

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	Children, Young People and Families Overview And Scrutiny Committee	
Date of Committee	18 June 2008	
Report Title	Report of Chair of Member Panel reviewing Educational Attainment and Skills at 16 in North Warwickshire	
Summary	A panel of six councillors has undertaken a review of educational attainment and skills at 16 in North Warwickshire. The Panel's report is attached as an appendix. The report was considered and approved by the North Warwickshire Area Committee on 21st May 2008.	
For further information please contact:	John Wright Committee Manager Tel: 01926 412320 johnwright@warwickshire.gov.uk	Paul Williams Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01926 418196 paulwilliamscl@warwickshire.gov.uk
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	No.	
Background papers	None	

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-

Details to be specified

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Other Committees | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | North Warwickshire Area Committee 21 st May 2008 |
| Local Member(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Other Elected Members | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Cabinet Member | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Chief Executive | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Legal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Sarah Duxbury/Victoria Gould |
| Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Other Chief Officers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Strategic Director, Performance and Development, Strategic Director, Children, Young People and Families, Strategic Director, |

Environment and Economy

- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION NO

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet Cabinet, depending on decision of Committee
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Agenda No

Children and Young People and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 18 June 2008.

Report of Chair of Member Panel reviewing Educational Attainment and Skills at 16 in North Warwickshire

Recommendation

That the Committee considers and endorses the recommendations of the local area scrutiny member panel, together with the additional recommendations endorsed by North Warwickshire Area Committee, and forwards to Cabinet those recommendations which require it's consideration and endorsement.

1. At its meeting of 21st March 2007 the North Warwickshire Area Committee agreed that a suitable subject for a local area scrutiny review would be educational attainment and skills at age 16 in the Borough. A panel comprising six elected Members and Chaired by Councillor Sweet was convened in July 2007 to undertake the review.
2. The panel has visited schools and received evidence from a number of agencies and individuals including young people. Using the key messages contained within the evidence gathered the panel has arrived at a series of conclusions and recommendations.
3. At its meeting held on 21 May 2008 the North Warwickshire Area Committee considered and approved the report of the local area scrutiny panel and recommended it to this Committee for consideration. At that meeting Councillor Richard Grant proposed the adoption of six additional recommendations. The Area Committee agreed to accept the additional recommendations and recommend them to this Committee.
4. Appendix A of this report sets out the ten original recommendations of the panel. Appendix B sets out the six additional recommendations proposed by Councillor Grant. Appendix C is the main panel report as considered by the North Warwickshire Area Committee on 21st May 2008.

COUNCILLOR RAY SWEET
Chair of Panel

Shire Hall
Warwick
22 May 2008

Original recommendations of Member Panel reviewing Educational Attainment and Skills at 16 in North Warwickshire

Recommendation 1.

That the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy be requested to attach a high priority through his economic development responsibility to work with North Warwickshire Borough Council and other agencies to attract more medium to high skilled jobs to North Warwickshire.

Recommendation 2

That every Autumn the North Warwickshire Area Committee considers a report from the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families on performance in the five secondary schools in North Warwickshire. This report should be based on discussions with the five Head teachers and the schools' governors. As well as including reference to the challenges and opportunities facing their respective schools the report should also inform the committee of collaborative working between them and any new teaching techniques that demonstrably take account of the specific needs of pupils.

Recommendation 3

That the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families be requested to report to the North Warwickshire Area Committee on an annual basis on progress with the introduction of the diploma system in North Warwickshire. This report to include reference to transport arrangements, cross-boundary issues, work towards engaging employers, parents and carers and Governors, partnership working between schools and colleges and any challenges facing the Northern Area Partnership.

Recommendation 4

That in planning future school development the Strategic Director of Resources be asked to ensure that adequate accommodation is provided for outreach teaching to be delivered by colleges.

Recommendation 5

That the Education Business Partnership be requested to examine its strategy for the provision of services across Warwickshire with a view to operating in more primary sector schools in North Warwickshire than at present.

Recommendation 6

That the Strategic Director of Performance and Development be asked to work with the Education Business Partnership to put in place such mechanisms as would be required to encourage and facilitate County Council staff supporting the EBP in North Warwickshire.

Recommendation 7

That the Strategic Director of Performance and Development be asked to consider how the County Council can assist further the Skills Delivery Group by providing placements for clients.

Recommendation 8

That when discussing with appropriate community groups and voluntary organisations the level of support they will receive from the County Council the requirements of the County Youth Service and Extended Services Team for access to appropriate venues should be emphasised. In instances where WCC supported community groups with suitable premises refuse, without good cause, the use of those premises then that support should be reviewed.

Recommendation 9

That the Strategic Director Children, Young People and Families undertakes to ensure that all elected Members of the Council are briefed on the Common Assessment Framework and its implications for them as community leaders.

Recommendation 10

That through the Children, Young People and Families Directorate secondary schools should be encouraged to identify and work with former pupils who have been successful in their lives to encourage them to return to the school and act as role models for existing students.

North Warwickshire Scrutiny of Educational Achievement.

**Additional Recommendations proposed by
Councillor Richard Grant**

ONE.

During the work of the scrutiny committee it became apparent that in order to make a significant impact on the learning and achievements of North Warwickshire all the lead players, partners and agencies in North Warwickshire need to unite to raise the aspirations of people particularly young people.

There is a role for the NW Community Partnership as well as statutory organisations like LAs, Police, Health and Voluntary Organisations, Employers, Chamber of Trade to 'champion learning and skills' and to promote North Warwickshire not only through talk but in their strategies and actions ... and to be able to demonstrate their commitments.

Recommendation:

The NW Community Partnership and North Warwickshire Organisations [statutory and voluntary] and be requested to champion learning and skills throughout their operations and be asked to demonstrate to the Area Committee the actions they have taken to promote this issue.

TWO

When Members talked to young people, they expressed the view that the greater achievement of young people in other areas of the county was due to their apparent predisposition to achieve. The reality of this erroneous view needs to be recognised and we ensure that this view is not left unchallenged by schools, councillors and other lead agencies including employers.

Recommendation:

All organisations in North Warwickshire to positively promote local young people and their potential to achieve and positively contribute to local communities. Where appropriate these organisations will be asked to challenge any negative attitudes which underplay the potential of North Warwickshire young people.

THREE.

In our conversations with young people they recognised the importance of the of the 'full person' particularly when making appointments and gaining employment. At the same time they did not fully appreciate the significance of appearance and 'presentation' in interviews etc. We received information about the Education Business Partnership's programme of practice interviews in North Warwickshire Secondary Schools. However, given the feedback we received from young people it would be worthwhile reassessing these programmes to ensure that all young people

are prepared for the practicalities of the 'jobs market' and achieving a successful outcome from job and training course applications.

Recommendation:

Schools, Connexions, Education Business Partnership [EBP] and employers be asked to reassess their strategy for preparing young people for positive engagement in the applications and appointment process in the 'jobs market'.

FOUR.

Several comments were made during the scrutiny work about the way in which some secondary schools operate in isolation from each other and the obvious need to work more in collaboration and be working on a common / shared agenda with young people. We understand that there are some good examples of collaboration and partnerships between secondary and primary schools in North Warwickshire. Sharing experiences to the mutual benefit of North Warwickshire young people ought to be more in evidence if young people are to be well served and where 'loyalty' to North Warwickshire is shared with 'loyalty' to a specific school.

Recommendation:

Secondary Schools in North Warwickshire be asked to consider how they can best build on existing links between them so that there is greater collaboration leading to more opportunities for enhanced learning experiences and improved outcomes for young people. County Councillors be asked to monitor collaborative working as part of their ongoing relationship with the schools in the Division they represent.

FIVE.

It was evident that NW and the local communities in NW have a proud sense of place which is to be valued but needs to be balanced with a much more open view of the wider world. Learning, training and experiences outside the local communities in North Warwickshire should be promoted as a good experience making a positive contribution to the NW 'person' and not seen as a 'threat'.

Recommendation:

Schools and other agencies such as EBP, Connexions, Employers, FE and HE to positively promote the opportunities which are on offer to young people outside their immediate community whilst valuing the importance of loyalty to their 'home community'.

SIX

Cabinet be asked to develop a strategy to direct resources into educationally deprived areas in North Warwickshire with a view to closing the achievement gap.

*EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND
SKILLS AT 16 IN NORTH
WARWICKSHIRE*

*REPORT OF THE NORTH WARWICKSHIRE
LOCAL AREA SCRUTINY PANEL*

APRIL 2008

Introduction by Councillor Ray Sweet



This report marks the culmination of nine months work by a small panel of County Councillors based in North Warwickshire. It has grown from a concern held by us and by our partners and employers that many young people in the Borough are leaving school without the qualifications and skills they need to embark on a good quality career.

I believe that for most people one of the most important things to have in life is a good quality job that they enjoy. Such a job brings with it a regular income that will provide security as well as the satisfaction of achievement. If young people, for whatever reason, fail to make that transition from school to further education or employment they run a very real risk of having a poorer sense of well-being and quality of life than those who do succeed.

During this review my colleagues and I have explored the facts behind our intuitions. We have spoken to representatives from a number of different agencies that are striving daily to enhance young people's life chances. We have visited schools and colleges and have consulted businesses to find out what they are looking for in young prospective employees. Finally we have spoken to the young people themselves and from the evidence we have amassed we have arrived at a number of conclusions and recommendations for the way ahead.

Without the help of so many different people this review would not have been possible. On behalf of the panel I should like to thank them for their efforts.

1. Introduction and Recommendations

In the Summer of 2006 Warwickshire County Council undertook a major review of its overview and scrutiny function. One of the outcomes of that review was a decision by councillors to roll out scrutiny into the five district and borough areas. This decision was based on an appreciation that whilst Overview and Scrutiny has a major role in strategic, countywide service delivery, it should also be used to explore performance at the local level. This approach allows for an in depth study of the issues that might be peculiar to a particular part of the county and which will require solutions that are specific to it.

Early in 2007 the North Warwickshire Area Committee agreed that it wished to examine educational skills and attainment at age 16. This decision was based on the understanding that young people in North Warwickshire are performing less well at school and are embarking on their adult life without the skills they will need to secure a good career.

The North Warwickshire Area Committee comprises eight elected Members. Two of these Members are Portfolio Holders on the Council's Cabinet and were thus ineligible to take a formal part in the review. The six remaining Members comprised the panel that has undertaken the review. They are,

Councillor Anne Forwood
Councillor Richard Grant
Councillor Joan Lea
Councillor Brian Moss
Councillor Mick Stanley
Councillor Ray Sweet

At its inaugural meeting on 20th July 2007, the panel elected Councillor Sweet as its Chair before undertaking a scoping exercise to explore the opportunities and barriers facing sixteen year olds. It then agreed in general terms the process to be followed by the panel and its terms of reference (See Appendix 1).

In essence the panel wanted answers to the following questions.

- Are levels of educational attainment in North Warwickshire increasing and if so how does this compare with other benchmarks?
- What are the barriers to educational attainment in North Warwickshire?
- What initiatives are already being pursued by agencies to improve educational attainment?
- What do young people aspire to be and how high do they set their sights?

- What skills are required to secure good quality employment in North Warwickshire?
- What does the future hold for employment in North Warwickshire? Will the skills required be different in the future and are we planning accordingly?
- What is being done already to ensure that young people have the vocational skills they need?
- Are young people acquiring the general life skills they will need to operate effectively and what is being done to ensure that they do?

In order to develop a series of robust and effective recommendations the panel needed to gather together as much relevant evidence as possible. This was achieved through a number of means. These were,

1. Visits to schools to speak to Head teachers and other school leaders
2. A series of further panel meetings to which council officers and other colleagues were invited to discuss their work.
3. A one-day single issue meeting to gain knowledge from government agencies and employers
4. Discussions with young people.

The following organisations have contributed to this process.

Hartshill School, Nuneaton
 Queen Elizabeth School, Atherstone
 Polesworth International Language College
 The Coleshill School – A Maths and Computing College
 Kingsbury School – A Specialist Science and Mathematics College
 King Edward IV College, Nuneaton
 North Warwickshire and Hinckley College
 Warwickshire County Council, Youth Service
 Warwickshire County Council, 14 –19 Development
 Warwickshire County Council, Extended Services
 Warwickshire County Council, Area Schools and Communities Team
 Warwickshire County Council, Education Business Partnership
 Warwickshire County Council, Skills Delivery Group
 Warwickshire County Council, Education Social Work Service
 Warwickshire County Council, Enhanced Services Network
 Warwickshire County Council, School Performance
 North Warwickshire Borough Council, Economic Development
 Learning and Skills Council
 Connexions
 3M

Having explored the barriers and opportunities available to young people in North Warwickshire the panel developed its recommendations. These will be put to the North Warwickshire Area Committee before consideration by the Economic Development and Children, Young People and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The final decision as to whether to adopt and implement the

recommendations will rest with the Council's Cabinet. Here are the panel's ten recommendations. These are repeated later in the main body of the report along with a clear statement of the rationale behind each one.

Recommendation 1.

That the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy be requested to attach a high priority through his economic development responsibility to work with North Warwickshire Borough Council and other agencies to attract more medium to high skilled jobs to North Warwickshire.

Recommendation 2

That every Autumn the North Warwickshire Area Committee considers a report from the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families on performance in the five secondary schools in North Warwickshire. This report should be based on discussions with the five Headteachers and the schools' governors. As well as including reference to the challenges and opportunities facing their respective schools the report should also inform the committee of collaborative working between them and any new teaching techniques that demonstrably take account of the specific needs of pupils.

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The main body of this report is divided into a number of sections. In it we have attempted to maintain a focus on the key points drawn out of the evidence. The report commences with an analysis of the educational attainment in the area. It then moves on to consider the barriers that young people encounter that may reduce their chances of success. The final section before considering our conclusions and recommendations is a description of the services available to young people and a review of the challenges facing service providers.

Further information can be found in the appendices. The reader is strongly advised to refer to these as they contain much of the detail that it has been felt appropriate to

omit from the main report. As well as finding background material on the national skills agenda the reader will find a record of the visits made and the discussions held throughout this review.

2. Educational Attainment at 16 in North Warwickshire

Secondary education in North Warwickshire is provided at five secondary schools. These are,

Hartshill School
 The Coleshill School – A Maths and Computing College
 Queen Elizabeth School, Atherstone
 Kingsbury School – A Specialist Science and Mathematics College
 Polesworth International Language College

In October 2007 there were 4491 pupils on the roll of these schools. Polesworth and Coleshill Schools maintain sixth forms. Each school is very different from its neighbours with different challenges and opportunities being presented to them by a range of factors. (See Appendix 2 for further details of the schools).

In addition to the five secondary schools 14 –16 and post sixteen education is provided in Warwickshire at North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and King Edward IV College in Nuneaton. Students leaving school at 16 often seek further education across the border in Staffordshire, Solihull, Birmingham or Leicestershire.

Tables 1 to 4 below set out the position serving to illustrate how the five secondary schools in North Warwickshire compare with each other and (as comparators) with those in Rugby, in other areas of the country and against the national picture.

