

**Children and Young People  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014**

**Educational Provision for 14-19 Year Olds**

**Recommendations**

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1) Examine initiatives in relation to developing employability skills; and
- 2) Consider the progress made in relation to Raising the Participation Age.

**1.0 Purpose of the report**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has requested a report which looks at developments being made to address skills shortages and how young people are being supported to develop employability and life skills required for future employment.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Local Authority is committed to helping young people access information and gain skills, work experience and the abilities they need to make a successful transition to employment.
- 2.2 The Local Authority's statutory duties are to:
  - encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people in education or training, including the most vulnerable and those at risk of disengaging;
  - promote the effective participation in education and training of young people covered by the duty to participate (RPA); and
  - have in place arrangements to identify those who are not participating.
- 2.3 On a monthly basis, local authorities are required to track and report to the Department for Education (DfE) the status of all young people in post-16 destinations until the end of the academic year in which they reach 19 years of age (or up to 25 years of age for those young people with learning difficulties). Local authorities also need to have arrangements in place to ensure that 16 (year 11) and 17 (year 12) year olds have received an offer of a suitable place in post-16 education or training by each September (known as the September Guarantee).

- 2.4 From September 2012, The Education Act 2011 placed schools under a duty to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for their pupils in years 9-11. From September 2012, the duty was extended to include all pupils in year 8 (12-13 year olds) and years 12 and 13 (16-18 year olds). For Further Education Colleges and Sixth Form Colleges there is an equivalent requirement for 16-18 year olds (through their funding agreements).
- 2.5 Increasing the participation of 16-24 year olds in learning and employment not only makes a lasting difference to their individual lives and those of their families, but is central to the government's ambitions to improve social mobility and stimulate economic growth. The government is committed to maximising the participation of 16-24 year olds in education, training and work to ensure that more young people go on to study and gain the skills and qualifications that lead to sustainable jobs and fewer become NEET.
- 2.6 A young person who experiences a period NEET will, on average, lose up to £50,000 in earnings over their working life when compared to a peer who doesn't experience a period NEET. They will lose up to £225,000 over the same period when compared to a peer who has never been NEET and who has graduated from university. The long-term scarring of a period NEET to a young person's future life is dramatic. This has long term effect on society as a whole in lost taxes, additional public services costs and associated impacts such as youth crime and poor health<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.7 The 14-19 education landscape has significantly changed in recent years, with the introduction of University Technical Colleges, Free Schools, Academies, Studio Schools and Further Education Colleges able to recruit learners at 14. Due to this changing educational landscape, the nature of the relationship between schools and local authorities has also changed.
- 2.8 In response to the Government's invitation for schools to join the academy programme, a significant number of secondary schools in Warwickshire have embraced the recent reforms. A total of 46 academies have opened in Warwickshire (25 secondary and 21 primary academies).
- 2.9 Warwickshire is a diverse county and as such the skills needed differ across the districts.
- 2.10 Whether young people possess sufficient and suitable 'employability skills' is a debate that has been going on for some time. Employers are demanding the right skills to meet the ever-changing needs of today's global economy and schools, colleges and universities are working hard to develop a better skilled future workforce to help meet those needs. A key question still remains, however, as to whether there is agreement on what those skills are.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Make NEETS history in 2014*, Impetus Private Equity Foundation, January 2014

- 2.11 In 2013 the CBI surveyed 294 firms and reported that 32% were dissatisfied with school and college leaver literacy and numeracy levels. The CBI has identified that a positive attitude is the key foundation of employability.
- 2.13 Last year, Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership engaged consultants Ecorys to survey local advanced manufacturing and engineering employers to look at their skills needs for the future. Contrary to general perception, when asked to comment on the current skills gaps and shortages apparent in their businesses, almost three quarters of respondents stated they did not suffer from any as they were able to recruit people with the skills required<sup>2</sup>.

### **3.0 How are young people prepared for the world of work?**

- 3.1 Every state school must offer a broad and balanced curriculum. Maintained schools in England are legally required to follow the national curriculum. Academies and free schools are not required to follow the national curriculum but they must teach a broad and balanced curriculum, including English, mathematics, science and religious education.
- 3.2 The Government is currently reforming qualifications and the curriculum to better prepare pupils for life after school. Every qualification that young people study for, academic or vocational, must be demanding, rigorous and a route to employment. Employers, universities and colleges are often dissatisfied with school leavers' literacy and numeracy even though the proportion of young people achieving good grades has gone up in recent years.
- 3.3 Work Related Learning has been non-statutory in Key Stage 4 (KS4) since September 2012; schools and academies are now free to formulate their own policies on work related learning. Some schools and academies offer work experience opportunities to pupils in Years 10 and 11. However, recent changes in post-16 funding and post-16 study programmes have enabled more students to access meaningful work experience opportunities as part of their post 16 study programme.

