in Year 11 entered a positive destination.

4.3 'September Guarantee' of an offer of learning for years 11 and 12

4.3.1 The second component is the 'September Guarantee'. This is a guarantee of an offer of learning to all young people at the end of Year 11 and Year 12.

4.3.2 2011 Year 11 September Guarantee by Residential District

	North Warks	Nun & Bedworth	Rugby	Stratford	Warwick	County
Year 11 cohort	593	1,485	1,109	1,333	1,334	6,508
Offer made	568 95.8%	1,437 96.8%	1,070 96.5%	1,304 97.8%	1,294 97.0%	6,306 96.9%

Source: CSWP

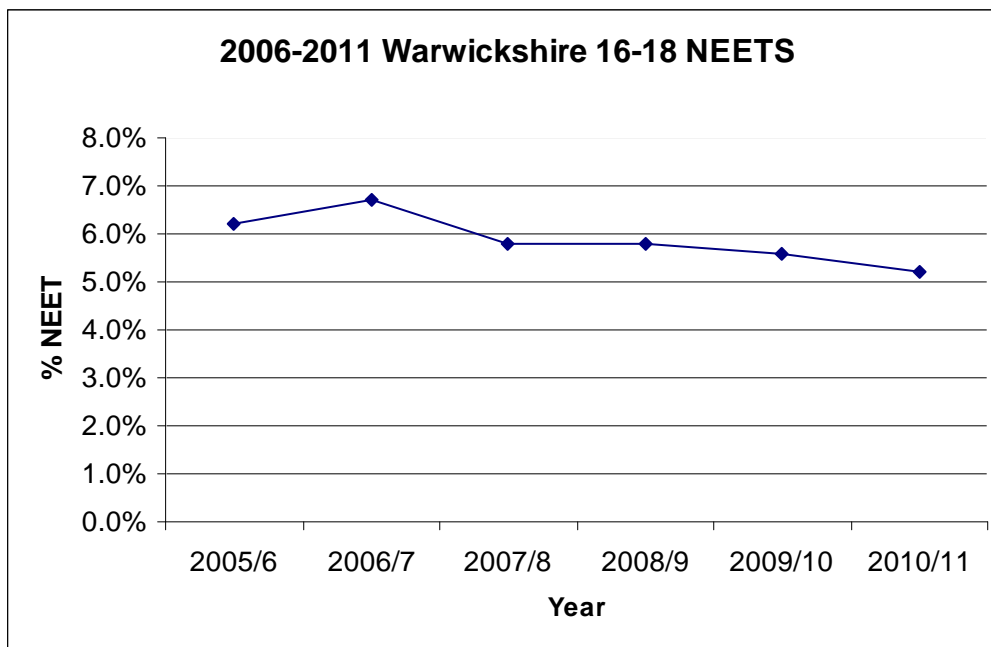
4.3.3. 2011 Year 12 Guarantee by Residential District

	North Warks	Nun & Bedworth	Rugby	Stratford	Warwick	County
Year 12 cohort	708	1,693	1,138	783	1,420	6269
Offer made	612 86.4%	1,460 86.2%	1,033 90.8%	713 91.1%	1,282 90.3%	5,680 90.6%

Source CSWP

5.0 The number of 16-18 year olds who are NEET

- 5.1 The third component is the reporting to the Department for Education (DfE) of the destinations and status of all young people within Warwickshire.
- 5.2 The DfE-published NEET figure is an average of the November, December and January submissions to the DfE from the contracted IAG provider. Up until 2011, this figure covered 16-18 year olds. This has changed, and from 2012 reporting on NEETs will include young people up to the end of the academic year in which they become 19. We anticipate that this will mean the number of NEETs will rise when this is next reported as there are now more young people in the cohort count.
- 5.3 Warwickshire has a long history of prevention and intervention measures which have seen the numbers of NEETs reduce to 5.2% in 2011 from 6.2% in 2006.



Source: DfE

- 5.4 The 16-18 NEET rate provides a measure of unemployment in this age group. The original target contained within the Children and Young People Plan (set in 2004) for 2011 was that no more than 4.4% of 16-18 year olds should be NEET. Actual achievement was 5.2% and therefore, in recognition of the difficult economic climate and a range of factors which are addressed in section 2, the County Secondary Strategic Partnership is aiming to maintain the NEET rate of last year which was 5.2% (823 young people 16-18). Early indications show the Warwickshire NEET rate for November 2011 stands at 4.8%, as this figure excludes learners whose status is 'Not Known'. The DfE reported figure across November, December and January will be higher.
- 5.5 January 2011 16-18 NEETS rates by district

	North Warks	Nun/Bed	Rugby	Stratford	Warwick
Jan 2011	7.5% (106)	6.8% (275)	4.7% (132)	2.9% (87)	4.6% (162)