Table 1 - Comparative Performance of North Warwickshire Secondary Schools 2007

School	5 or more grades A*-c incl. Eng & Maths %	Level 2 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 1 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 2 (5 or more grades A*-C) %	Level 1 (5 or more grades A* - G) %	Av. Point score per pupil
Coleshill	39	42	99	46	96	329.6
Kingsbury	38	44	98	51	98	322.4
Hartshill	27	50	87	45	89	340.7
Polesworth	54	59	98	61	99	382.4
Queen Elizabeth	36	40	96	41	95	327.1

Table 2 - Comparative Performance of Rugby Secondary Schools 2007

School	5 or more grades A*-c incl. Eng & Maths %	Level 2 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 1 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 2 (5 or more grades A*-C) %	Level 1 (5 or more grades A* - G) %	Av. Point score per pupil
Ashlawn	55	60	99	68	99	414.7
Avon Valley	34	34	94	67	91	390
Bilton	52	58	98	57	97	392.9
Harris	43	46	97	48	95	324.6

Lawrence Sheriff	100	100	100	100	100	685.3
Rugby High	99	99	99	100	100	522.1

Table 3 - Averages 2007

	5 or more grades A*-c incl. Eng & Maths %	Level 2 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 1 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 2 (5 or more grades A*-C)	Level 1 (5 or more grades A* - G) %	Av. Point score per pupil
Average for N. Warks	38.8	47	95.6	48.8	95.4	340.4
Average for Rugby Schools	56.8	59.6	97.6	68	96.4	441.5
Warwickshire Averages	47.8	52	93.9	58.3	93.4	383.8
England Averages	46.8	50.3	90.8	62	91.7	378.2

Table 4 – County Comparison 2007

County Average	5 or more grades A*-c incl. Eng & Maths %	Level 2 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 1 in Functional English and Maths %	Level 2 (5 or more grades A*-C)	Level 1 (5 or more grades A* - G) %	Av. Point score per pupil
Leics	48.8	50.8	92.9	60.8	93.1	398.8
Notts	41.7	49.6	90.7	54.9	90.0	361.5
Worcs.	47.7	48.7	93.4	61.6	92.7	379.8
Staffs	45.7	48.7	93.3	60.0	93.2	372.2
Oxon	48.1	50.3	94.0	57.5	93.0	369.7

Pupils in secondary schools in North Warwickshire perform less well than those in Rugby the rest of Warwickshire or Nationally. Compared to the five comparator local authorities pupil performance in North Warwickshire is also low. However, two features from the data should be noted.

1. Pupil performance at Polesworth School is significantly better than its neighbours.
2. The figure for Level 1 (5 or more grades A*-G) shows that whilst pupils in North Warwickshire do not do as well as those in Rugby they still exceed the county and national average. They also exceed the performance of pupils in all five comparator counties. This shows us that whilst academic attainment is not high in North Warwickshire, young people are at least achieving some qualifications albeit at a lower level.

However, it is not advisable to consider a single year in isolation. Trend data can show whether overall any improvement is being secured. The tables and charts below are based on data over the last 5 years.

Trends in Academic Attainment

Table 5 and Chart 1 below illustrate performance at Key Stage 4 with the percentage of pupils achieving 3 or more A*-A. It can be seen how the fortunes of pupils in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth are closely allied. The chart illustrates how over the last five years performance in all areas of the county has increased.

Table 5

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
North Warwickshire	9.3	11.1	13.8	10.8	12.5
Nuneaton and Bedworth	10.5	12	11.8	12.4	13.1
Rugby	17.9	19.7	20.7	24.2	24.9
Stratford-on-Avon	25.4	29.7	31.3	28.5	32.2
Warwick	20.7	19.6	23.8	20.8	22.5

Source NCER

Chart 1

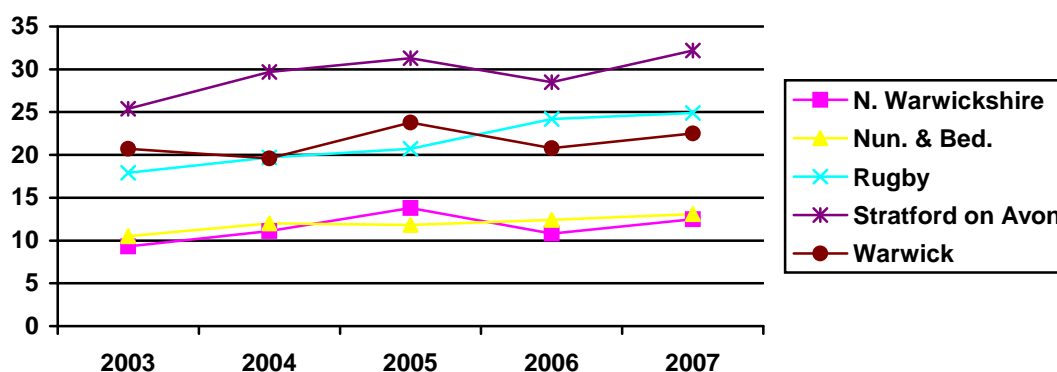
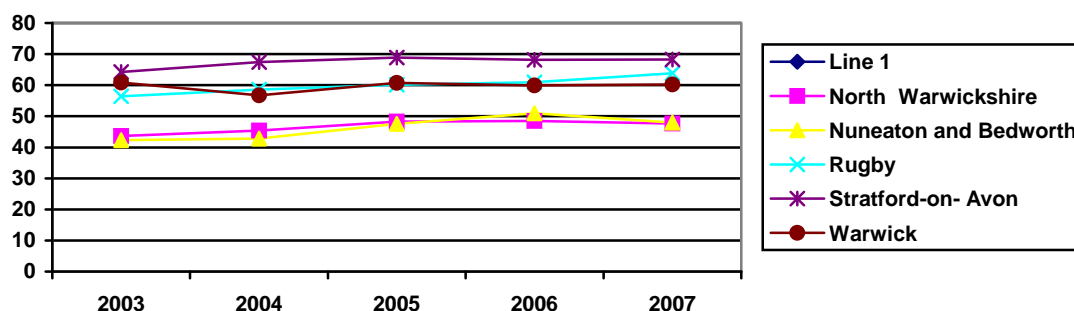


Table 6 and Chart 2 are based on the same time period to 2007. They serve to show how again performance in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth is roughly similar. This time, however, the performance data is for pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C grade.

Table 6

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
North Warwickshire	43.7	45.4	48.3	48.5	47.7
Nuneaton and Bedworth	42.3	42.8	47.6	51.0	48.0
Rugby	56.4	58.6	60.1	61.0	63.8
Stratford-on-Avon	64.2	67.4	68.9	68.2	68.3
Warwick	60.8	56.7	60.7	59.9	60.2

Chart 2



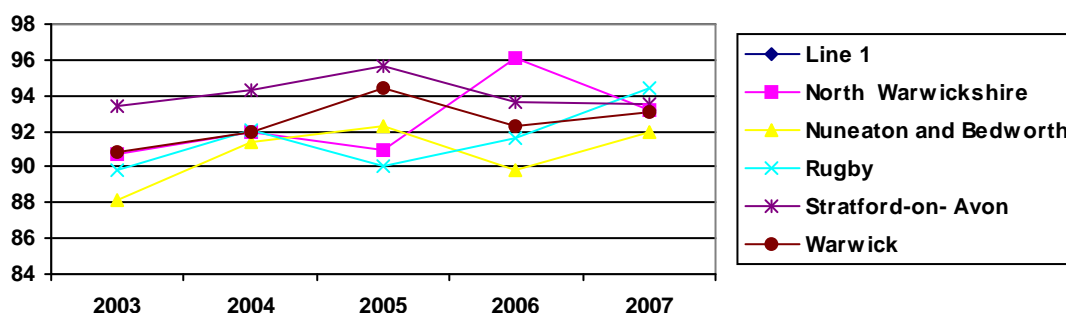
Source NCER

Table 7 and Chart 3 show how a high proportion of students in North Warwickshire succeed in obtaining some formal qualifications at age 16. Note how in 2006 performance in North Warwickshire exceeded that of the other five district areas. In 2007 the performance in all five areas appeared to almost converge on a single point.

Table 7

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
North Warwickshire	90.7	91.9	91.0	96.1	93.2
Nuneaton and Bedworth	88.1	91.4	92.3	89.8	91.9
Rugby	89.8	92.1	90.0	91.6	94.4
Stratford-on-Avon	93.4	94.3	95.7	93.6	93.5
Warwick	90.8	91.9	94.4	92.3	93.1

Chart 3



Source NCER

NEETS (Not in Employment Education or Training)

Nationally roughly one in ten of 16 to 19 year olds are categorised as a NEET. In Warwickshire the figure is significantly lower at 5.2%. However, the figure for North Warwickshire in November 2006 was 7.9%. This was marginally higher than that in

Nuneaton and Bedworth (7.3%) but significantly higher than for Stratford (2.4%). NEETs and NALAs (Not Available Left Area – ie disappeared) are a concern for agencies such as Connexions where a positive destination for a young person is deemed essential to future well-being.

In stark terms the evidence above shows us that overall in academic terms young people in North Warwickshire are not performing as well as young people in the rest of Warwickshire and elsewhere. Given these facts the task for the panel was to establish why this was the case, what was being done already to address the problem and the challenges for the future

3. Barriers to Educational Attainment

There is no single factor or barrier that can be held to account for a young person's failure to fulfil his or her potential. The panel has identified the following as examples of some of the factors that will influence a young person.

Aspiration

Almost every person spoken to as part of this project has acknowledged not only that the aspirations of young people in North Warwickshire are generally lower than they should be but that this reduces their educational attainment and hence their life chances. A person's aspirations are determined by a number of differing factors. The way in which those factors interact and their intensity will affect young people's aspirations in different ways. These are summarised below.

Culture - Evidence from the schools and from agencies such as the ESWS and Connexions points to the borough's former mining and manufacturing past as carrying a legacy that limits some people's outlooks. Many families particularly in former mining communities have never shown any inclination to look beyond their neighbourhood or the nearest town. Heads of households fail to encourage their children to seek any kind of alternative or to look beyond their comparatively small world. As pointed out by one Headteacher there is no history of higher or further education amongst many parents and carers. Attempts in the past to provide adult classes in numeracy and literacy have failed through lack of interest. If there is no desire within the family or community to achieve so the effort put in at school will be reduced. Of course it would be wrong to generalise and state that every young person who has not prospered at school has been held back by their culture. Nevertheless, the professionals that the panel spoke to saw this as a significant barrier.

Jobs - Linked to some extent to culture (above) is the type and availability of jobs in North Warwickshire. The prevailing culture amongst many young people is that they have no desire to seek work or a life outside of their neighbourhood. The coalmines and factories that characterised the borough closed during the 1980's. In their place came distribution warehouses and low skilled worked such as can be found in the sandwich factory. Where more skilled jobs were created such as at BMW's engine plant at Hams Hall, these were offered largely to people from outside the area.

Unemployment is not particularly high in North Warwickshire (1.5% as opposed to 1.6% for Warwickshire as a whole and 3.6% nationally). Young people know that

when they leave school they will probably be able to secure a job of some sort. It seems, however, that a significant proportion of these young people have low expectations of what work might offer and are content to accept low skilled employment.

Geography - In a number of different ways the size and location of North Warwickshire can have a negative influence on it. In terms of aspiration the presence of many small former mining villages and the absence of a single main town serve to reinforce the cultural barriers that already exist. Tamworth, Solihull and Birmingham to the West and Nuneaton to the East are seen by many young people as remote even alien. Professionals working with young people explained to the panel how many of their clients would never dream of travelling to towns away from their neighbourhood either for leisure or work.

Distance and Transport

Here again the geography of North Warwickshire serves as a barrier to attainment. The panel was informed by representatives from the various educational establishments consulted how the location of schools and communities impacts on the ability to deliver services. The bullet points below highlight some of the challenges being faced.

Hartshill School – Whilst located in North Warwickshire adjoins Nuneaton and takes many of its students from the western part of that town. It had worked to forge links with the colleges in Nuneaton but its distance from the college campuses is regarded as an issue.

Queen Elizabeth School, Atherstone – The willingness of young people from this school to continue their education post 16 at colleges of Further Education means that there are too few left to form the nucleus of a sixth form at the school. This is not of itself seen as a problem by the school although it does rely on young people being prepared to travel away from the town to continue their studies.

The Coleshill School – A Maths and Computing College – Coleshill is situated on the eastern edge of the county. It has little in common with Nuneaton and few of the school's pupils continue into further education in Nuneaton. Because of its location almost half of its students originate from the West Midlands conurbation (Solihull/Birmingham and Staffordshire). Many students do not relate to Warwickshire nor do they see their future there. Because of the distances involved relationships with the colleges in Nuneaton have been challenging to manage. By the same token it has been difficult to develop the close ties with neighbouring colleges and institutions that lie across the administrative boundary.

Kingsbury School – A Specialist Science and Mathematics College – Kingsbury shares many of the challenges faced by Coleshill. Even though it Kingsbury lies close to Tamworth it was reported that many former pupils travel to Nuneaton for further education opportunities. This was seen as a challenge for these young people as the bus journey can take a long time.

Outreach services are provided by colleges, the County Council and other organisations. North Warwickshire and Hinckley College has an annex at Atherstone

and used to offer courses at Coleshill. Changes in funding allocations, however, led to the demise of the Coleshill classes. Classes are delivered by college staff at Hartshill but the distances between Nuneaton and the other schools has worked against the development of other such arrangements

Transport or the lack of it can be a major barrier for young people. Up to the age of sixteen students are either provided with transport or can access buses to get to and from school. Nevertheless, journeys can be lengthy and tiring whilst rigid service timetables can prevent young people from engaging in extracurricular activities. Year 10 and 11 pupils who have to travel into college for their classes can also be faced with lengthy journeys which can demotivate them.

Buildings, Resources and Facilities

The panel considers that for young people to flourish they require the right environmental conditions. At each of the secondary schools visited it was noted that there appeared to be at least some aspect of the fabric of the buildings that was wanting. At Coleshill for example the walls of the steel framed building were found to be damp whilst the split site at Queen Elizabeth School in Atherstone was regarded as placing pupils and staff at a disadvantage.

Hartshill School having worked hard to engender relationships with the college has found that it has a dearth of rooms and facilities to enable the college to deliver lessons in the school.

The County Youth Service does some excellent work with young people. It too recognises the barriers of geography and distance and would be keen to undertake more work away from the major centres of population. The service, however, faces a major barrier of its own, namely identifying venues to hold sessions with young people. It experience has been that many community halls will not permit the youth service to use their facilities for fear of damage or trouble.

The next section explores many of the initiatives that are being pursued by agencies to help young people achieve. These schemes, however, require adequate resourcing. A major potential barrier to attainment is a shortage of those resources needed.

4. Opportunities and Innovations

In order to gauge what, if any, enhancements are required to the services provided by the council the panel was keen to obtain a clear picture of what is already being done to help young people reach their full potential. For the sakes of completeness the panel spoke to education providers and support workers whose clients are aged from 14 upwards. For example, the views of the Skills Delivery Group which works with the medium to long-term unemployed from age 18 were sought.

It is not intended to set out every detail of what each agency does. Rather, the following paragraphs are intended to give a flavour of the work undertaken and to set out some of the issues around service delivery that they encounter and which they feel may on occasions place young people at a disadvantage.

Warwickshire County Council - County Youth Service

The County Youth Service is not perceived by young people as providing a formal education in the strictest sense. Young people often find it easier to engage with youth workers and follow what might appear to them to be a softer less intimidating learning approach. The service has strict targets for its work with the 13-19 age group.

Accreditation is a key objective of the youth service. Experience has shown that young people's confidence can be increased significantly if they complete a course for which they receive formal credit. Examples of accredited courses include Warwickshire Challenge, Duke of Edinburgh, Youth Achievement Awards and Junior Sports Leadership Awards.

Programmes are run in schools. These include Motiv8, Ban the Bully and drugs and alcohol education.

Observations from the Youth Service substantiate those of other agencies working in the borough. The issues include rural isolation, lack of choice for young people, low aspirations, geographical barriers and a lack of good role models. The Youth Service would like to do more work in North Warwickshire but finds itself constrained by limited resources. It would like to offer more accredited courses and to provide an enhanced service within schools.

Often the Youth Service will seek to offer services to young people based in village halls and community centres. However, the organisations responsible for those venues will often refuse to co-operate fearing damage and disruption by the young people.

Finally the service would like to undertake more work in schools whilst working with partners such as Connexions to deliver appropriate programmes

Warwickshire County Council - 14-19 Development

Warwickshire County Council has invested considerably in the 14 – 19 agenda. The core objective of the agenda is to “ensure that the range and quality of learning provision for 14-19 across Warwickshire meets the needs of all young people and enables them to be successful learners and achieve economic wellbeing”.