### **4.0 Innovative Structures**

- 4.1 University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools are government funded schools that offer 14-19 year olds teaching through real life employer projects. Both have all national political party support and have been endorsed by the CBI and Chamber of Commerce.
- 4.2 The areas first University Technical College will open on the Westwood Business Park site Coventry in September 2014. WMG Academy for Young Engineers will deliver a business-led curriculum designed in response to extensive consultation with higher and further education partners and local,

---

<sup>2</sup> Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Skills Analysis for Coventry and Warwickshire. Ecorys 2013.

regional and international employers. It will challenge, place high expectations and positively transform young people so that they are able to achieve their full potential as effective leaders, employers, employees and entrepreneurs, as well as effectively respond to an ever more rapidly changing world.

- 4.3 The county's first Studio School for 14-19 year olds opened in Nuneaton in September 2013. The Midland Studio College specialises in Engineering (intelligent transport systems) and Enterprise. Studio schools offer continual work experience from Year 10 to Year 13 and give young people a head start on being ready for work. They also use personal coaching and small classes to help young people achieve their full potential. The maximum number of students in the whole school is 300. The Midland Studio Colleges other Studio school based in Hinckley, is the first Studio School to achieve an Outstanding Judgment from Ofsted, it was praised by inspectors for the *"truly exceptional achievement is made in the wider range of skills that prepares students for the next stage in their education or employment."*

## **5.0 Vocational Education**

- 5.1 The Secretary of State for Education commissioned Professor Alison Wolf of King's College London to carry out an independent review of vocational education. The 'Wolf review of vocational education' published in March 2011, has considered how the DfE can improve vocational education for 14-19 year olds and promote successful progression into the labour market and into higher level education and training routes.
- 5.2 From 2013/14, the only courses which will count in 14-16 performance tables are those that are high quality, rigorous and proven to support progression.
- 5.3 From September 2014, new Tech Levels will provide a high-quality vocational alternative to A Levels – each endorsed by professional associations or employers. Along with a high-level maths qualification and an extended project, Tech Levels will count towards the Technical Baccalaureate, or TechBacc – an ambitious new benchmark for the most talented students.
- 5.4 Apprenticeships are also being reformed; new standards are being developed and designed by employers. The Government has extended the apprenticeship grant for employers to support small firms making the commitment to recruit and train young apprentices.

## **6.0 Careers Guidance**

- 6.1 Since September 2012, schools and academies have been legally required to secure independent careers guidance for all year 8-13 pupils.
- 6.2 Ofsted conducted a thematic review of careers guidance to assess how schools are responding to their new duty. Ofsted's report 'Going in the right direction?', published in September 2013, found that the majority of schools

needed to do more to ensure that all of their pupils had information on the full range of training and education options and career pathways to help them make informed choices about their future so that they could reach their potential.

- 6.3 Ofsted is considering young people's destinations when judging the quality of a school's leadership and management. According to the DfE, the best schools have high aspirations for all of their pupils and demonstrate this by placing inspiration, mentoring and real-life insights into the workplace at the core of what they do.
- 6.4 Schools should use the DfE's destinations data to monitor the choices made by pupils at the end of year 11 and year 13. The destination measures show the percentage of students progressing to further learning in a school, further education or sixth-form college, apprenticeship, higher education institution or moving into employment or training. It identifies, for the first time, their education and employment destinations by gender, ethnicity, free school meals, special educational needs (SEN) and learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). To be included in the measure, young people have to show sustained participation in an education or employment destination in all of the first two terms of the year after they completed Key Stage 4 or took A Level or other Level 3 qualifications. The first two terms are defined as October to March.