Source CSWP, Adjusted NEET = current NEET+Adjusted expired NEET+Adjusted expired EET

5.6 2008/09-2010/11 Statistical Neighbours 16-18 NEETs Rates

Statistical Neighbours	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Warwickshire	5.8%	5.6%	5.2%
Cheshire East	N/A	5.6%	5.7%
Hampshire	6.3%	5.7%	5.2%
Leicestershire	4.4%	3.9%	3.8%
East Riding of Yorkshire	4.0%	5.5%	5.6%
Kent	4.7%	4.9%	4.9%
Staffordshire	5.3%	5.1%	4.9%
Cheshire West & Cheshire	N/A	5.4%	4.6%
Essex	6.7%	6.9%	6.3%
Worcestershire	5.3%	5.5%	5.5%
Northamptonshire	5.4%	5.2%	5.2%

Source DfE Three month average Nov-Jan

6.0 Actions

- 6.1 A number of actions have been put in place to address NEETs.
- 6.2 The Authority has a contract with Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership (CSWP), which is the local IAG provider. The contract prioritises work with NEETs, providing support and guidance on a 1:1 basis and in group sessions, the placing of young people with learning providers and the tracking, monitoring and reporting of all young people. The contract focuses on vulnerable groups (see Appendix A for a list of these groups). There is dedicated Connexions Advisor time for Looked After Children/care leavers, teen parents, young offenders and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 6.3 The Local Authority commissions provision from a wide range of learning providers to ensure that there are sufficient places across the county in education and/or training for young people. It also seeks to influence externally funded European Social Fund (ESF) programmes in a commissioning capacity to ensure that provision is secured where it is most needed geographically, i.e., in the north of the county. Currently, for 14-16 year olds who are at risk of becoming NEET, there are 270 places of learning for young people funded by ESF. For 16-18 year olds, the number of ESF funded places is 690 to be delivered over a three-year period.
- 6.4 The Local Authority has been participating in a trial addressing the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA). From this, a strategy is being developed to address NEETs within the context of the RPA legislation. In doing this the Local Authority will:

- Ensure that it knows where all 16 -18 year olds are and what they are doing
 - Identify and understand the early risks for future 16-18 year olds. A Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) is being trialled in four schools in Year 9 and this will be made available to all schools. These indicators are appended at **Appendix B**.
 - Implement a 'Managed Moves' process so that the movement of young people from post-16 provider to provider is managed, tracked and transparent.
- 6.5 The Local Authority convenes a county-wide NEETs strategic group, which meets quarterly. Membership is drawn from all providers across the County. It is led by the Secondary Phase Teams Inclusion Manager and includes cross Local Authority representation. This led to a series of actions as highlighted in this report in terms of targeted provision in the north of the county.
- 6.6 The Local Authority also participates in a sub-regional Foundation Learning steering group which has been established to consider how providers might recruit and deliver more successfully onto Foundation Learning programmes for those young people who have not yet achieved a level 2 qualification. These young people account for approximately 10% of the cohort.
- 6.7 The Local Authority administers the Learner Support Funds and 16-19 Bursary, which supports financially vulnerable groups providing support.
- 6.8 The Local Authority convenes a Travel to Learn Forum, which seeks to address the difficulties of post-16 transport in light of recent changes to costs and routes.
- 6.9 The Local Authority manages the placing of students with LLDD at Independent Specialist Providers, which meets their education and training needs.
- 6.10 Reporting on NEETs within the Local Authority is robust and occurs at a number of levels, i.e., Countywide NEETs Group, Secondary Phase Officers Group and the Warwickshire Secondary Phase Strategic Partnership Group.

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**DEFINING VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE
In respect of Information, Advice and Guidance**

- 1. Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as evidenced by a statement or 139a Assessment.**
- 2. Young parents and parents to be**
- 3. Young offenders and young people at risk of offending**
- 4. Young people in care and care leavers and unaccompanied asylum seekers**
- 5. Young homeless people**
- 6. Young travellers**
- 7. Young people with complex mental health problems, as evidenced by working with CAMHS**
- 8. Young people refusing to attend school in response to identified psych-social barriers.**
- 9. Year 10 and Year 11 pupils currently on the PRU roll.**
- 10. Post 16 Young people at risk of dropping out of education and/or training or who are NEET at 16/17/18 years of age.**

Risk of NEET Indicators (RONI)

- 1. Attendance is below 85%**
- 2. Has been permanently excluded**
- 3. Has had less than 5 fixed term exclusions**
- 4. Has had more than 5 fixed term exclusions**
- 5. Has attended a PRU**
- 6. Has had contact with YOT**
- 7. KS2 average score**
- 8. KS3 average score**
- 9. SEN status**
- 10. Is eligible for Free School Meals**
- 11. Is a LAC**
- 12. Is a teen mum**
- 13. Is pregnant**
- 14. Lives in a New Deal for Communities area (Coventry only)**