There are a number of aspects to the agenda a summary of which can be found at appendix to this report. There is a heavy emphasis on partnership working and a desire to ensure that the education available to young people is appropriate to their individual needs.

Personalised learning programmes and initiatives such as NOVA (New Opportunities and Vocational Applications) and Reactiv8 are promoted by the 14-19 team and help to get young people involved in activities they enjoy.

The new 14-19 Diplomas being rolled out by Government are presenting a major challenge to the 14-19 team. The principle behind the Diplomas is similar to that outlined above ie that not all young people are suited to the traditional academic

route of GCSEs and A Levels. By 2013 17 new Diploma courses will have been introduced with certain schools offering certain courses. The 14-19 team is working to ensure that,

- through the Northern Area Partnership educational establishments within Warwickshire and in neighbouring authority areas are working together to ensure the successful delivery of the diplomas
- young people are able to access the courses best suited to their needs via the area prospectus,
- transport arrangements are in place to facilitate the movement of young people to and from the schools and colleges they choose to attend,
- funding for transport and courses is distributed equitably to account for different needs.

In order to achieve the above the 14-19 team has recognised that it will have to overcome a number of barriers.

- Schools and other establishments will be required to work much more closely together than previously. This ethos runs contrary to that pursued for many years whereby schools competed against each other for funding and other resources.
- Businesses will need to be engaged much more in the delivery of the Diplomas and the skills agenda as a whole.
- Low aspirations and the inward looking culture that is common in North Warwickshire may well deter young people from seeking to attend courses offered beyond their immediate neighbourhood.
- For North Warwickshire the cost and logistical challenges of transporting young people to educational establishments are a particular issue although much work has already been done with colleagues in the Environment and Economy Directorate to prepare the ground for this.
- Effective cross-boundary working is particularly important in North Warwickshire and whilst relationships are being brokered with establishments in neighbouring authority areas there remain a number of issues such as those relating to funding to be addressed.
- There remains a considerable amount of work to be done in terms of raising awareness of the 14-19 agenda in general and the Diploma system in particular.

The Department of Children, Schools and Families chosen to leave the detail of how the new Diploma system will be delivered to local authorities. The absence of any clear framework for implementation has meant that the 14-19 team is having to expend considerable effort in engaging all partners in the process. Any school that

for whatever reason chooses not to embrace the new system will be picked up through their Ofsted inspection. However, this will be a retrospective view only.

Warwickshire County Council - Extended Services

An extended service is one that works in partnership with a wide range of local providers and other schools to provide access to a range of quality services and provision.

Extended Services provide: “a range of activities and services, often beyond the schools day, to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community” (DfES).

Warwickshire has been working since 2003/04 on its extended service agenda. In June 2005 the Prospectus for Extended Schools confirmed it a key to delivery mechanisms for the localised delivery of the Every Child Matters agenda. For the first time, a ‘core offer’ of extended services was identified which all children, young children, families and communities should be able to access either at or through their local school. In essence the Extended School Agenda offers,

- A varied menu of study support activities to be on offer such as homework clubs and sport (at least two hours per week beyond the school day for those who want it), music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs such as chess and first aid courses, visits to museums and galleries, learning a foreign language, volunteering, business and enterprise activities.
- Parenting support including information sessions for parents at key transition points, parenting programmes run with the support of other children’s services and family learning sessions to allow children to learn with their parent.
- High quality ‘wraparound’ childcare provided on school sites or through other local providers, with supervised transfer arrangements where appropriate, available 8am – 6pm throughout the year.
- Swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services such as speech and language therapy, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, intensive behaviour support and (for young people) sexual health services. Some may be delivered on school sites.
- Wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities, including adult learning.

In North Warwickshire the Extended Schools Team has been working to some extent with four of the five secondary schools. A major challenge for the team is persuading community venues to open their doors and services to be run from them. A second challenge is that of planning a service for which the future funding is uncertain. Funding to 2011 has been confirmed but beyond that date there is far less certainty. The hope is that schools will recognise the benefit of the Extended Services initiative to the community and contribute to the running costs. This would be assisted if the schools pooled their resources and worked more collaboratively.

Warwickshire County Council – Education Business Partnership

The Education Business Partnership (EBP) has operated for 16 years in Warwickshire. In recent months it has relocated to become part of the Environment and Economy Directorate. Whilst the service does not seek to raise educational attainment per se it does offer training on the “softer” skills that are required to secure a good job.

Amongst other things employers are recruited to work with schools and their students to provide practice interviews and other instruction.

Employers provide plenty of feedback to the EBP based on their experience of going into schools. In North Warwickshire employers report not only that students have low aspirations but that they frequently fail to show any inclination to engage in and learn from the process. Often young people have little appreciation of what they can achieve.

The EBP is more active in North Warwickshire than in any other area and works with around 4000 students a year in the Borough. Under previous funding regimes it was possible to operate at the primary as well as secondary level. However, more recently the ending of funding from the Learning and Skills Council services being provided anywhere other than in secondary schools. This is regretted as there is a strong belief that as with many aspects of a child’s education early intervention is beneficial.

Warwickshire County Council – Enhanced Support Network

The County Council has gradually been rolling the Enhanced Support Network out across Warwickshire. Its principal driver was the Victoria Climbié case and the subsequent report by Lord Laming. The purpose of the ESN is to provide an integrated service whilst moving support upstream thus enabling earlier intervention. A wide range of services are involved including the police, voluntary sector, education psychology, Connexions and school nurses. The key agencies are concerned with housing, health and social care. 93% of cases are initiated by schools that have identified issues with young people that need to be pursued. Most of the cases have come via primary schools.

Warwickshire County Council – Education Social Work Service

The work of the Warwickshire County Council Education Social Work Service (ESWS) extends far beyond addressing non-attendance at school. The team deals with exclusions, home education, child employment, bullying and support for traveller families. One of the reasons that the team’s remit is this broad is because it recognises that non-attendance or other similar behaviours can often be attributable to other factors. The ESWS receives between 800 and 900 referrals a year. This figure is increasing and the team is struggling to avoid having to operate a waiting list for clients.

It is not often appreciated that if a parent or carer does not work to ensure that their child is receiving an education then they are committing an offence for which they can be prosecuted.

Absences in North Warwickshire are higher than elsewhere in Warwickshire. It has been calculated that around 79,000 sessions are missed by pupils in North Warwickshire every year. A session equates to half a day.

One of the major challenges facing the ESWS (apart from the increasing demand for its service) is the need to be able to operate cross-boundary. Responsibility for a child's attendance at school lies with the authority where that child is educated. So where a child lives in Birmingham but attends a school in Warwickshire so it is Warwickshire County Council that is responsible. With a significant number of young people attending schools across border (50% of the pupils at Coleshill School are from Solihull or Birmingham) this places added pressure on resources.

Warwickshire County Council - School Performance

As well as having support mechanisms for individual pupils the County Council provides advice and support to schools on their performance. Each school has a School Improvement Partner (SIP) who gives a minimum of 5 days support a year to their school.

The team works with the Area Schools and Communities Officer to monitor school performance. Where this is found to be less than satisfactory the team will then offer such support and advice as is necessary. In recent years the team has worked with two of the secondary schools in North Warwickshire. The result of that work has been a marked improvement in performance.

Warwickshire County Council – Skills Delivery Group

When a young person leaves school at 16 it is hoped that they will move on to further education, training or a job. Despite all the efforts of the schools and support services listed above and later on some young people fall through the net. Experience shows that if they do not find employment relatively quickly they will find it more and more difficult to do so and will become long-term unemployed. The Skills Delivery Group seeks to work with these people to give them a degree of training and to prepare them for work.

A major component of the work of the Skills Delivery Group is work placements for their clients. This presents a major challenge to them as it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain placements with companies. North Warwickshire Borough Council has in the past provided placements for clients whilst the County Council has supported the initiative to a limited extent via Kingsbury Water Park.

Warwickshire County Council - Extended Services

The aim of the Extended Services Initiative is to make schools the hub of their communities. This is not to say that it is relevant or appropriate for all schools to need to embrace the initiative. One of the barriers to young people's achievement is the low aspiration of parents. A challenge for the team is to persuade parents who may not have nice memories of school back through the gates to participate in further learning.

A challenge for the team is to persuade venues to allow them to be used for the delivery of extended services. In addition, question marks over future funding make service planning a challenge.

Learning and Skills Council

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for planning and funding high quality education and training for everyone in England other than those in universities. It has a national office in Coventry and nine regional offices overseeing the work of local partnership teams throughout the county. Its annual budget for 2006-07 was £10.4 billion.

The LSC's major tasks are to:

- raise participation and achievement by young people
- increase adult demand for learning
- raise skills levels for national competitiveness
- improve the quality of education and training delivery
- equalise opportunities through better access to learning
- improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the sector.

Every person in the country is entitled to be educated to NVQ Level 2. Training is provided but whilst the education is available the challenge for the LSC and training providers is in re-engaging people.

In north Warwickshire a major challenge is brokering the joint working between LSCs although issues can often be resolved through negotiation.

Connexions

Connexions is sub-contracted to Warwickshire County Council. The service focuses on 13 – 19 year olds and works to provide advice and guidance regarding careers and further education opportunities. The service works very closely with schools and as such has a good idea of the challenges facing young people today. In addition to its work with schools the service has forged close links with the colleges. Whilst most of its clients are in mainstream education or training Connexions also works with young mothers, carers, homeless people and excluded pupils.

The challenge for the Connexions service in North Warwickshire is in ensuring that young people can access the opportunities available to them. One of the barriers that the service recognises is that generated by the area's rural nature and the requirement to travel some distance to access jobs or training. Like other agencies Connexions regards the diploma system as potentially leading to more transport related problems as students struggle to get to the courses that are offered.

Another challenge for Connexions is to be able to engage employers in its work. Large employers are particularly reluctant to assist. Smaller companies (surprisingly)

are often more willing to release staff for training. North Warwickshire Borough Council has been very supportive of the work of Connexions in the past although tightening budgets have led to a reduction in that support.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Throughout this review the panel has sought to obtain as clear and as comprehensive a picture as possible of the barriers and opportunities facing young people in North Warwickshire. From what it has seen and heard it has arrived at a series of conclusions. Sometimes a conclusion might be reached that whilst requiring some form of positive action may be beyond the power of the County Council or other agencies to influence. In other cases, however, the panel recognises that there is scope for change to happen and for the council and our partners to help bring that change about.

Conclusion 1.

The panel has recognised that North Warwickshire, whilst not unique, is faced with a series of challenges that mark it out as different from the rest of Warwickshire. The area's history of mining and manufacturing and the rapid decline of those sectors in the 1980's prompted a call for jobs of whatever type and quality to be brought in to relieve the high levels of unemployment then being experienced. This resulted in a high proportion of low skilled jobs being created in logistics and service support. The panel acknowledges the value of these jobs. However, having spoken to young people, support agencies, school leaders and economic development officers there is a feeling that the area now needs to focus on the growth of a more skilled employment base. The challenge will be three-fold. The land required for new development must be identified, the right companies need to be drawn to the area and finally the people of North Warwickshire need to be equipped with the skills to secure those jobs. The panel appreciates that the changes sought will not happen overnight but is keen to ensure that every opportunity is taken by the County and Borough Councils to pursue that agenda.

Recommendation 1.

That the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy be requested to attach a high priority through his economic development responsibility to work with North Warwickshire Borough Council and other agencies to attract more medium to high skilled jobs to North Warwickshire.

Conclusion 2.

Early in this review panel members made a point of visiting all five secondary schools in North Warwickshire. Being aware of each school's academic attainment levels the panel wanted to develop a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing the schools and the communities they serve. The principal message that came across is that all five schools are very different from their

neighbours and that these differences are the result of a complex web of different factors. These factors include, catchment areas, levels of deprivation, geographical factors, cross-boundary issues, funding, relationships with partners such as colleges, support from within the local authority, the community's expectations, transport issues and constraints imposed by buildings and land.

The panel welcomed the candour of the Headteachers in discussing the challenges and opportunities being faced by their schools and given the concerns that triggered this review relating to attainment levels considered that regular detailed updates on the issues discussed are necessary.

Recommendation 2

That every Autumn the North Warwickshire Area Committee considers a report from the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families on performance in the five secondary schools in North Warwickshire. This report should be based on discussions with the five Headteachers and the schools' Governors. As well as including reference to the challenges and opportunities facing their respective schools the report should also inform the committee of collaborative working between them and any new teaching techniques that demonstrably take account of the specific needs of pupils.

Conclusion 3

The panel was thoroughly briefed on the new 14-19 diplomas and the likely impact that these will have on secondary education across the country. As well as appreciating the opportunities that the diplomas will potentially give to young people in North Warwickshire that the panel was also made aware of the challenges that they will present (and are presenting) to the council, schools, colleges and partners. These challenges appear to present themselves in three forms.

1. There are the logistical aspects of delivering this new style of education. How will students who need to travel to other schools for their classes be transported? How will timetables be co-ordinated between educational establishments? Can schools and colleges accommodate the needs of curriculum subjects that are more vocational than has recently been the case?
2. There is the need for schools and colleges to embrace a new way of working that requires greater collaboration and co-ordination.
3. Significant aspects of the diploma system require comprehensive engagement by employers. How can this be achieved?

The panel is fully aware of the excellent work already being undertaken by the local authority officers and our partners to implement this initiative. However, as elected representatives the panel feels that it is important that it is kept fully informed of the progress being made and of any difficulties being encountered which they can assist in addressing.

Recommendation 3

That the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families be requested to report to the North Warwickshire Area Committee on an annual basis on progress with the introduction of the diploma system in North Warwickshire. This report to include reference to transport arrangements, cross-boundary issues, work towards engaging employers, parents and carers and Governors, partnership working between schools and colleges and any challenges facing the Northern Area Partnership.

Conclusion 4

Through its visits to the five secondary schools in North Warwickshire and subsequent discussions with officers the panel has become aware of the close relationship between learning and the environment in which pupils learn. The panel were made aware on their visits of the pressures being placed on the fabric of schools. They were also made aware of the need to provide appropriate teaching environments for the more vocational elements of the curriculum that will be part of the diplomas. Some schools in North Warwickshire are already working with colleges to provide academic and vocational teaching in the schools themselves. For this to be able to happen, however the schools must be able to physically accommodate visiting teachers/lecturers and the equipment they require. The diploma system will potentially result in more outreach and vocational teaching taking place at schools. Given that the “Building Schools for the Future” initiative will see major schools redevelopment across Warwickshire the panel is keen to ensure that this initiative and any building work that occurs before then will be sensitive to the requirements of the diploma system.

Recommendation 4

That in planning future school development the Strategic Director of Resources be asked to ensure that adequate accommodation is provided for outreach teaching to be delivered by colleges.

Conclusion 5

The panel was very impressed with the efforts being made by officers both within the County Council and outside who are working to support young people and schools. The Education Business Partnership is particularly active in North Warwickshire working to a greater or lesser extent with all the secondary schools in the area. The challenges being faced by the EBP concerning its funding were noted.

Throughout this review the panel has heard on a number of occasions of the need to interest and stimulate young people at an earlier an age as possible. Children who are at risk of becoming disenfranchised need to be “caught” early whilst early aspirations and ideas need to be built on and nurtured before they fade away. Whilst the panel was heartened to hear of the work of the EBP at secondary level it was disappointed to discover that work in primary schools had all but ceased.

Life chances of people in North Warwickshire (including Nuneaton and Bedworth) are recognised to be less than elsewhere in the county. For this reason the panel considers that if by working in primary schools agencies such as the EBP can increase those life chances then they should be able to do so. Ideally the panel would like to make extra resources available for the EBP so that it can re-engage with primary schools. However, given the budgetary constraints that the County Council has to operate under it is felt that a redeployment of some of those resources that the EBP does have to North Warwickshire would be appropriate.

Recommendation 5

That the Education Business Partnership be requested to examine its strategy for the provision of services across Warwickshire with a view to operating in more primary sector schools in North Warwickshire than at present.