## **7.0 Schools working in partnership with local businesses on developing life skills for young people**

- 7.1 Establishing a planned programme of employer engagement gives pupils the opportunity to hear directly from professionals and be inspired by role models. Schools/academies across Warwickshire have set up their own arrangements with local businesses, linking with different sized companies and organisations, also developing business links via parents and school governors.
- 7.2 Business in the Community pairs schools/academies with local employers; six of our secondary schools have been matched with employers, e.g. Queen Elizabeth School with TNT.
- 7.3 Barclays Bank has developed a work skills programme for 11-19 year olds that they offer to schools/academies. Local colleges and training providers also offer support to schools and academies.
- 7.4 There are many good examples of collaborative practice but too many employers are still not effectively engaged with schools, colleges or universities. Building relationships needs to be made much easier.
- 7.5 Within the European Structural Investment Fund, Skills Theme, there is a strand 'getting a better fit between education and employment', which aims to

develop better links between businesses and schools, further and higher education providers across Coventry and Warwickshire.

## **8.0 What initiatives have been implemented in Warwickshire and how effective have they been?**

- 8.1 Warwickshire is a diverse county and as such the skills needed differ across the districts. Therefore, initiatives tend to be targeted rather than universally offered. There are lots of initiatives being delivered across Warwickshire, however, due to the changing relationship with schools, the LA is not always made aware of individual school arrangements.
- 8.2 The Apprenticeship Hub was established in April 2013 to support businesses in Warwickshire recruit apprentices and to support the County Council to recruit 50 apprentices across its departments. In its first 12 months, WCC has recruited 34 apprentices and the Hub has engaged directly with 152 businesses, had over 6500 unique views of its two websites and has supported the advertising of over 200 Apprenticeships vacancies for Warwickshire based employers. The Hub has also supported schools and nurseries, either directly, through the website, the Schools post site or through the HR Advisory team to support recruiting over 30 Apprentices.
- 8.3 The Council's HR department is exploring 'Fair Train' a work experience quality kite mark; a commitment to providing high quality work experience across WCC. The Observatory and the Economic Development Team provide Local labour market information to all schools and are committed to continue to do this.
- 8.4 Following the success of the Warwickshire 'EXPO' event for school pupils in March 2013, the Economic Development Team are continuing to organise jobs and apprenticeship events. They are working with key sectors e.g.; the Gaming industry to organise targeted careers events.
- 8.5 The Secondary Phase Team, within Learning and Achievement, deliver careers guidance network meetings to support senior and middle leaders in schools and academies with responsibility for careers guidance. The network aims to support institutions and the council with meeting the expectations in relation to Raising the Participation Age, supporting with interpreting statutory duties in relation to careers guidance and interpreting new Ofsted guidance on the inspection of careers guidance. At the meeting held in November 2013 CWLEP and Jaguar Land Rover attended to update schools on different careers in the sub-region.
- 8.6 All secondary schools and FE colleges across Warwickshire were encouraged to attend the Skills Show held at the NEC in November 2013. The Skills Show is the largest event of its kind in the UK and highlights the vital importance of skills to economic growth in the UK. It's the single biggest showcase for vocational training, skills and careers in the UK which is packed with a wealth

of exciting opportunities to inspire visitors. This event is being repeated in November 2014.

- 8.7 There is an agreement with all post-16 learning providers in the sub-region to accelerate the application process from young people in order to provide an offer of learning by the end of March (as opposed to the statutory requirement of September). This is known as the Warwickshire 'March Forward Guarantee'.
- 8.8 WEST (Warwickshire Employment Support Team) has traditionally worked with adults with learning difficulties, Autism or Asperger's to enable them to gain employment. Recently, some pilot work has taken place with younger adults about to leave education. The specialist skills of the WEST team have enabled the young adults to develop work readiness skills and gain employment opportunities
- 8.9 35 secondary schools and 1 FE college are actively involved in Warwickshire's Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Young people aged 14-24 work towards three levels of the award, which supports developing skills for both life and work, including, self-discipline, commitment and a capacity for team work.
- 8.10 WCC have made a fund available over the next four years (£2 million in total) to support with skills in education and skills in employment. Officers are currently exploring ways in which this fund could have the most benefit and impact across the county.
- 8.11 The recently published report by the Work Foundation on the 'Geography of Youth Unemployment', suggests that LAs should set up Youth Transition Partnerships to enable local policy makers to co-ordinate services, align and pool resources, and fill any gaps in infrastructure. The group's membership would include local employers, schools, FE providers, LAs the voluntary and community sector, Work Programme providers and Job Centre Plus. These partnerships would lead on developing a Youth Transitions Strategy, commission services, monitor outcomes, share data and track young people.
- 8.12 Officers at WCC are working with Coventry City Council to explore a 16-24 'Progression to Employment' strategy, in order to co-ordinate all plans and activities aimed at reducing NEETs and Youth Unemployment. This will be aligned with the work of Coventry and Warwickshire's Local Enterprise Partnership.
- 8.13 Within the European Structural Investment Fund, Employment Theme, there is a Youth Unemployment Initiative for 15-24 year olds. Under this work there is a target of supporting 1885 eligible 15-24 year olds across Coventry and Warwickshire between 2014 and 2020. Actions that will be supported include:
  - Expanding and improving the quality of careers advice for young people;

- Increasing young people's exposure to industry via traineeships/apprenticeships;
- Tailored intervention, including coaching and mentoring support with transport costs; and
- Improved employability skills, including literacy and numeracy.

