



Human Rights & Equalities Board

25th April 2018

09:30 – 12:00

Severus room, West Offices

Present: Cllr. Peter Dew (Chair), Cllr. Denise Craghill, Cllr. Mary Cannon, Charlie Croft (CYC), Sarah Armstrong (CVS), Simon Topham (CAB), Jennifer Allott (CYC), Liz Lockey (York Human Rights City Network), Steve Flatley (CYC), Emily Taylor (Higher York), Paul Gready (Applied Centre for Human Rights), Marilyn Crawshaw (York Human Rights City Network) Maurice Vassie (York Interfaith Forum)

Witnesses: Julia Massey, Dave Fleming, James Curran

Apologies: Cllr. Keith Aspden, Lindsey Robson (NYP)

		Action
1.	The chair welcomed people to this first meeting of the Board.	
2.	<p>Liz Lockey explained the background to the Board’s decision to place its initial focus on NEET (Young People Not in Education or Training). Liz Lockey introduced the Call for Evidence response Summary Document (attached).</p> <p>There was a discussion seeking to clarify York’s figures in respect of NEET. Steve Flatley provided trend data for local authorities as set out in the attached tables. Steve commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 17 to March 18 the NEET cohort has reduced from 3.1% to 2.9%. This equates to around 100 young people in total in the NEET group. • Our “Not Knowns” have increased form 0.8% to 1.3% over the same period equating to 44 young people. It is difficult to know at this point whether the increase in Not Knowns accounts for the decrease in NEETs. • York’s NEET percentage compares to 2.8% nationally and 3.2% for the region. We are 3rd in the region and 70th out of 152 LAs in England. • For combined NEET and Not Known we are in the 2nd quintile of LAs but the 3rd quintile when you look at NEET alone. • It is important to be aware of where NEET young people come from. Since September 17, 95 young people have joined the NEET group and 52 have left. Of the 95 who joined, 68 (80%) joined from education and training provision. This compares to 58% nationally and 71% regionally. We will draw full conclusions after 12 months but we can see that we have an issue with retention in education and training provision. 	

The Board then heard evidence from the key witnesses who had responded to the call for evidence.

Dave Fleming

Dave explained his extensive experience of working with young people and stressed the following points:

- the power of arts and culture in engaging young people
- many young people who are NEET have complex problems that may include mental health issues; some won't want to be engaged
- to engage young people it is necessary to do it in settings where they are comfortable and doing things that they are interested in engaging with

Julia Massey

Julia described her work on the NEET agenda as Learning City Partnership Manager, manager of CYC's Skills Team and lead officer for York's Skills Plan, working with colleagues, schools and employers to:

- Shape and influence activity to prevent young people at the age of 16 becoming NEET at the end of Key Stage 4
- Ensure that there is sufficient, appropriate education, training and provision for all 16-19 year olds in the area, in line with the Council's statutory duty for Raising the Participation Age
- Create programmes to inspire young people and support their transition into education, employment or training and 'to create' employment / apprenticeship / internship opportunities
- Support longer term unemployed 18-24s into employment

Julia stressed that those who are NEET are largely the most vulnerable and challenging young people, with additional barriers to work, such as disabilities, mental health problems, low skill levels and inter-generational worklessness.

The issue is not a shortage of jobs for young people to progress into as the city actually has large numbers of unfilled vacancies. The challenge is how we ensure that there is closer alignment between the jobs available by both helping young people and challenging and supporting employers to re-shape jobs to provide the right environment for those with additional barriers to securing employment.

Julia tabled a range of case studies (attached) to illustrate:

- the characteristics and complexity of young people are at risk of NEET, those who are NEET (aged 16-17) and of those who are unemployed (aged 18-24)
- The importance of a personalised programme of support and 1:1 mentoring; it's not just about employability skills, but also about undetected learning difficulties & disabilities; mental health issues;

self-confidence

- The value of male key workers & peer to peer support from young key workers
- The complexity of ensuring that all stakeholders are involved
- The value of interactions with employers and liaison with employers to secure positive working environments
- The on-going in-work / in-college support to secure sustained progression outcomes

With such low levels of NEET and youth unemployment, it's about being more sophisticated with targeted interventions between the different stakeholders. This is costly and often dependent on external funding to support.

James Curran

James described NYBEP's work with schools, the PRU and colleges to identify young people who are vulnerable or at risk of being NEET and to build programmes that address individual need, promote engagement and participation and remove barriers to learning. These programmes are designed to provide young people with access to a wide range of opportunities away from the classroom, helping them recognise and develop the skills and attributes required in the workplace or for continued learning or training.

Central to this approach is the opportunity to engage with employers and businesses, either through activities which explore the world of work or through carefully managed work experience placements. Key areas of focus are confidence, motivation, aspiration, employability skills, careers, progression. The programme has also been applied to young people (18-24 yrs) not in employment.

James drew the board's attention to aspects of young people's experience of school and the school curriculum and stressed the significance of the transition from primary to secondary school.

Steve Flatley

Steve described the work of the Local Area Teams in the context of the Children, Education and Communities Directorate priorities:

- Focussing on children and young people at primary and secondary schools who do not meet the required standard of English and Maths
- Fostering KS4 and post 16 work based provision that engages young people and embeds the key skills of English and Maths
- A family focused approach to the work of Local Area Teams
- Ensuring the voice and involvement of young people who are NEET
- A focus upon key wards with poor outcomes
- Holding providers to account through an outcomes and progression based approach with a key focus upon retention and drop out

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and tracking of NEET • Working with LEPS, Higher York, ESF providers and JCP and employers to align the delivery of activities and outcomes 	
	<p>The Board discussed the evidence that they had heard and noted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are only 120 NEET young people in York and we know who they are. Therefore it should be possible to bring action to bear. • That the Board’s action plan should take account of the council’s pre-existing 11 point plan (attached) • The Board noted the wide range of existing provision: the need therefore is to bring coherence where currently there is fragmentation • The Board therefore needs to pursue system wide change rather than looking to create more provision • This will require a long-term approach; it cannot be just another project or set of initiatives • But we need to address this by investigation at a local level, gaining a robust understanding of how things work on the ground • We should look at the young person’s journey and the critical decision and risk points for them • The aim will be to improve life outcomes for young people; it will be important to avoid labelling • A critical contribution for this board will be to commission some work to hear the voice of young people about being NEET • Arts based methods might be particularly helpful in this • The support of schools to this project will be critical 	
	<p><u>Actions</u></p> <p>Officers to develop a proposal for the Board’s work plan based on two strands of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission appropriate voice work to be led by young people • To focus on a particular area of York in order to examine system based change <p>Officers to circulate the proposal for comment ahead of the next meeting and to include proposals for how the work may be addressed using a task group approach.</p> <p>It was agreed that given the complexity of the issues discussed and the workload involved to address them that the Board should maintain its focus on NEET for the foreseeable future.</p>	