Conclusion 6

As noted above the panel acknowledges the valuable work of the Education Business Partnership. During the review the panel was informed that a major challenge confronting the EBP is in recruiting sufficient volunteers to assist them in delivering practice interviews and other school-based sessions for young people. Local companies contribute that which they feel able and support has been forthcoming from some elements of the public sector.

The panel noted that whilst Warwickshire County Council is the largest single employer in the area its contribution in terms of volunteers to the EBP is disproportionately low. The physical distance between the council's base in Warwick and North Warwickshire is noted as a major factor in recruitment but given the EBP's needs, the benefits that volunteering can bring to staff and the example that this would set to other employers the panel feels that more attention should be devoted to this.

Recommendation 6

That the Strategic Director of Performance and Development be asked to work with the Education Business Partnership to put in place such mechanisms as would be required to encourage and facilitate County Council staff supporting the EBP in North Warwickshire.

Conclusion 7.

In developing its understanding of the support available for young people in North Warwickshire the panel chose to consider the work undertaken with those people who are nineteen plus and for whom there is a risk of long term unemployment and disaffection. Having heard of the work of the Skills Delivery Group and the challenges it faces in identifying placements for their clients the panel concluded that greater resolve was needed by the County Council as a major employer to assist in this. The panel is not insensitive to the challenges that this would present to the

County Council but it considers that as a major public service provider it should be doing everything in its power to assist.

Recommendation 7

That the Strategic Director of Performance and Development be asked to consider how the County Council can assist further the Skills Delivery Group by providing placements for clients.

Conclusion 8

The panel commends the work of the County Youth Service and the Extended Services team, recognising the quality and breadth of support they provide in North Warwickshire.

There was, however, one issue of concern to the panel which it considers needs to be addressed. Officers of both these services informed the review that whilst they are keen to operate more widely across the borough they often have difficulty identifying venues to hold sessions. Some community halls have been identified as suitable but the management of those venues has resisted letting them out fearing damage or trouble from young people. The panel considers that such a position is discriminatory and should be resisted.

Many village halls and community venues are supported either directly or indirectly by the Warwickshire County Council. The panel considers that if public money is being used to maintain these venues then it is the responsibility of those venues to be as inclusive as possible. This means allowing both the Youth Service and Extended Services team to make use of them.

Recommendation 8

That when discussing with appropriate community groups and voluntary organisations the level of support they will receive from the County Council the requirements of the County Youth Service and Extended Services Team for access to appropriate venues should be emphasised. In instances where WCC supported community groups with suitable premises refuse, without good cause, the use of those premises then that support should be reviewed.

Conclusion 9

During its discussions with officers from the County Education Social Work Service (ESWS) and the Enhanced Support Network (ESN) the panel became very aware of the value of the Common Assessment Framework. The panel considers that the CAF along with the reconfiguration of the ESWS and the roll out of the ESN across North Warwickshire promise to bring about a major improvement in the way we deliver our combined services to those individuals and families that need us most.

The panel is of the opinion that as community leaders all County Councillors should be made fully aware of the significance of the Common Assessment Framework.

Knowledge of the CAF will potentially help councillors when confronted with issues concerning their constituents.

Recommendation 9

That the Strategic Director Children, Young People and Families undertakes to ensure that all elected Members of the Council are briefed on the Common Assessment Framework and its implications for them as community leaders.

Conclusion 10

When speaking to young people and the providers of services to young people a theme that was repeated a number of times is the need to lead by example. The panel recognises the value of positive role models in a young person's life and also recognises that for many young people role models either do not exist or could be seen as having a negative influence.

Schools that have sixth forms sometimes use their senior pupils as an example for others to follow. Those schools that do not have sixth forms are unable to do this. During its discussions, however, the panel concluded that all schools have ex-pupils who have succeeded in their chosen field and who could act as role models for others. Thus the panel believes that it would be of significant benefit if schools could be encouraged to invest the time in inviting former pupils back into the school.

Recommendation 10

That through the Children, Young People and Families Directorate secondary schools should be encouraged to identify and work with former pupils who have been successful in their lives to encourage them to return to the school and act as role models for existing students.

APPENDIX 1

Terms of Reference for a Review of Educational Attainment and Skills of Young People at Age 16 in North Warwickshire

Aims and Objectives

Aim

The links and inter-relationships between educational attainment and quality of life are becoming increasingly understood. It is clear that young people leaving school

with few of the qualifications or skills they will need to secure a good quality job may not only experience financial hardship but also poorer health and generally lower levels of well-being. It is apparent that many 16 year olds in North Warwickshire are not attaining the qualifications or learning the skills they will require for their futures and further, young people in other parts of the county are generally doing better. The North Warwickshire Area Committee, concerned at this situation wishes to explore the basis for it, consider what efforts are being made to address it and establish how, through enhanced partnership working, further improvement in the performance and employability of 16 year olds in the borough can be achieved.

Objectives

The overall objectives of the review are

1. to agree a series of recommendations for actions that assist in enhancing the life chances of 16 year olds in North Warwickshire.
2. To develop a clear understanding of the factors that influence educational attainment and the development of the skills required by 16 year olds if they are to obtain good quality employment.
3. To identify any areas for improvement in the services provided to young people by the County Council and its partners in North Warwickshire.
4. Promote the value of young people living and learning in North Warwickshire to employers who can offer them quality long term employment

Scope

In order to achieve the above, the review will consider,

- Secondary school and further education provision in North Warwickshire and ways in which curricula can be enriched
- Levels of (formal and informal) attainment amongst 16 year olds in North Warwickshire.
- The impact of factors such as gender and socio-economic background on attainment.
- The potential benefits to be accrued from the Local Area Agreement.
- The barriers that exist that can prevent young people in North Warwickshire from reaching their full potential.
- The ways in which employers within the borough can be encouraged to engage more with schools and public agencies

The review will utilise the following sources of evidence.

- Information on earnings and job levels in North Warwickshire
- Performance information from DfeS and within WCC
- Information on experiences from other parts of the country
- Benchmarking information
- Examples of best practice

- Comparisons between schools within North Warwickshire and with other areas of the county
- Information on job retention
- Information on college course completions
- Destination statistics

Indicators of Success

- That the recommendations made are accepted and implemented with a corresponding impact upon the objectives outlined above
- Increased educational attainment and skills development
- Increased employment of local young people in good quality jobs
- Increased engagement with schools and employers

Methodology

The review will utilise the following

- Results of analysis of performance data from Warwickshire schools
- Web-based research to establish performance and examples of good practice from elsewhere.
- If appropriate, visits to other parts of the country to draw on the experience of others
- Results of discussions with stakeholders and partners

The following stakeholders will be consulted and engaged with

- Young people
- Schools and colleges
- Connexions and Job Centres
- Education Business Partnership
- Businesses in North Warwickshire
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
- Learning and Skills Council
- Nuneaton Training Centre
- Three A's
- Youth Offending Team and Police
- Adult and Community Learning and Extended Services
- Millennium Volunteers

A Member/officer panel will be established to oversee the review. This will comprise

Councillors

Grant
Forwood
Lea
Moss
Stanley
Sweet

Timetable

July/August 2007	Initial research into topic to enable detailed programme to be developed
October/November/January	Visits to schools.
January 2008	Single Issue Meeting
March 2008	Panel to produce recommendations

APPENDIX 2

Evidence Gathered Throughout Review

1. Visits to Schools

1a Hartshill School 16.10.07

Hartshill School is situated on the eastern boundary of North Warwickshire adjacent to Nuneaton. Councillor Ray Sweet and Paul Williams, Scrutiny Officer, visited the school on 16th October 2007.

Evidence for this report was provided by the Head Teacher of the school, Wendy Tomes and Assistant Head Teacher, Jamie Rynberk. The following is a summary of the main points raised during the visit.

- At the time of the visit the roll comprised of 899 11 to 16 year olds.
- Most students at the school come from within the catchment area. Michael Drayton School in Hartshill is the principal source of new pupils but that school is experiencing falling numbers largely due to demographic changes.
- 9% of pupils claim free school meals although it is recognised that others who are entitled do not claim them.
- Year 7s arrive at the school with abilities on paper matching the national average. However, primary schools tend to teach to focus on achieving good SATs results. These look good on paper but hide various weaknesses in ability that the secondary school has to address through year 7. This pattern is not unique to North Warwickshire or Hartshill being reflected across the nation.
- Given the heavy emphasis now being placed nationally on skills development and education to age 19 the school feels that it is at a disadvantage because it does not have a sixth form. There is a very heavy reliance by Hartshill and its fellow secondary schools in the area on North Warwickshire and Hinckley College. It is considered regrettable that funding is channelled to the college and King Edwards and not into those schools that could provide education on site for years 10 and 11. Consideration has been given to the establishment of a sixth forms consortium recognising the difficulties that school looking to work unilaterally to provide a broad 16-19 curriculum would encounter.
- The changes to the funding formula may well work to the disadvantage of schools without sixth forms although the greater emphasis on the use of deprivation indices is welcomed.
- The absence of a sixth form also makes it difficult to recruit staff.
- Work-related education features prominently at the school with a Work-related Learning Co-ordinator having been appointed on a full-time basis. By year 9 the school has a good idea of which direction students should be channelled towards. The three options are,
 1. A narrower range of subjects
 2. Work related training
 3. Broader academic study
- The school has very close links with Hinckley and North Warwickshire College. The college offers a very wide range of vocational courses and many students from Hartshill spend a day at the college studying on them. Around 20 year 10 and 11 students are considered at risk of falling out of the system whilst 35 to 40% of year 10 and 11 students attend college.
- Whilst the support of the college is welcomed it is felt that the relationship could be enhanced if training facilities were enhanced at the school with college staff delivering lessons in Hartshill. This would reduce the need for pupils to travel and could potentially provide enhancements to the facilities available to other pupils.
- All students are offered a week's work experience. Support for this from local businesses has been good although difficulties have been encountered when periods of extended work experience have been sought.

- The school works closely with the Education Business Partnership providing interview practice and enterprise days.
- Enterprise features prominently with the Make Your Mark Club and New Enterprise Scheme. As part of the enterprise agenda the students are looking to set up a business growing and selling herbs in as green a way as possible.
- Close links have been forged with Landrover and through this an auto-engineering course has been set up in conjunction with the college.
- In addition, links have been formed with the Arcadia Group. Hartshill is the only school in Warwickshire to offer a BTEC in retail. (A BTEC is equivalent to 4 GCSEs).
- The Connexions service features prominently in the school. This is aided by the fact that the school was able to have input into the selection process for the current support officer.
- Up to 8 students are able to work with the Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust on its Sport and Talk initiative. This involves a speaker visiting the school to discuss sport related issues with these pupils.
- Gifted and talented pupils do not miss out on special attention with many being given the opportunity to take appropriate GCSEs in year 9. A specialist teacher has been appointed to focus on gifted and talented students. This is significant as only 12 such teachers have been appointed nationally.
- Gifted and talented students are encouraged to partake in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, become Prefects, engage in the student mentoring system, join the School Council and support the Hartshill Anti-bullying squad.
- Student aspirations cover a broad spectrum but many year 7 students enter the school experiencing low self-esteem. Parental support is sometimes found wanting and this is considered to be linked to social deprivation and a dislike of the school environment by some parents.
- Much work has been done to raise the staff's expectations of their students. Staff now believe that students can reach the targets that have been set them.
- The Extended Services initiative is now reaching out as far as Hartshill. A co-ordinator has been appointed and whilst based at Michael Drayton School they do undertake work at Hartshill School. There is a feeling that the Extended Schools resource is spread too thinly especially given that Hartshill School would like to develop
 1. After school provision
 2. Summer school provision
 3. Wider community use of the school facilities
- A bid for specialist status as a science school has been submitted. If successful this will make Hartshill the only specialist science school in the area. The secondary specialism is art.
- Life skills are generally pretty good on entry at year 7. these are built upon as part of the citizenship curriculum. The school has specialist citizenship teachers and operates a citizenship week that involves fund raising for a designated charity.
- The governing body has been newly selected and is seen as very strong.

Summary

From the above the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. Young people attending Hartshill possess a great deal of potential but are often hampered by low self-esteem
2. Good links with the local college and businesses mean that students can access work-related training
3. The school would benefit greatly from having a sixth form.
4. Work related education would be enhanced if facilities were available on-site and if the local college was able to deliver lessons at Hartshill.
5. Both the school and the local community stand to benefit from the extended services agenda.

1b The Coleshill School – a Maths and Computing College 1.11.07

Coleshill School lies at the extreme western boundary of Warwickshire. Councillors Anne Forwood and Brian Moss along with Paul Williams visited the school on the morning of 1st November 2007.

Evidence for this report was provided by the Head Teacher, Kate Kearney, Debbie Seazell, Acting Deputy Head Teacher, David Anderson, Acting Chair of Governors and two students, Adam Lines and Joshua Smith.

The visit commenced with a tour of the school led by Adam Lines and Joshua Smith. During the tour it was noted that the fabric of some parts of the school was in poor condition. This was largely attributed to its age, being 50 years old. Classes were visited with Members particularly noting the favourable student/teachers ratios for year 13 pupils. The prominence of maths and science as topics for study beyond year 11 was also noted. The size of the school playing field was noted and seen by the students as a major asset for the school. Members also noted the links that have been made with a school in Gambia.

Following the tour, school representatives and visitors met. The following is a summary of the main points raised and noted.

- At the time of the visit the roll comprised of 1010 students aged between 11 to 19.
- 110 students are sixth formers.
- The school is very popular and is the most “appealed-for” school in Warwickshire.
- A major influence on the school is its location very close to the border with Solihull and Birmingham.
- Approximately two thirds of appeals for admission to the school come from pupils who do not live in Warwickshire.
- Until 2005 the ratio of pupils from Warwickshire as opposed to Solihull /Birmingham was 73/27. In 2007 that ratio has become 50/50. This pattern is attributable in part to demographic changes and reducing primary school rolls within Warwickshire and partly down to an increasing desire of Solihull and Birmingham residents to send their children to the school.

- Students tend to look westwards for entertainment, further education and employment. They have little affinity with towns to the east in Warwickshire.
- 2.7% of pupils come from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds. Three pupils currently at the school do not speak English. Migration from Eastern Europe is not having any impact on the school but may do in the future..
- Because of their urban background many students feel free to express themselves in a way not generally found amongst students from rural Warwickshire.
- Free school meal take up is relatively low at 6% but 42% of pupils come from the lowest 30% Super Output Areas..
- Of an annual intake of 180 students only 70 will stay on to sixth form. This is considered to be in part because there are several colleges in Solihull, Birmingham and Sutton Coldfield that students may regard as less parochial than Coleshill.
- 75% of year 11s go into further education or remain at the sixth form.
- Because of the relatively small size of its Sixth form the school has elected to focus on a limited number of A level courses. It also offers one, moving to two B-TEC courses.
- The school is part of the 14-19 Area Partnership which is working towards the delivery of diplomas.
- The school would like to develop stronger links with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). However, its location places it at a disadvantage. This is because the school comes under the Coventry/Warwickshire LSC as opposed to the Solihull/ Birmingham LSC.
- Attempts have been made in the past to set up partnerships with further education colleges in Solihull and Birmingham. These initiatives have tended to falter largely, it would seem, because the colleges could see little benefit for their engagement.
- 66% of pupils arrive at school by motorised transport. Many rely on service buses from places like Chelmsley Wood and Marston Green.
- The school has previously worked extensively with the Warwickshire Education Business Partnership (EBP) and whilst it has reduced the use it makes of the EBP it still values the practice interviews that are provided. Previous experience had shown that some of the larger events that were organised at the school had been less than successful. Concerns had, however, been fed back to the EBP.
- Hays Recruitment has developed a relationship with the school. It now operates its "Ignition Project". This currently focuses on BTEC Year 12 students, ten in number and involves taking them off-site for practice interviews.
- All pupils get to undertake two weeks work experience. Regrettably getting feedback from employers is proving increasingly difficult as they see there being very little in it for them. There are also few large employers in the area that can provide support. BMW up at Hams Hall do offer work placements but will only do so for a week at a time.
- The 14-19 Area Partnership has employed two full-time staff to develop links with businesses, the fruits of their labours are yet to be seen.
- Every year a significant number of students either fail to find employment or training or simply disappear. There is awareness that there is a large amount

of low paid employment available in the area. For example from the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham International Airport and the distribution sector. Many pupils would like to undertake modern apprenticeships but the decline in manufacturing opportunities has limited opportunities for this.