8.14 Within the European Structural Investment Fund, Social Inclusion Theme, there is work being carried out on engaging and raising aspirations for young people. Under this strand there is a target of working with 1,456 15-24 year olds across Coventry and Warwickshire between 2014 and 2020. Priorities in this area include:

- Supporting interventions for young people, especially those with multiple barriers to participation, including care leavers, lone parents, offenders and those with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Activities that raise aspiration and reduce the attainment gap by preparing young people for working life.

8.15 As Warwickshire does not have an Employability Charter, there could be the potential for developing a Charter, possibly through the remit of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

## **9.0 Update on strategies/initiatives to reduce NEETs**

9.1 Budget reductions across the Authority have reduced the targeted support for young people, which include the IAG and NEETs work.

9.2 The Authority is committed to support young people to make a successful transition to employment and has continued to commission CSWP in 2014/2015 to provide support and specialist careers guidance to 16-19 year old NEET young people to encourage them to re-engage in education, employment and or training. CSWP work with post-16 providers, employers and other agencies across the sub-region to find suitable opportunities.

9.3 Part of the Authority's strategy to reduce NEETs has been to develop an early identification system for young people at risk of disengaging, known as the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI). It provides an analysis of data held by the Authority on young people on roll in Warwickshire schools and identifies characteristics that evidence has shown puts the young person at risk of becoming NEET at age 16. The Authority will be providing each secondary and special school with individual RONI reports for pupils in current year 7 and current year 10 in order that preventative activity can be targeted at those young people specifically at risk.

9.4 The Local Authority's Targeted Support for Young People Team work with young people who are at risk of becoming NEET or who are NEET and who are not yet ready to re-engage. The service works through personal development programmes offering 1:1 support or structured group work. Referrals come from five main sources: CAF, Priority Families, Social Care,



schools are self-referrals from young people the service has contact with through its Centre work, projects and detached work.

- 9.5 The Virtual School for looked after children ensure every child of school age (4-16 years) has a Personal Development Plan (PEP). The PEP process supports with mapping the young person's future plans and identifying any support needed to achieve these, e.g., organising work experience opportunities.
- 9.6 Getting Ready for Adult Life (Leaving Care Services) provide direct support to young people aged 16-25 years of age to promote education, employment and training opportunities. Career planning is an integral part of the young person's pathway plan.
- 9.7 The People Group has recently established a 'Priority Young People' project board to ensure support offered to Warwickshire's most vulnerable young people is coherent, effective and aligned across all areas of the Authority.

## **10.0 Involvement of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) and City Deal**

- 10.1 The CWLEP have developed a Skills Strategy to support its overall objectives of generating economic growth and creating jobs. Three Strategic priorities have been identified and developing high level manufacturing skills is a key aim.
- 10.2 The CWLEP have identified in the Strategic Economic Plan (March 2014): *'That a challenge in Coventry and Warwickshire is bridging primary and secondary education and the linkage to Small and Medium Employers in Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering (AME). Secondary School colleagues are being brought together with businesses in the AME sector in May 2014 to discuss employment opportunities in the sector for young people. There is an opportunity to use both of these initiatives to open a dialogue between public and private sector partners, involving the Department for Education and to pilot initiatives which will further support young people as they progress from secondary education into further study and ultimately work linked to the AME sector.'*<sup>3</sup>
- 10.3 The CWLEP has worked extensively with the Skills Funding Agency regarding requests for Skills Capital and launched a call for expressions of interest for Skills Capital projects. Based on the proposals received, they are seeking funding from the local growth deal under the AME programme for:
  - One significant skills capital investment of £7m led by City College Coventry and Henley College to develop a STEM centre which will encourage more young people to acquire the technical and higher skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and support

---

<sup>3</sup> CWLEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014, pp66.

future growth in advanced manufacturing and engineering, delivering 2000 qualifications over three years.