- Work with the Connexions Service has proved challenging in recent years. Post 16 provision has never properly developed and there appears to have been a reluctance on the part of some advisors to encourage students to increase their aspirations. Having a full-time adviser on site all day would allow students with questions or concerns to access the service whenever they wanted.
- An Extended Services Cluster Co-ordinator has recently been appointed. Early priorities are parenting support and the raising of aspirations within communities.
- Use is made of the school by the community although funding changes last year meant that North Warwickshire and Hinckley College withdrew from teaching adult courses there.
- The development of life skills feature strongly in the school.
- Attendance and punctuality remain a problem. Punctuality is reduced by the times the services buses from Solihull run. These are due to arrive at 8.30 am which is the same time as the school day commences. If the buses are delayed so students are late.
- Attendance is a particular concern exacerbated by the fact that the school is in Warwickshire but many of the students come from another authority area. A major frustration is that the Education Social Work Service in Solihull has little interest in students attending Warwickshire Schools. At the same time Warwickshire ESWS does not operate in Solihull.

Summary

From the above the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. The Coleshill School's geographical location provides it with a series of unusual but not unique circumstances.
2. With many students at the school originating from deprived urban areas outside of Warwickshire the school is needing to demonstrate its readiness and ability to adapt to cultural change.
3. Whilst it is small the school's sixth form appears valued by staff and students alike.
4. Partnership work with outside agencies and employers continues to prove challenging partly because prospective partners struggle to recognise the benefits that might accrue to them and partly due to complications arising from the presence of administrative boundaries.
5. Joint working with County Council based services such as the EBP, ESWS and Connexions has yet to realise its full potential.

1c Queen Elizabeth School, Atherstone 12.11.07

Queen Elizabeth School lies in the former mining and hat-manufacturing town of Atherstone on the North East border of Warwickshire. Councillors Sweet, Stanley and Forwood along with Paul Williams visited the school on the morning of Monday 12th November 2007. The Head Teacher, Tony Wilmot hosted the visit.

The following is a summary of the key points from the visit.

- The school currently has 587 students aged 11-16 on its roll.
- The school does not have a sixth form having taken the decision four years ago to close it. This decision was based upon the fact that many students were choosing to attend North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and King Edward VI College in Nuneaton. Declining numbers of sixth formers limited the breadth of the A Level courses that could be offered at the school. In addition, experience showed that the more academically talented pupils were choosing to go to college in Nuneaton leaving some of the less academic at the school. This had an impact on pass rates and in turn was reflected in league tables. There was little resistance to the closure of the sixth form with students and parents recognising that the good transport links to and the quality of education on offer in Nuneaton would meet their needs.
- Queen Elizabeth School used to have links with Polesworth School but these have lapsed in recent years.
- The school has spare capacity. It can accommodate annual admissions of 162 students but is planning for future admissions of 120. Most of the students that join the school come from primary feeders in Atherstone although a few come from Leicestershire and from Hartshill (Michael Drayton). The school has very few students from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is largely a reflection of the fact that there is very little cultural diversity in Atherstone.
- Around 13.4% of students receive free school meals (FSMs). This figure should be higher as pupils who are entitled to FSMs are deterred from claiming them because of the stigma they bring and the bureaucracy that goes with the process.
- The school would like to see more students claiming their FSMs as this would impact on attendance targets.
- The school site is split. This is considered to be a major barrier to educational attainment. The split site is a historical legacy involving the former Grammar School and County Secondary School. Having students on two sites adds many complications to the delivery of education. In addition it is estimated that it adds £50,000 per annum to catering costs alone. The split site has implications in terms health and safety. The speed limit on the road outside the school is 40mph. Students leaving the school sites face significant danger in crossing this road.
- Key Stage 4 attainment is a concern across Warwickshire as a whole. It is of particular concern at Queen Elizabeth School where students who have done well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 suddenly see a significant dip in their performance. It is felt that this poor performance is largely due to students not having the skills and disciplines they require to undertake work on their own. To address this, the school has adopted the “Building Learning Power” initiative. In addition, the school is shifting its emphasis from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. As part of this move some students will commence the GCSE curriculum in year 9. There will also be an increase in Saturday morning classes for year 11 students and increased assessment of the quality of teaching by peer teachers and the students themselves. It is recognised that these changes will cost a lot of money.

- The changes to the National Curriculum that will allow schools to deviate from the former rigid approach to lessons are welcomed. The school will stop the timetable on occasions and concentrate on the skills agenda.
- Through the Extended Schools agenda links are being developed with cluster schools. An example of joint working is the delivery of language lessons at Oakfield Primary School by a teacher from Queen Elizabeth School.
- Queen Elizabeth School is also a sports college. Primary pupils use the facilities for competitions.
- A significant number of parents do not see the value of education. This is reflected in their children's' performance. Rarely is there more than 70% attendance at parents' evenings although it does not drop below 50%.
- Approximately 7% of students fall into the NEETs category annually.
- Most students go on to college in Nuneaton.
- Students receive good careers guidance and the school makes extensive use of the Education Business Partnership and Connexions Service.
- Businesses are invited into the school with the EBP organising practice interviews.
- Aspirations are rising in Atherstone although this is a slow process. Few want to end up working in the sandwich factory but at the same time some have no desire to look beyond the bounds of Atherstone itself. It was noted that when the logistics industry moved to the area many people in the town had little comprehension of what this was.
- As in any school bullying does happen. This is rarely physical in nature and is addressed quickly and through codes of conduct.
- Concern was raised over the effectiveness of the Education Social Work Service in the area. It was felt that caseworkers are not tough enough with parents and students to ensure good attendance.

Summary

From the above the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. The split nature of the school site is a major impediment to education. It adds to the cost of running the school and leads to delays and increased risk as students migrate between the two sites.
2. The school is looking to embrace more fully the concept of a broader education whilst at the same time acknowledging the need to improve its performance at Key Stage 4.
3. Many students from Atherstone choose to undertake their further education in Nuneaton. It is not clear, however, whether many of those students go on to university and secure good quality jobs and careers.
4. School attendance is a concern to the Head Teacher. There is a desire to see more positive outcomes being delivered by the Education Social Work Service.
5. The Extended Services Initiative is regarded as a good means of placing the school firmly at the centre of the community whilst at the same time reinforcing links with cluster schools in the area.

1d Kingsbury School – A Specialist Science and Mathematics College 19.11.07

Kingsbury School sits on the western side of North Warwickshire, just south of Tamworth. Councillors Anne Forwood, Joan Lea and Brian Moss along with Paul Williams visited the school on the morning of 19th November 2007.

Evidence for this report was provided by the Head Teacher, Anne Rogerson and by two Assistant Head Teachers, Karen Price and John Sedgwick.

The following is a summary of the main points raised and noted during the visit.

- At the time of the visit the roll comprised of 604 students aged between 11 and 16.
- The school does not have a sixth and given its small size is unlikely ever to have one.
- The majority of students at the school come from Kingsbury and the villages around it.
- Recently parents living in neighbouring areas such as Birmingham, Chelmsley Wood and Staffordshire have applied to get their children into Kingsbury. For the 2007/08 academic year there were 216 applications for an intake of 126.
- Transport for students is a major problem that the school is keen to address. The school's geographical location makes it difficult for students to get to it and to gain access to further education opportunities.
- The school population is not ethnically diverse. This absence of diversity has placed a responsibility on the school to ensure that students are made aware of different cultures and religions. This is achieved in part through the use of visiting speakers.
- Free school meal numbers are not regarded as an effective measure of social deprivation. In Kingsbury many families that are entitled to free school meals do not claim them as a matter of pride. 32 students are registered for free school meals whilst 450 school meals are served daily.
- Students must stay on the school site during lunchtimes.
- The principal barrier to achievement in the school is considered to be the low aspirations of the students. There is no history of further or higher education amongst the majority of parents. This is a legacy of the area's former mining and quarrying history where whole families were engaged in the same industries for their entire working lives.
- The school has sought to raise students' aspirations partly by getting parents on board with its work. Despite a great deal of effort on behalf of the school the level of take up has been disappointingly low.
- Year 7 parents' evenings are generally well attended (70%) but Key Stage 4 parents' evenings attract only around 50% attendance.
- Deprivation levels in Kingsbury are high although this is not registered through traditional means. It is hoped that adoption of ADACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) will prove a more accurate method of identifying deprivation.
- Further education provision is focused on North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and King Edwards College in Nuneaton. Some students attend college in Tamworth and Sutton Coldfield whilst a few go on to sixth form at Polesworth. Those students that go to Nuneaton are faced with long journeys on the bus.

- The school recently won a bid with primary Heads for Extended Services. A person has been appointed to go out into communities to establish the need for services.
- Evening classes were offered from the school for three years. These were not well supported by the community. An adult numeracy course was offered but only two people expressed any interest in it.
- The 14-19 agenda is regarded as a unique opportunity for young people. The school, however, is concerned that its geographical location will place its students at a disadvantage. Again, transport is an issue here as government guidance suggests that transport to learning opportunities should be paid for from the Education Maintenance Allowance or via parental contribution.
- The school used to provide support to its gifted and talented pupils by transporting them to Nuneaton once a week. The cost of providing a coach for this was £5000 per annum. Funding was provided by the European Fund and LSC. When this funding stopped the school was unable to continue with the service.
- Cross-boundary working is almost non-existent.
- When the Health and Social Care GCSE was introduced the school worked with Tamworth College to deliver it. However, Staffordshire LSC withdrew its funding on the basis that it could not support youngsters from Warwickshire.
- Tamworth College has set up the Torc vocational college. Politicians in Staffordshire stated that the facility was for young people from Staffordshire only. Attempts to get a Head Teacher from Warwickshire onto the board have not been successful.
- In Warwickshire the two days for 14-16 (NOVA and gifted and talented) are Wednesday and Friday. Staffordshire has other days. This makes joint timetabling and hence joint working impossible.
- 45 students from Kingsbury attend 14-16 classes in Nuneaton.
- Limited accommodation at the school restricts opportunities for colleges to deliver outreach services. In addition the distance between Nuneaton and Kingsbury would mean that teachers would have to travel for at least half an hour in each direction to deliver the service.
- Careers support is provided to students from year 7. 83% of students go on to further education whilst the NEETs figure is 6%.
- The school works well with Connexions. It is felt that this is largely down to the individuals involved in delivering the service.
- The Education Business Partnership undertakes a lot of work in the school whilst every student is found a work experience placement.
- Local businesses do not tend to be very supportive of the school. This is considered to be in part due to the fact that the majority of businesses in the area are very small. The oil terminal does not feature in the life of the school or community nor is it a big employer.
- In terms of general and life skills, students are taught how to learn and think for themselves. The PHSE curriculum has been overhauled with whole days being given over to citizenship events.
- The Education Social Work Service (ESWS) is considered to be largely ineffective. This may be down to under funding but equally it may be due to the fact that the service focuses on young people who are unlikely ever to re-engage in the education system.

Summary

From the above the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. Kingsbury School is disadvantaged by its location. Regrettably the barriers it is faced with are political and administrative as well as geographical. Proximity to Tamworth should be a bonus; rather it is a disadvantage.
2. Inadequate affordable transport is a barrier to educational attainment. It limits opportunities to access further education and restricts the likelihood of students raising their aspirations.
3. Overall the school is satisfied with the support it receives from agencies such as Connexions and the EBP. The school is less impressed with the work of the ESWS although it does recognise the limitations of that service.
4. Aspirations of students will continue to be low whilst parents and carers continue to remain distanced from the school. Efforts to gain the support of parents have had mixed results but it is difficult to see a way to improve the situation.

1e Polesworth International Language College – 27th November 2007

Polesworth is located at the heart of the former Warwickshire coalfield, just to the North of the A5. On 27th November Councillors Moss and Stanley accompanied by Paul Williams visited the school to speak to Andy Clarke the Head Teacher.

The following is a summary of the main points raised and noted.

- Polesworth International Language College is large by Warwickshire standards with some 1400 students on its roll.
- The school has a sixth form comprising some 250 students. This has grown from 80 students ten years ago.
- Academically the school is very successful. In 2005 it had the 26th most successful comprehensive sixth form in the country.
- Considerable emphasis is placed by the school on raising the aspirations of its students. The local community is becoming economically stronger and as generations pass through the school so it has been found that expectations are raised further.
- Good relations with the community and parents and carers are seen as very important in the success of the school.
- Every effort is made to encourage year 11 students to stay on into the sixth form. This is largely because the school regards a good predominantly academic further education (16-19) as fundamental to success.
- The sixth form is seen to benefit the school in a number of ways. One major benefit is that year 12 and 13 students act as good role models for younger students. This in turn serves to help raise aspirations in the school as a whole.
- It is recognised that schools have to be large if they are to support a sixth form. The annual intake at Polesworth is around 230 with students coming predominantly from local villages and towns.
- Students have a preference for sixth form over colleges of FE. This is thought to be down in part to the convenience of the school, the good quality of teaching, the fact that peers remain at the school and the academic record.

- Sixth formers are very active in the life of school although their separate annex means that they can also feel distanced from it when appropriate.
- Free School Meal entitlement is 5%. This is below the national average.
- Some years ago Polesworth shared a sixth form with Queen Elizabeth School in Atherstone. A Levels in minority subjects were taught through this means. That arrangement was, however, allowed to lapse.
- Links with the six feeder schools are strong. Heads meet once every half term and for two days in the summer year 6 pupils visit the school to begin to make their transition.
- The Polesworth SENCO provides a support service to the primary schools and languages are taught to year 5 and 6 pupils by staff from Polesworth.
- There is very little ethnic diversity in the school. In order to give students a greater understanding of different cultures and religions, the school has developed links with schools in Ghana, India and China.
- HSBC has close ties with the school having sponsored it in its quest to become a language college. Enterprise work has been developed and students from the school have visited the HSBC headquarters in London.
- There is an awareness that business and enterprise could be developed further. A visit to BMW proved less fruitful than expected although links with Landrover have proved more positive.
- Attempts to gain support from employers on the former Birch Coppice site have proved fruitless but many local businesses are very supportive in giving work placements for pupils.
- 79% of students remain in education beyond year 11. (In 2005 this figure was 85%)13% go straight into employment. The 2006 NEETs figure for the school was 3.1%.
- The Head Teacher considered that historically Connexions had failed to seek to raise young people's aspirations sufficiently. Frequent changes of personnel have made it difficult to induct representatives into the school's ethos.
- The Education Business Partnership undertakes a lot of work at the school. It arranges practice interviews and supplies the interviewers for prefect applicants.
- A youth worker is employed half time by the school so there is close work with the Youth and Community Service.
- The community makes extensive use of the school. North Warwickshire Borough Council runs the sports hall in the evenings and weekends whilst language classes are also run.
- Some 14-16 students attend vocational classes at college in Nuneaton. A small group of 16+ students take part in a joint vocational programme with Tamworth and Lichfield. In practical terms this is not a problem. However, whilst it is recognised that for some students the traditional academic route is not suitable the Head Teacher has some concerns over the potential impact that a wider shift towards vocational training will bring. It is considered that the new diplomas will pose major challenge in terms of their delivery in rural areas.
- There is some concern over the lack of skills amongst students for independent learning. There is too much spoon-feeding and over testing.

- A major challenge for the school is the amount of investment that is needed on it. There are eleven temporary classrooms and the current sixth form block needs replacing.

Summary

From the above the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. Aspirations amongst young people can be raised with good leadership and support from parents
2. Students at all ages benefit from having a sixth form on site. However, the sixth form can only be sustained through the large intake at the school.
3. Partnership working can greatly benefit a school but success depend a lot on individual personalities.