- Two lower value capital projects totalling £1.15m led by Warwickshire College which will support the promotion of STEM subjects and the provision of AME apprenticeship training.<sup>4</sup>

## **11.0 How are views of children and families sought on current provision?**

11.1 The Youth Parliament held a Youth Employment Summit in May 2013, where they explored careers guidance and job opportunities.

11.2 A survey of care leavers has resulted in more opportunities being made available for children to access careers information, advice and guidance.

11.3 The County Council conducted an annual pupil survey, which all schools were invited to participate in:

- In 2012, there were 7420 responses, 62% were from secondary aged pupils (total 4598)
- In 2013, there were 3661 responses from secondary aged pupils

11.4 The survey contains a section on careers, this is focused on how well prepared pupils are for further education and finding job. Key messages:

- The proportion of students who felt they had good access to careers services fell from 25% in 2011, to 19% in 2012, 19.5% in 2013.
- 14% of pupils agreed with the statement that their careers advisor had given them enough IAG compared to 13% in 2012 and 18% in 2011.
- 21.7% felt they were well prepared for a job or college interview.

## **12.0 Raising the Participation Age**

12.1 The Government has increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from summer 2013 and until their 18th birthday from summer 2015 onwards.

12.2 Participating in education or training brings benefits for young people, and also for the economy and wider society. Young people who continue in learning post-16 are more likely to attain higher levels of qualifications and have increased earnings over their lifetime. They are also able to gain the skills that employers want, which will lead to a more internationally competitive workforce.

---

<sup>4</sup> CWLEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014, pp64

12.3 Raising the Participation Age (RPA) does not necessarily mean young people must stay in school beyond the age of 16; they will be able to choose from one of the following options:

- Full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider; or
- Full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training; or
- An Apprenticeship.

12.4 The Education and Skills Act 2008 places specific duties with regard to the role of local authorities in relation to RPA. Local authorities will be required to:

- Promote the effective participation in education or training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area; and
- Make arrangements to identify young people resident in their area who are not participating.

12.5 The Education and Skills Act 2008 places specific duties with regard to the role of schools in relation to RPA. Schools will be required to:

- Secure independent, impartial careers guidance for their pupils in years 8-13.
- Promote good attendance of 16 and 17 year olds; and
- Inform local authority support services (CSWP) if a young person aged 16 or 17 has dropped out of learning. This is so the young person can be contacted swiftly and offered support to help them re-engage.

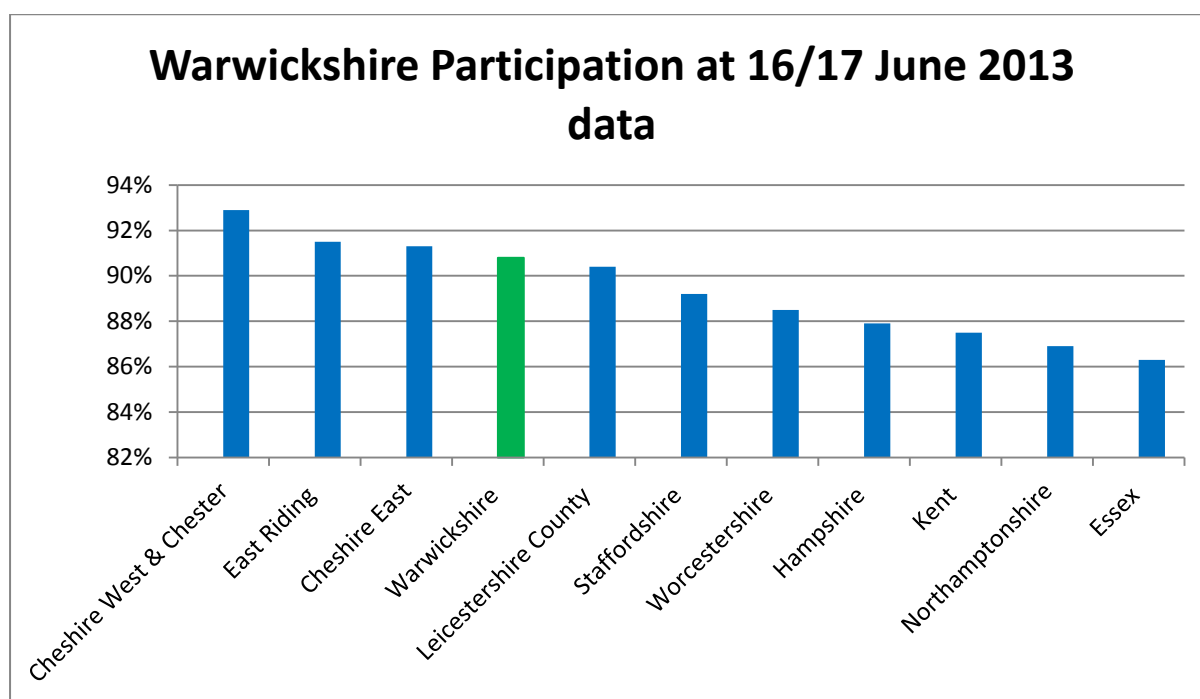
12.6 Successfully achieving RPA will require all sections of the education system to play their part, and in particular local authorities will have a key role to champion the needs of young people in their areas and work with local partners to achieve full participation. This currently involves leading on a number of initiatives to support young people to progress in learning and to continue to reduce the numbers who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