2. Notes from Panel Meetings

2a Meeting 13th November 2007

The meeting was attended by three officers from Warwickshire County Council all of whom had direct experience of working with practitioners and young people. They were,

Cheryl Jones – Northern Area Youth and Community Manager

Lynne Upton – Senior Inspector 14-19 Development

Karen Sheerin – Extended Service Development Officer

Cheryl Jones – Cheryl started by telling the panel about the work of the Youth and Community Service and her role as Northern Area Youth and Community Manager. The meeting was informed of the audit that is currently being undertaken which is looking at young people in the area and the issues they are confronted with. The service is keen to use a wide range of new innovations to deliver and promote the service. For example a rural mobile youth worker has been appointed to work in the more remote parts of the borough. In addition, the service will be promoting itself at the Dickens Evening in Atherstone. Delivery of the service is focused on where the need is known to exist. To assist in this a rural bus is operated around the borough.

The service is planned and delivered in such a way that it contributes to the Every Child Matters agenda. (See Appendix 2a) It strives to increase educational attainment but does so in a less formal environment than school. To get young people to engage the service has to use stealth. For example, course and events are offered as being for “fun” rather than “learning”.

Members of the panel were shown some of the supporting material for the “Warwickshire Challenge”. Successful completion of this course is equivalent to ¼ of a GCSE.

The Youth and Community Service subscribes to ASDAN. This is a series of book-based short courses which the service delivers with schools although the meeting was informed that some schools are more receptive to this than others.

The key aspect of the service’s work is that it can deliver courses that are accredited and which will assist young people in their future career development.

The service has few links with employers. This is something that is regretted. Those links that do exist tend to be down to individual staff rather than policy. Links with other agencies are being developed. For example the merits of a three way link between Connexions, the Youth and Community Service and employers are recognised.

Low aspiration amongst young people is recognised as a major barrier to attainment. The service would like to do more work with NEETs and has recognised that the Children, Young People and Families Directorate has a good opportunity now to take a holistic view of family issues.

In response to a question from Councillor Stanley, Cheryl informed the meeting she would like to make use of the many community and village halls around the borough. Unfortunately many community groups will not allow the service to use them.

The 2007 Every Child Matters survey revealed that in general young women do not make particularly good use of the careers advice they are given. In addition, young people lack confidence in completing college applications and CVs.

When asked what she would like to do to develop her work and that of the service, Cheryl stated that it would be useful to have dedicated staff who could travel to and work in schools. Councillor Grant asked if schools could potentially put their own resources into paying for such support.

Cheryl’s final comment was that the secret to working with young people is face-to-face contact.

Lynne Upton – (See Appendix 2b) Lynne explained the structure of her team. There are 3 Area Co-ordinators and a Special Education Needs Co-ordinator.

The meeting was told that the Government now recognises that the current offer does not meet the needs of all learners and that not all learners want to learn. The Government is gradually rolling out the 14-19 diploma system but is playing it down as it fears a backlash from those who suggest it is dumbing down education.

Lynne felt that many young people are simply not engaged. Personalised Learning Programmes and initiatives such as NOVA (New Opportunities and Vocational Applications) and Reactiv8 help to get young people involved in activities that they enjoy doing. For example, this latter project sees young people engaged on practical projects such as motor maintenance for 2 days per week. Young people on the

scheme will have been “on the radar” since year 9. they tend to be people who are becoming disaffected and who are not learning as effectively as they might be expected to.

Year 13 are considered to make good use of Connexions but there is a feeling amongst children that the advice is biased towards going to college rather than securing the right job.

The meeting was then informed of the new Area Prospectus and the role that this will play in guiding young people towards course. However, Lynne told the meeting that the Area prospectus should not be regarded as the only pot of call. Parents and carers still have a major role to play.

The 14-19 team makes extensive use of the Warwickshire Challenge and works with the EBP and Connexions and with the Warwickshire Observatory to gather information on the labour market.

Colleges are the lifeblood of the 14-19 Service. The NOVA programme is generally delivered by North Warwickshire and Hinckley College.

Turning to cross-border issues, Lynne told the meeting that her service was looking to broker links with Solihull and Staffordshire. In addition, the 14-19 agenda was designed to help young people operate across borders. The colleges had previously operated shuttle buses budgets were overspent. To address this, Head Teachers are now being told that they must pay £80 levy for each pupil to attend college courses.

Warwickshire is currently bidding to initially deliver 7 diploma courses although it is expected that by 2013 all 17 diplomas will be delivered. The Government line is that diplomas are employer-led. However, the nature of the diplomas means that they will probably only appeal to major employers. Decisions on the bids for Diplomas are expected in March 2008. North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth are leading the way with the diplomas this is largely because the need for them is more readily recognised in these areas.

Lynne’s closing remarks concerned the need to ensure that all schools and colleges work in a collaborative way.

Karen Sheerin – Karen began by explaining to the meeting the vision of making schools the hub of communities. The meeting was, however, informed that the Extended Schools initiative would not be relevant or appropriate for all schools. Polesworth, Atherstone and Coleshill have Cluster Co-ordinators whilst Kingsbury Children’s Centre will also have one. On job of the co-ordinators is to ensure that resources are being used effectively and that there is a little unnecessary duplication as possible. The co-ordinators are usually based in schools and are not necessarily part-time.

One major issue for Extended Services is getting community facilities to open their doors.

Funding in the long term is not certain. It is hoped that once the service is fully operational schools will contribute to running cost. This would best be achieved if

schools were prepared to pool at least some of their funding. This may, however prove difficult to achieve. However, funding to 2011 is confirmed.

The meeting agreed that schools need to show a move away from autonomy and towards greater interdependence and co-operation.

2b Notes of Meeting 18th December 2007

The panel welcomed Peter Thompson, the Senior Area Schools and Communities Officer to the meeting. Peter had been invited to assist the panel in its consideration of the issues highlighted during the visits made to the five secondary schools in North Warwickshire.

The following is a summary of the points made at the meeting.

Sixth Form Provision

- Hartshill School feels that it is put at a disadvantage by not having a sixth form, although none of its immediate neighbouring schools have one.
- That Coleshill School is able to sustain a sixth form is unusual given its small size. There are currently just over 100 sixth formers at Coleshill. The advice from the Department for Children Schools and Families is that for sixth forms to be viable they would normally be expected to have a minimum of 200 students. This higher number allows a wide breadth of courses to be offered and this in turn serves to attract sufficient numbers of students. This need for a critical mass is acknowledged by the Learning and Skills Council which funds post-sixteen education.
- Queen Elizabeth School in Atherstone does not have a sixth form. Given the proximity of Nuneaton with its extensive post sixteen provision such a facility is not considered necessary at the school.
- Polesworth School has successfully established a culture of 11 – 18 education. They make a presumption that students will remain at school to study A levels or further other post 16 courses.
- It is difficult to start a sixth form from scratch. This is because it is not possible to commence year one with a full complement of students.
- Creating new sixth forms could potentially compromise the viability of existing 16-18 education provision in the North of the County as there is a finite supply of potential students.
- It is important to note that the absence of a sixth form will not necessarily harm a school or its pupils' chances of success. Every school has individual strengths and the most significant question to ask is whether a school is serving its pupils well.
- Panel Members felt that the success of a sixth form was reliant on a number of variables, in particular leadership, location and the general ethos of the school.
- Schools need to follow a statutory process to establish a sixth form. Secondary schools are set up either as 11-16 or 11-18. To change this the process is lengthy and complicated.
- Sixth form provision across Warwickshire is diverse. Rugby has three sixth forms (one in each grammar school and at Ashlawn). In Warwick/Leamington/ Kenilworth all schools are 11-18. Stratford is similar to

Rugby with a mixture of provision and Nuneaton and Bedworth has 11 – 16 schools with a sixth form college.

- Following the Greenwich Judgement (1989) schools must give equal access to students regardless of whether or not they live within the relevant local authority area. The migration of students into Warwickshire makes it difficult to compare the strengths of Warwickshire schools, some of which have a high proportion of non-Warwickshire pupils.
- Some headteachers are unhappy that schools with sixth forms attract more funding than those without. It is the case that older students each receive more funding per head but at the same time the cost of their education can be significantly higher.
- 'A' Level groups are more cost effective the larger they are.

Changes to the Curriculum

- Traditionally schools with sixth forms had focussed on academic courses. The new diploma system will accelerate the introduction of a vocational element. It is more difficult for schools to develop partnerships with employers than it was twenty years ago. This is in part because of the demise of the larger employers and the fact that smaller employers lack the capacity to assist.
- School such as Hartshill value the links that they have forged with North Warwickshire and Hinckley College.
- Given the requirement to offer all students' access to the full diploma range, there is an argument for the use of peripatetic teachers rather than have large numbers of students travelling to partner schools although it is recognised that geographical location could render this problematic.
- The deadline for the full introduction of the new diploma scheme is 2012. Partnerships will be required to ensure their success and the one in North Warwickshire is currently being developed.
- Cross boundary issues can be challenging. The panel acknowledged that many young people in Coleshill relate more to the Solihull/Birmingham conurbation than they do to Nuneaton and Bedworth or Coventry. This is understandable but some concern was raised that there appear to be barriers that prevent the appropriate local authorities cooperating as fully as they might.
- It was noted that Polesworth School has forged some links with Staffordshire.
- Transport to college can be a major problem. Under Warwickshire's existing student transport policy, financial support is made available, students wishing to undertake a particular course must do it at the nearest college offering it.

1. Support Services

- The work of the Education Business Partnership is clearly valued by all the schools using the service.
- The Connexions Service is also valued although the panel acknowledged that the service's effectiveness in any one school can depend heavily on the individual adviser. The panel considered that it would be helpful if schools had a representative on interview panels for Connexions advisors.

- The panel highlighted some of the issues that it had heard pertaining to the Education Social Work Service (ESWS). It was explained that many of the challenges now being faced by ESWS were created by central government, which had set the criteria by which cases were prioritised, and required the service is required to focus on persistent offenders rather than those beginning to display a tendency to truant from school. In practice many of these young people are found to be beyond help. If they do eventually attend school then it is likely they will learn very little. The ESWS is now consulting with a view to change its priorities, moving “upstream” to work with those pupils that may be at risk of developing a pattern of truanting. The service is also looking at providing a more holistic approach through supporting parenting classes and helping entire families. Councillor Grant stated that the Truancy Panel is scheduled to consider a report on the new arrangements in March and added emphasised that the ESWS does undertake a lot of good work in difficult conditions.
- So far as cross boundary working is concerned, it was suggested that one barrier to effective joint work may be the pressures that neighbouring authorities find themselves under, often working with higher thresholds for intervention than in Warwickshire.
- The panel was informed of the roll out of the Enhanced Support Network (ESN). This is required by government and will ensure that client families are supported by one ‘key’ worker rather than several. The scheme has been launched in Rugby and will be rolled out to parts of North Warwickshire in the Spring of 2008. ESN has taken some time to get going because of the large number of agencies involved. Efforts will be made to ensure continuity amongst professionals thus avoiding the difficulties that can result when an officer moves on to a new job or is off sick.

Aspiration

- Lack of ambition or expectation on the part of students and their families is regarded as a major barrier to achievement. However, it is important to emphasise that staff at schools have a major role to play in raising aspirations amongst students in order to break the vicious cycle of low achievement and under attainment.

2c Single Issue Meeting 7th January 2008

Present

Councillor Sweet (Chair of Panel)
 Councillor Forwood
 Councillor Grant
 Councillor Stanley

Yvonne Rose – Director of Planning and Development, Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council
 Dave Fraser – Operations Manager, Connexions

Jacqui Crisp – Manager, Skills Delivery Group
Martin Ward – Principal, King Edward IV College, Nuneaton
Mike Clarke – Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality

Paul Williams – Overview and Scrutiny Officer (WCC)
Janet Neale – Project Support Officer, Community Learning (WCC)
Jean Hardwick – Principal Committee Administrator (WCC)

Apologies – Councillor Lea, Councillor Moss and Gail Wright (Education Business Partnership)

The following notes summarise the key points made by each speaker and the issues highlighted by the panel.

Yvonne Rose - Learning and Skills Council.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has existed since 2001. Recently it has undergone a major restructure including changes to its remit. Nevertheless it is acknowledged that there continues to be a need for its services. Whereas the LSC used to fall under the control of the DfES it is now funded jointly by the Department of Children, Schools and Families and Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills.

The LSC is responsible for the planning and funding of all post 16 education and training with the exception of higher education.

Academic attainment in North Warwickshire is low. For example, 21.7% of people of working age are qualified to NVQ4+. The national figure is 27.1% whilst that for Warwick District is 38.1%. The figure for Nuneaton and Bedworth is 17%.

For Level 3 the percentage is 36% for North Warwickshire as against 60.3% in Warwick. Performance in North Warwickshire is improving but not as fast as in other parts of the county.

At the other end of the spectrum (% of people of working age with no qualifications) the figure is even starker. 19.5% in North Warwickshire, 13.6% for England and 6.9% for Rugby.

Turning to employment levels, Yvonne noted that 81.4% of residents of North Warwickshire are in employment (whilst 85.2% are economically active). This compares very well with a regional employment figure of 73% and national employment figure of 74.2%.

The panel was particularly interested in the NVQ4+ figure and asked whether this was helped upwards by inward migration into the area by better-qualified individuals who work in the Birmingham/Solihull conurbation.

One theory regarding the low academic attainment but high employment is that young people, knowing they can secure a job (albeit on a comparatively low wage) do not aspire to do well academically. In addition, managers themselves often have low expectations of their staff.

Every person in the country is entitled to be educated to NVQ Level 2. Training is provided free but Yvonne pointed out that whilst the education is available the challenge for the LSC and training providers is in re-engaging people.

Returning to the statistics, the panel was informed that the number of Job Seekers Allowance claimants in North Warwickshire is low (1.4% compared with a national figure of 2.1%) whilst incapacity benefits claimants is also low.

The proportion of workers in the borough involved in manufacturing is high (15.8%) compared to the national figure (10.9%). Of particular note was the percentage of employees involved in transport and communications (21.4%) compared to the national figure of only 5.9%. Employment in public administration, education and health is also very low.

The panel was informed that whilst there borough has a high proportion of low skilled jobs, this does not necessarily equate to low paid jobs. It was noted that the borough council sees the future of employment as being in the service industry ie back-office work for financial institutions.

Focussing back on educational attainment, the panel was informed that it is generally white boys that perform less well than anyone else. It was conceded that many such boys may not regard high academic attainment as appropriate for them.

Performance in schools in North Warwickshire, with the exception of Polesworth is generally low. 38% of pupils in North Warwickshire achieved GCSE grade A* to C as opposed to 60% in the southern area of the county.

A Level and AS level performance at King Edward VI College and North Warwickshire and Hinckley College in Nuneaton is generally lower than equivalents in other parts of the County. However, Yvonne pointed out that students attending those institutions do tend to have done slightly less well in their GCSEs than those going to sixth forms in other parts of the county. She stressed that the quality of the teaching is not in doubt and informed the panel that North Warwickshire and Hinckley College had recently received a very good OFSTED report.

The LSC is not permitted to work with schools on quality issues. Where performance is of concern the school improvement partner intervenes.

The introduction of the 14-19 diploma scheme may have an impact on numbers attending sixth forms at schools. This is because more young people may choose to attend colleges of FE.

Joint working between LSCs can prove challenging although issues can often be resolved through negotiation.

94.1% of young people leaving school have a positive outcome. This is the lowest figure in Warwickshire but nevertheless it does mean that of every 20 young people leaving school only one will not have a positive destination.

The number of young people in North Warwickshire progressing on to higher education is increasing year on year. In 2003, the figure was 155, in 2004 the figure was 160 and in 2005 it was 180. Number in Atherstone Central is not increasing.

Dave Fraser – Connexions

Since 1st April 2007 Connexions has been sub-contracted to Warwickshire County Council.