12.7 Actions taken by the County Council in order to meet these new statutory duties and enhance the life prospects of young people in Warwickshire include:

- delivering internal/external briefings;
- creating a dedicated RPA webpage on Warwickshire County Council website;
- delivering a sub-regional post-16 participation in education, employment and training Group (PEET);
- publishing an RPA Strategy document outlining actions being taken to meet the new requirements which came into effect in summer 2013;
- briefing post 16 providers on developing 2013/14 commissioning priorities;

- delivering briefings on new Information, Advice and Guidance responsibilities to all secondary schools;
- implementing an 'Early Alert to NEETs' form to target early intervention actions where a learner has left their course early or is at risk of becoming NEET;
- risk of NEET (not in education, employment or training) indicator (RONI) implemented in all secondary schools. It provides an analysis of the data held by the local authority on young people and identifies the characteristics that evidence has shown puts the young person at risk of becoming NEET at the end of year 11;
- monitoring the performance of all secondary schools, focussing particularly on the performance of vulnerable learners;
- promoting and support the use of the 16-19 Bursary Funds to help financially disadvantaged young people aged 16-19 to meet the costs of participating in education or training; and
- working to stimulate economic growth via the *Going for Growth* strategy, particularly in the promotion of apprenticeships.

### **Warwickshire Participation Data for 16 and 17 year olds**



Source: DfE Data, Proportion of 16-17 year olds recorded in education and training, June 2013.

12.8 The table above shows the participation of young people aged 16/17 in Warwickshire compared to statistical neighbours as at June 2013, which is the official data used by the Department for Education (DfE) for participation rates by local authorities.

12.9 However, the DfE also publish quarterly updates, with the latest showing participation figures as at December 2013. Whilst participation of 16/17 year olds in Warwickshire has increased by 0.5% from December 2012 to

December 2013, most of the statistical neighbours have a higher rate of increase and England overall has seen an increase of 1.9%.

- 12.10 Within Coventry and Warwickshire there are agreed principles regarding those young people covered by the new duties regarding RPA but who may require a temporary break in education or training, with the intention to re-engage in learning at the earliest opportunity. Within Warwickshire in April 2014, there were 30 young people aged 16 and 47 aged 17 who required a temporary break due to health issues, being pregnant or being a teenage parent.
- 12.11 Further details on these new duties and the strategy adopted by the council in response to Raising the Participation Age can be accessed at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/stayinginlearning](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/stayinginlearning)

### 13.0 Conclusion

- 13.1 Building on developing links within the Early Help and Targeted Support Business Unit and the Learning and Achievement Business Unit, The People Group are also are developing stronger links with Economic Growth Business Unit, in the Communities Group. Working jointly across the groups will maximise opportunities, improve co-ordination and engage a range of partners. It will also support developing further links with the CWLEP.
- 13.2 The Local Authority to consider piloting a 'Youth Transition Partnership', to support the co-ordination of the wide range of initiatives and organisations involved in preparing young people for employment.
- 13.3 The Authority will continue to strengthen links with all schools, academies, colleges and training providers to raise the profile of this agenda.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Sarah Bradwell	<a href="mailto:sarahbradwell@warwickshire.gov.uk">sarahbradwell@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> 01926 742027
Head of Service	Nigel Minns	<a href="mailto:NigelMinns@warwickshire.gov.uk">NigelMinns@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> 01926 742588
Strategic Director	Wendy Fabbro	<a href="mailto:wendyfabbro@warwickshire.gov.uk">wendyfabbro@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> 01926 742665
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Colin Hayfield	<a href="mailto:cllrhayfield@warwickshire.gov.uk">cllrhayfield@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>