The service focuses on 13 – 19 year olds and works to provide advice and guidance regarding careers and further education opportunities.

In 1987 52% of school leavers went on to further education. That figure now sits at 94%.

Achievement in North Warwickshire is influenced by many different factors. Transport for young people is a major issue. This can limit choice, something that is often forgotten.

Family expectations and behavioural issues (drugs, alcohol, crime) can prove major barriers to attainment

There are few large employers in North Warwickshire. Connexions regards any company employing more than 20 people in the borough as being a large employer. The national definition for a large employer is based on a much higher figure. Of the top employers in the area the borough council features prominently as do the colleges and hospitals.

Large employers do not tend to support events organised by Connexions.

North Warwickshire Borough Council is very supportive of the service. However both the borough council and TNT have cut back on apprenticeships.

There are no training providers based in the area and this can compound problems around transport.

Remaining with transport the panel was informed that the introduction of the diploma system will lead to complications regarding transport. For example, it may be that a limited number of establishments will offer a particular course. If a prospective student lives some distance away from that institution they may not be able to access the course of their choice.

The panel was informed that the level of subsidy available from the county council for post 16 travel had been reduced in recent years.

Transport can also be a problem. People will often not travel outside of there are. Public transport can be expensive and of poor quality. Low levels of literacy prevent candidates from passing the theory element of the driving test. This in turn might prevent them from passing their overall test.

Dave informed the panel that the issue for him is over how long jobs last for and where do they lead to. In some instances people are considered to be over qualified and this can prove frustrating.

It can prove difficult to persuade employers to release their staff to undertake training. This is understandable but regrettable. In addition, once young people do secure jobs and find money in their pocket they get stuck in a cycle.

In recent years migrant workers have been able to secure the lower paid entry-level jobs that would previously have gone to local young people.

School exclusions tend to be dominated by young white males. These people are very often characterised by having low aspirations.

NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training) continue to be a major challenge for the service. On average 47% of NEETS are over 18 years old. These people are at a disadvantage as they are competing with 16 year olds who have yet to develop a history of unemployment. 12% of NEETS are pregnant or are already young parents. In 2006/07 at one secondary school in northern Warwickshire 5 girls in year 11 became pregnant.

Homelessness is a small but significant issue for young people in North Warwickshire. Connexions is working with the Youth Service to identify ways in which young homeless people can be assisted in finding work.

Connexions is working with North Warwickshire and Hinckley College to convert the former caretaker's house on the college site as a crèche. This facility, with learning spaces downstairs and childcare facilities upstairs will be able to provide places for 20 children. However, there are known to be 180 teenage mothers in Nuneaton and Bedworth alone.

The service does undertake work with young carers. The challenge here is that carers are, usually by definition, unavailable for training or work.

People in care are frequently moved around. This places them at a disadvantage and many are not ready for work when the time comes.

Connexions would like to work with younger people but resources and contractual obligations restrict opportunities at this time.

The Wheels to Work initiative (whereby young people are lent mopeds to be able to access work and training opportunities) has been very successful. Connexions would like to expand the scheme and would always welcome more resources to do this.

Jacqui Crisp – Skills Delivery Group

The Skills Delivery Group is now part of the Environment and Economy Directorate of Warwickshire County Council. It assists in the delivery of the government's New Deal initiative and has bases across the County.

The focus for this service is the medium to long-term unemployed from age 18.

One of the major barriers to unemployed people in North Warwickshire is the lack of choice they have. They are held back by transport problems as they need to travel outside of the borough to access the service.

Clients are assisted in developing their CVs and are given interview experience. With aspirations and self-perception a major issue some clients return to the service year on year.

Limited job opportunities mean that additional training is needed to ensure that clients at least have a chance of succeeding in gaining employment.

In 2006/07 the service saw 3000 “starts”. (The service is not assessed on the number of clients as many are returners).

An essential element of the work of the service is the organisation of work experience placements. Employers gain a degree of free labour but have to be prepared to invest time to train and supervise those who are placed with them.

Relatively few clients return time after time. Some clients are found to be on the wrong benefits. This places them at a disadvantage because some are completely unsuitable for training and placement.

In recent times it has been found that migrants are now taking places that would have been offered to ETW clients.

Work placements are arranged with both small and large employers. The secret to obtaining placements is often to isolate the right person in the organisation who is willing to offer assistance. This makes the identification of placements something of a lottery.

One major challenge is in getting clients to accept that they need training in essential skills. ETW has sought to work in partnership with colleges to deliver such training but limited take-up of this opportunity has made this unviable. Many clients lack the basic skills and motivation to turn out for a job or for training. If they fail to turn up for training they risk losing their benefits.

Because of the nature of the service provided the staff to client ratio is very high. Much work is undertaken on a one on one basis and this makes the service very expensive. Some volunteer mentors have been used in the past.

Clients who sign on in neighbouring areas will be placed with that authority’s training provider.

North Warwickshire Borough Council has a history of supporting ETW clients. The panel was interested to know what assistance the County Council provides. Jacqui responded that Kingsbury Water Park has been supportive, as have schools. However, as the character of the client group has changed it has become more difficult to place individuals in a school environment. On hearing this, panel members felt that more should be done to explore ways in which the County Council could assist in finding placements.

The County Council has supported initiatives such as Cargo Bus and “Busterwerkenback”. In addition the S106 agreement for Birch Coppice included a Green Transport Plan.

The placements that the Skills Delivery Group can offer are not sufficiently long for individuals to undertake NVQs. They can do motivational courses to build confidence and raise self esteem.

Martin Ward and Mike Clarke – King Edward VI College, Nuneaton.

King Edward IV College (KECs) is the main sixth form in Nuneaton. It currently has 1071 A and AS level students on its roll. As a college it is classed as small but as a sixth form it is considered large.

36 different courses are offered. Most of these are the traditional academic ones although IT, social care and performing arts are also offered.

500 students enrol every year. Most come from within Warwickshire but around 10% come from outside. Some come from independent schools such as Bablake in Coventry.

The pass rate at the school is exceptionally high at 97%. In addition, 84% of starters complete the course. This latter statistic places the college in the top 10% in the country. The reason that so few students drop out is that they are robustly assisted to choose the right course for them.

80% of students go on to higher education, 10% go into employment (ideally with further training) and 10% go into further educational opportunities other than higher education.

A number of barriers are considered to exist that can prevent young people from reaching their full potential. These are largely based around economic and social factors.

Leadership plays an important role in ensuring success as do good quality buildings.

It is important that students have the right learning skills and access to the right IT facilities.

It is anticipated that the proposed new facility in Nuneaton town centre will be able to provide a much wider curriculum choice.

KECs works as much as it can with secondary schools in the locality. The extent to which this can be done reduces in proportion to the distance a school is from Nuneaton.

Video teaching is something that has been considered. This, however, would rely on secondary schools working much more closely together to invest in the necessary equipment and to establish classes of a viable size.

Student aspirations are raised through mentoring schemes and an initiative whereby former pupils return to their schools to inform existing students of the benefits of further education. Those students who achieve tend to be stronger-willed than others. They have a clear goal and stick with it. Girls generally do better than boys but the gap between boys and girls is narrowing.

KECs runs revision sessions for secondary school students. These tend to be well supported but attract those students who are well-motivated.

In addition sessions are run for Key Stage 3 students who are transported from their secondary schools to the college once or twice a week. Funding for transport is currently provided by the LSC. This, however, is due to cease and it will be down to the individual schools to finance travel to Nuneaton. As well as teaching during the school day, twilight sessions are run.

In response to a question from Councillor Grant, the panel was informed that KECs has worked to forge links with employers. Some employers offer a six-week internship across the summer holidays. Students are paid the minimum wage and whilst not many get the opportunity to take this up the benefits to those that do is significant.

Subjects that require employer input do receive it. The college is looking to develop this further particularly in the fields of IT and health.

The majority of students who go on to university tend to go to local ones such as Coventry, Leicester and Birmingham. Links with Warwick University have not been strong. Recently, however, two Governors have joined KECs from the university and it is hoped that this will assist in the development of links.

Sheila Hancox – Education Business Partnership.

The Education Business Partnership has moved from the former Education Department and now sits within the Environment and Economy Directorate and has been running for 16 years.

The service does attempt to contribute to academic attainment by enhancing the curriculum. It also offers training in those “softer” skills that are required to secure a good job.

Employers are recruited to go into schools to work with students. However, many employers do not hold students in high regard. This is sometimes echoed by school staff who have low expectations of their own pupils.

Some schools are very poor at looking after employers who visit them and this is something that the EBP is keen to address.

The EBP is more successful and active in North Warwickshire than anywhere else in the county. It offers many different courses and works with around 4000 students per annum.

It is a challenge persuading employers based in North Warwickshire to engage with schools in that area. BMW for example currently supports an academy in Staffordshire.

The new diplomas will rely heavily on employer engagement and input.

Funding for schools to buy in the services of the EBP is limited.

Councillor Stanley suggested that one way of ensuring that companies that relocate to North Warwickshire are engaged with right from the start. Once they are established they will be less inclined to assist in the EBP's service delivery.

Turning to the barriers faced by young people, Sheila noted that a significant number of young people in North Warwickshire tend to be apathetic with low self-esteem and low aspirations. Often they have little idea of what they can achieve.

The EBP works hard to raise expectations and to draw young people out of themselves. It used to work with primary schools but the funding from the LSC for this ceased. Shelia stated that she found this particularly regrettable as it is very important to get to children as young as possible.

Bob Chetwynd – 3M UK Ltd

Bob introduced himself stating that he had worked for 3m for 35 years.

The company has a very low turnover of staff and as such does not have a strong history of recruitment of young people from North Warwickshire.

The nature of the work undertaken at Atherstone has changed over the years. There are currently 250 people employed at Atherstone and whilst previously many of these would have been involved in administration the majority are now focused on manufacturing.

Nationally the company recruits about 6-8 graduates annually. This is done via the head office at Bracknell.

Two apprentices were appointed at the Atherstone plant. These came from local schools and have proven very successful. In the light of that success, there is now talk of taking on two more such staff.

3M works closely with the Education Business Partnership. Occasionally the company will take students on for work experience and in addition it supports the enterprise days held in schools.

The company pays for its employees to undertake further education and there is good progression in the company.

2d Notes of Meeting 28th January 2008

The panel welcomed Derek Warren, the 14-19 Director and Annette Guerrini, the Adult Learning Manager from North Warwickshire and Hinckley College. Derek and

Annette had been invited to the meeting to share their experience of providing a further education service to young people in North Warwickshire.

The following is a summary of the points made at the meeting.

- North Warwickshire and Hinckley College (NWHC) is keen to reduce the achievement gap that exists between the north of Warwickshire and the south.
- In its recent (October 2007) OfSTED report the college was considered to be “highly responsive and inclusive”.
- The college has 2500 full-time learners including apprentices and E2E (Entry to Employment), studying at all levels across 14 subject sector areas. It is a large college being in the top 50 nationally in terms of student numbers.
- The aim is to attract young people to the college and develop their ability regardless of the level they are at when they first attend. The Level 1 curriculum has been developed to meet the needs of those students entering the college at a lower level.
- As an institution that employs 500 staff the college is keen to explore ways in which it can further develop its own workforce.
- The college has two outreach centres. One at Atherstone, the other at Polesworth.
- It is difficult to persuade young people in North Warwickshire to travel to college. For this reason the college seeks to take learning out of the campus.
- The college offers 15 subject areas and whilst there are some gaps at level one most of the subjects are taught from pre-entry level to level three. A few students have gone through from pre-entry to level three being aided by the fact that they can get finance for the first two years.
- With the help of input from the LSC the courses are matched as much as possible to need. Some courses are over-subscribed. This is in part due to the lack of accommodation. Courses in building and trowel skills for example require student’s work to be left up for assessment. This is very demanding on space. The college is currently negotiating with Higham Lane to use some space there. In addition, the college has extended its week to Saturday. Currently there are 150 students enrolled on courses that teach on Saturdays.
- The college runs carpentry courses at its satellite facility at Polesworth. More space is required but as the college does not own the building it is difficult to make the changes required.
- It is hard to attract qualified teaching staff particularly those from trades where they could be earning more.
- Young apprenticeships are very popular. Government has elected to retain these along with diplomas.
- “Pathways” is used to assist young people with particular problems. Kingsbury School makes extensive use of this. An example was given of one young person who, whilst not academic, discovered that he was very skilled with a trowel. He has since gone on to complete an apprenticeship and win awards fro his work.
- Pastoral care is cross-referenced with the five objectives of the Every Child Matters agenda.
- Nursery provision currently exists only at the main campus.
- 9% of students are from ethnic minorities.

- Mindful of the barriers to learning the college is developing distance learning and virtual learning packs.
- The desire to close the achievement gap has led to the development of long and short qualifications. Long qualifications are the traditional 30 week courses whilst the short qualifications are much shorter and cover issues such as health and safety. Moves are afoot to link shorter courses to make long ones. In this way students are encouraged to constantly achieve.
- There is a strong focus on value added. The recruitment profile of students in the area is quite low when compared to some other areas. The majority of students achieve within expectation. In some subjects, however, they achieve above expectation and the college is looking to learn why this is.
- Students who move on to higher education often express concern that they do not receive the level of support at university that they do at the college. They also say that the teaching they receive at university often duplicates that provided previously at the college.
- Diploma courses are being developed with school partners. There is a feeling, however, that some Headteachers are not engaging.
- The college has stronger links with Leicestershire than with Staffordshire.
- It is recognised that as the area prospectus is developed and rolled out so the links with neighbouring authorities will need to be strengthened. The 14-19 Co-ordinator, Kate Ireland is based at the college.
- Annette Guerrini – Additional funding has been made available for work with NEETs.
- A lot of work is done with the Millennium Volunteers but the challenge is in getting young people to turn up for courses and placements.
- The new programme for NEETs offers some short qualifications. From the intake of September 2007 of the eight who undertook the course, 6 are now attending the college full time.
- Young people in North Warwickshire are reluctant to travel to learning opportunities. Transport is provided for NEETs and even then there is a reluctance to travel.
- A bid has been submitted to undertake more home visits with Connexions.
- Male NEETs ask to undertake construction or gardening courses. Females tend to want to undertake hair and beauty courses.
- Some NEETs hear about the support available from their friends and approach the college independently.
- Award ceremonies are considered to be very important as they encourage the young people to undertake more study.
- When the NEETs undertake courses on construction they contribute to maintaining the fabric of the building.
- Work with NEETs is very resource intensive. Small group sizes enable more focused work.
- Students at college relish the feeling that they are being treated like adults.
- Given that some NEETs have behavioural issues, some staff are not comfortable working with them. Other staff seek to work with NEETs.
- All applicants are offered a place at interview. The college is looking at why some applications do not convert to enrolments. One way to pick up latecomers is to offer enrolments in the January.
- To avoid students becoming too dependent on the support the college offers group tutorials are run to encourage group work and the development of leadership skills.

- The college has sought to develop its relationship with secondary schools. This has been challenging and has been hindered by a reluctance of communities to engage in courses that are offered. One of the possible barriers is getting parents to return to the school environment.
- In terms of the 14-16 year olds who attend the college, demand for courses is led by the secondary schools. At some schools, eg St Thomas Moore, staff from the college go to the school. Schools may be tempted to dump troublesome pupils on the college for one or two days a week. Students in the NOVA course have chosen to attend.
- Links with developers are very good. However, the challenge for the college is to find the placements needed. Employer links tend to be developed through good experience and by the fact that some college staff have links with businesses through their work.
- The college has also been able to respond to crises such as the closure of Ryton and Longbridge and have put together training packages for redundant staff.
- Funding for transport is a problem. This has led to thought being given to taking training out in to the community. Minority subjects are a problem and it is necessary to work with institutions to pull enough students together to justify undertaking the course.

2e Notes of Meeting 18th February 2008

The panel welcomed Viv Sales, Principal Educational Social Worker, Pat Tate, Head of Service, Enhanced Support Network and Shona Walton, Senior Officer (Access and Innovation). The following is a summary of the information shared.

Viv Sales

- Most people think that ESWS focuses entirely on non-attendance at school. This is not the case.
- Roles and responsibilities of ESWS include:
 - School attendance
 - Children missing education
 - Exclusion (meetings with school governors)
 - Home education
 - Child employment and performance
 - Anti-bullying
 - Support to traveller pupils
- It is important to recognise that non –attendance or other such behaviours can be symptomatic of other issues that are not so readily apparent.
- In terms of schools attendance the service,
 - sets county and school targets (currently measured in terms of persistent absence)
 - supports schools to fulfil their role
 - takes referrals for individual children
 - undertakes early intervention and preventative work
 - develops parenting contracts and orders

- issues fixed penalty notices and undertakes court work.
- The work undertaken is done very much on a social work basis. Workers look to identify the reason a child might be staying off school. For example it might be because they are being bullied or they might be struggling with the curriculum.
- In response to a question from Councillor Forwood Viv noted that the service could always benefit from more staff and resources.
- In North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth the service handles between 8 and 900 referrals a year. This figure is increasing and the service is endeavouring to avoid having to have awaiting list.
- “Clients” are seen every two weeks on average although this varies depending on the individual case.
- A fast track approach can be used if non –attendance has not yet grown into a major problem.
- The team in North Warwickshire comprises an Area Manager, Team Leader, Panel Officer, Parenting Support Officer and 5.5 (FTE) Caseworkers.
- If parents and carers do not fulfil their duties to the child then they commit an offence for which they can be issued a fixed penalty notice.
- A service review is currently being undertaken. A comprehensive consultation exercise has been undertaken.
- Four years ago the arrangements whereby each school had a linked social workers was scrapped. The consultation exercise being undertaken indicates that schools would like to revert to the old system.
- In addition schools are seeking looking for the threshold for intervention to be changed from 70% to 80%. The DCSF supports the raising of thresholds to 80% but it has to be acknowledged that more cases mean that something else will have to go (possibly the duty referral line).
- If the system of linked social workers is returned to then the Common Assessment Framework will be used.
- Absence is higher in North Warwickshire than in the rest of the county and nationally.
- 79,000 sessions are lost each year (a session is half a day).
- Term-time holidays are a major contributor to this.
- The DCSF has issued guidance on such holidays. It support terms-time holidays for families that have no choice eg servicemen and women and recognises that on some occasions families need time together.
- Headteachers have discretion regarding term-time holidays and more and more schools are choosing to refuse them.
- Term-time holidays are more common in the primary than secondary sector.
- Factory weeks and fortnights are no longer an issue.
- Work cross-boundary can be challenging. It is quite clear that responsibility for a child’s attendance lies with the authority where the child attends school.
- With 50% of students at Coleshill School originally from Chelmsley Wood this is a real issue in terms of resources for Warwickshire.
- Problems do occur when having to work with agencies across border.

- Non-attendance has increased slightly in secondary schools but has dropped in primary schools.

Pat Tate

- The Enhanced Services Network (ESN) has already been initiated in Rugby and Nuneaton and Bedworth.
- Its main driver was the Victoria Climbié case and the subsequent report from Lord Laming.
- The purpose of the ESN is to provide an integrated service whilst moving support upstream thus enabling earlier intervention.
- A wide range of services are involved. These include Police, voluntary and community groups, education psychology, Connexions, school nurses etc. the key agencies, however, are housing, health and social care.
- The ESN seeks to work in partnership with families as opposed to doing things to them.
- 93% of assessments are initiated by schools that have picked up on issues.
- In Rugby 50% of all cases were found to have their roots in domestic violence. In Nuneaton and Bedworth this figure is 40%.
- The ESN relies heavily on the Combined Assessment Framework (CAF). This tool means that a child or family will be assessed only once with a comprehensive and structured approach ensuring that all information needed is gathered.
- Primary schools have been found to be the highest area for CAF initiation. As well as looking at child development the CAF also addresses carers and family and environment.
- Good training is required for CAF initiators. Assessment to family support meeting should take no more than 15 days.
- The key to success with the CAF is strong accountability. A lead professional develops an action plan that should be implemented in 6 to 8 weeks.
- Warwickshire does not intend to train very many CAF assessors preferring to ensure that it is follow up actions that are pursued rigorously.
- It is important that promises are not made if they cannot be delivered.
- Hartshill School and its cluster have already commenced work with the CAF because of their proximity to Nuneaton and Bedworth.
- It is important to engage young people and work with them to develop their skills. Many will be good leaders if they can be trained and brought on.

Shona Walton

- The role of the School Performance Section is to transform and improve schools.
- The focus of the work is the whole school and not the individual student.
- Intervention will occur when schools are not performing. Levels of intervention are in inverse proportion to success i.e. the better the school the less intervention.
- All schools receive a minimum of 5 days School Improvement Partner support.
- Intervention is largely data driven although Area Schools and Communities Officers also have an input.

- Two schools in North Warwickshire have been worked with in recent years. They have improved and no longer need the same level of support.
- At the end of year 6 performance in North Warwickshire is 4th out of 5 areas in the county. By year 9 performance has improved so that North Warwickshire is 2nd out of 5.
- Performance of the most able students (ie A* and A) is poor in North Warwickshire but what is of note is the high proportion of students achieving A-G qualifications. This is the highest in the county and is indicative of the levels of inclusivity in schools on the borough.
- Unauthorised absences are high as is the number of NEETs.
- Overall poor academic attainment can be attributed to low aspiration, poor role models, poor adult literacy, the type of the work available to young people and the stability of communities.
- Leadership in schools is very important. All new headteachers are allocated a mentor and receive substantial induction training.
- Plenty of support is also available for governing bodies particularly those considered to be weak. The SIP meets each governing body at least once a year.
- The downturn in performance between KS3 and KS4 is regrettable. This may be attributable to the nature of the curriculum in that it is perhaps too traditionally academic, the aging teaching workforce that on occasions might be resistant to new ideas and students lacking the skills they need to move towards more independent learning.

2f Note of Meeting with Young People 15th April 2008

Late on the afternoon of Tuesday 15th April 2008 a meeting was held in Atherstone with a group of young people from around North Warwickshire. The aim of the meeting was to obtain their views on education in their area and to find out more about what they hoped to achieve in life. The young people were supported by two officers from the County Youth Service. The meeting was also attended by Councillors Grant, Stanley, Moss and Forwood.

The young people make the following observations.

- There was a perception that the south of Warwickshire receives more funding and support from the County Council than the north.
- It was felt that because funding was not equally distributed so the schools in their area are not as good. (In response, the point was made that there has been an observation made that young people in the south of the county generally perform better academically in spite of the quality of the schools they attend)
- Often pupils will work hard at school if they like the teacher and feel motivated by them.
- The young people become frustrated when they are taught by a succession of supply teachers or by teachers who promise them extra support but then fail to deliver on their promises. It was acknowledged that in one secondary school which had previously had a history of using a lot of supply teachers this had now improved, a fact that was appreciated by the pupils.

- Sanctions used to maintain discipline are not used fairly. Some pupils will receive more severe sanctions than others for the same behaviour.
- Pupils were motivated if they received rewards such as house points. They also feel they work better if allowed to do so at their own pace.
- Pupils at one school are rewarded for good attendance.
- Homework and exam revision are major barriers for some young people. There is a reluctance to devote time out of school to study whilst revision is considered unnecessary.
- It was acknowledged by some of the young people that those fellow pupils that do study and work hard will go on to university.
- The Connexions Service focuses too much on college courses and not on helping young people identify what jobs they want to do.
- Schools devote more time and attention to higher achievers particularly when considering options for GCSE. They make too many assumptions about what can be achieved by an individual and fail to encourage those pupils in the lower ability groups.
- One secondary school undertakes to introduce young people to university life. This is, however, limited to the higher achievers.
- The cost and inconvenience of travel are seen as a major barrier to attending college. Some students start at college but find that they cannot afford the bus fares or that the time needed to get to college is prohibitive.
- Discounted bus travel is not available before 9am. This means that students needing to get to college early have to pay full fare.
- Those pupils that have applied to college have tended to do so following encouragement from family or friends.
- The Education Business Partnership has visited the schools but there was a perception that their work tended to focus on the higher achieving pupils.
- If pupils become disillusioned in schools it starts to happen around year 9. Pupils then feel that the schools have given up on them.
- Dyslexia can go undiagnosed for a long time or if it has been discovered at primary level the fact that this is the case is not conveyed to secondary schools.
- Few of the young people ever read books (although they knew people who did).
- Reading is encouraged at primary schools but little is done at secondary level.

To get the best out of young people schools should,

- Organise more for young people to do out of the classroom
- Get rid of school uniforms
- Allow young people to express themselves
- Treat pupils with more respect
- Display the work of less able children on the walls rather than simply focussing on the high achievers.
- Give pupils freedom to choose whether to work or not.
- Reduce the length of lessons and add more variety
- Reward low achievers when they try hard.

APPENDIX 2a

WHAT THE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE IS DOING IN NORTH WARWICKSHIRE TO SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Curriculum for Youth Work

'To help Young People achieve their full potential'

Youth work offers educational programs and projects which young people choose to be involved in in order to relax, meet friends and have fun. The programs encourage young people to be critical and creative in their responses to their experience and the world around them.

These educational programs and projects are developed through Warwickshire's Youth Service Curriculum which follows the framework recommended in REYS as:

Content – building on the four principles of Education, Equality of Opportunity, Empowerment and Participation.

Pedagogy -the different ways of working to engage young people in the curriculum.

Assessment – to show how planned learning outcomes have been achieved.

The Curriculum Framework has been mapped against the five outcomes of Every Child Matters and is available through area offices, the web site and on display at each Centre. The five outcomes being:

- ✓ Staying Healthy
- ✓ Staying Safe
- ✓ Enjoying and Achieving
- ✓ Making a Positive Contribution
- ✓ Economic Well-being

Uniqueness of the Service.

The Youth Service is not perceived by young people as being formal education in the strictest sense. Where it may be increasingly effective, is that often Young people can find it easier to engage with youth workers and follow what might appear to them to be a 'softer' learning approach. Nevertheless, the service has strict targets for learning aimed at the 13 – 19 age group. They are called REYS targets

Some areas of work

Delivered in Youth Clubs/ Youth projects/ outreach and detached work/ rural mobile provision/participation/ partnership and schools work.

1. Recorded Outcomes

- Shows the benefit derived and demonstrates personal progress as a result of a youth work intervention
- It is the result of identifiable progress that has been made within a programme of youth work.
- Provides evidence to show action/progression/distance travelled

In 2006/07 in North Warwickshire the service achieved 683 Recorded Outcomes (REYS target - 469)

Accreditation – Delivered in Youth Clubs/ Youth projects/ partnership and school work

- Warwickshire Challenge
- Duke Of Edinburgh Award
- Duke of Edinburgh open Access
- ASDAN short and Longer courses
- COPE – Certificate of Personal Effectiveness
- Youth Achievement Awards
- Junior Sports Leadership Awards

Programmes in Schools

- Motiv8
- Positive Pupil Programme
- Ban the Bully
- Wise programmes for Young Women
- Citizenship
- PHSE
- RSE (relationship and sex education) – the majority of our staff are trained to a minimum of tier 1. Many full time workers are trained to tier 3
- CHAT clinics
- Mentoring
- Drugs and alcohol programmes
- Smoking cessation
- Dealing with challenging young people

Participation

Youth Forum/ Voice 4 M/County Youth Panel/YOF & Youth Development Grants – applying 'Hear by Rights' Standards.

NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training)

Targeted programmes run in partnership with other agencies addressing the needs of this group of young people.

Barriers to Educational Attainment

- Lack of six form at schools
- Travel to further education destinations
- Peer pressure and friendships

- Positive young people as role models not being visible in their community – for other young people to see and aspire to
- Inconsistent support and aspiration within some families
- Rural isolation
- Lack of choice for young people
- Lack of knowledge and information about options
- Attitudes
- Curriculum not suiting all young people – more vocational programmes required
- Psychological barriers e.g. Young people confidence and self esteem
- Class and Poverty

Every Child Matters Survey 2007

Some key points

- Young people particularly young women felt that they did not make use of careers advice service at school and that they had not learnt about different jobs that people do
- Felt that they were not confident writing college applications and CV's

Implications on the service could help

- Modernise the staff team. Raise capacity by Improve the face to face levels of work. To be achieved by April 08
- Continue to organise learning opportunities around young peoples needs eg YOF & YCF.
- Widen our accreditation routes. Addressing through the use of more varied accreditation routes BUT needs to be rolled out to all areas.
- Increasingly target our resources. Look at opportunities with partners to create synergy ie Connexions. Develop our role with Targeted Youth Support and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- With more resources the service could offer dedicated staff within schools. Work in partnership with connexions to deliver appropriate programmes, projects and support to young people within school and NEETS.

14-19 STRATEGY PAPER.

November 2007

Warwickshire County 14 – 19 Partners Strategy for Education, Training and Skills Development.

This strategy for 14 -19 learners is an integral part of the County vision for its children and young people.

“Every child and young person, including those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged has the greatest possible opportunity to be the best they can be”

(CYPP 2007-2010)

Our core purpose:

To ensure that the range and quality of learning provision for 14-19 across Warwickshire meets the needs of all young people and enables them to be successful learners and achieve economic wellbeing.

Our aims:

To maximise the range of learning opportunities available to all young people and enable them to become:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning and achieve
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society
- Informed decision makers and active participants in developing the skills to achieve economic wellbeing

We are committed to promoting success using the following principles:

- Maximising opportunities and achievement for all 14-19 learners
- Promoting innovative and inclusive approaches to partnership working, recognising the fact that “no one institution alone can meet the needs of all its learners”
- Assisting providers to enable 14-19 learners to achieve the outcomes of Every Child Matters
- Promoting effective inter agency working and the provision of coherent and integrated services, through targeted activities in the Children and Young Peoples’ Plan and the Local Area Agreement
- Working within the spirit of openness, trust and transparency
- Encouraging all providers and stakeholders to take collective responsibility for meeting the needs of learners and serving the needs of the community
- Acting with impartiality
- Ensuring that the needs of the learner are central to the development of provision

In order to achieve this we will:

- Seek ways to collaborate with partners in order to provide the maximum choice for learners
- Thoroughly monitor and evaluate provision with a commitment to continuous improvement
- Give parity of esteem to all pathways and qualifications
- Provide learners with access to impartial information, advice and guidance about all learning opportunities and career pathways
- Put the needs of learners above the needs of our own institutions
- Provide the widest possible choice of pathways with clear progression routes across the ability range
- Address barriers to learning and promote equality of opportunity for all
- Provide a range of different teaching and assessment methods to meet the individual needs of learners
- Seek to raise aspirations and encourage progression
- Pass on relevant information about individual learners at key points of transition and make effective use of information from other providers
- Provide opportunities for learners to be involved in the planning, review and evaluation of provision
- Ensure provision acknowledges the needs of the labour market and the local community
- Regularly review the Learner Entitlement to ensure it remains relevant to the experience of learners

(extract from Coventry and Warwickshire Learner Entitlement)

Our priorities:

Enjoy and achieve: (CYPP 309)

Transforming schools and supporting learning communities

- Developing effective infrastructures to support collaborative working
- Support the training and development of the workforce to deliver a broad range of high quality provision
- Promoting innovative solutions to the development access and management of specialist facilities to support the 14-19 entitlement

Raising educational standards: (CYPP 311)

- Supporting the coherent planning of provision to offer the full 14-19 entitlement by 2013
- Developing curriculum pathways to support and give parity of esteem to general, applied and practical vocational learning
- Supporting the development of applied learning opportunities including the roll out of 14 diplomas, the development of functional, personal, learning and thinking skills

Supporting the delivery of impartial advice and guidance: (CYPP 318)

- Developing the Area Prospectus and high quality IAG to support young people in their choices

Raising employment education and training standards 14-19: (CYPP 319)

- Developing effective links with employers to involve them in the delivery of high quality learning