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**Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee**      **26<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

Report of the Assistant Director Governance and ICT

**Draft Final Report – Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Review Task Group**

**Summary**

1. This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Youth Unemployment Scrutiny Review Task Group.
2. Members are asked to note the report and make any amendments/additions they feel necessary prior to this report and its associated recommendations being sent to Cabinet for consideration.

**Background**

3. At a meeting of the Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012 it was agreed that, in the 2012/13 municipal year, they would carry out a review around Youth Unemployment. They considered this topic further at a meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and after consideration of an introductory paper (**Annex A refers**) covering the following:

- key statistics and trends
- Initiatives and agencies supporting young people into jobs and opportunities
- Support for 16 to 18 year olds and 18-24 year olds
- Opportunities for the Scrutiny Committee to consider

agreed that the work should be carried out by a Task Group comprised of three Members of the Committee<sup>1</sup> working to the following remit:

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<sup>1</sup> The Task Group was comprised of Councillors D'Agorne, Riches and Semlyen

## Aim

4. With a particular focus on vacancies within the care sector and business administration, to look at ways City of York Council can help young people to navigate the employment economy.

## Key Objectives

- i. Investigate what the barriers are for young people (ages 16-24) getting work
- ii. Investigate whether all agencies are playing their part in supporting young people into work
- iii. To investigate whether there are any gaps and/or overlaps in provision and if so make recommendation to address them.

## **Consultation**

5. Consultation has taken place throughout the review and Members have taken guidance from officers within the Council. In addition to this they have met with representatives from Jobcentre Plus, the Work Programme providers, young people and other stakeholders and agencies who provide support for young unemployed residents<sup>2</sup>. They also received responses to a question around Youth Unemployment that they had posted on the GeniUS website.

## **Setting the Scene**

6. Prior to the first meeting of the Task Group Councillors D'Agorne and Semlyen attended the York Skills Summit on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012 in connection with this review to gain a wider understanding of the skills and employment landscape and priorities for all employment sectors and residents of all ages.
7. The Task Group met for the first time on 18<sup>th</sup> July with the Youth Support Service Manager and the Learning City York Partnership Manager. At this meeting the information at **Annex A** to this report was further discussed alongside a paper that had been presented to the YorOK Board in January 2012 entitled 'Apprenticeship Developments in York and Programmes Supporting Young People 16-24 into Work' (**Annex B refers**). The following paragraphs set out the discussions that ensued.

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<sup>2</sup> Via the Learning City 'Connecting People to Jobs & Opportunities' network – including Higher York (who have a particular focus on unemployed and under-employed Graduates); National Careers Service; Castlegate (focus on 16-18 year old NEETs);

## The 16 to 18 year old age group

8. Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to secure education and training in their areas for young people aged 16 to 18 (up to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday), for young people up to the age of 25 subject to a learning difficulty and disability assessment and for up to 21 years of age for care leavers. As of January 2012 there were approximately 286 young people in this age group who were considered to be NEET (not in education, employment or training). Jobcentre Plus has a statutory responsibility to provide support for all ages of benefit claimants to find work. In York, this support tends to be from age 18 upwards (there are very few 16-17 year olds on out-of-work benefits, with only twenty 16-17 year olds falling into this category as of April 2012, and 19 as of December 2012).
9. The Task Group learned that City of York Council already had a good understanding of the 16-18 NEET group and a multi-agency partnership infrastructure that brought providers together to ensure that there were programmes in place to support the progression of these young people into work, further training at College or an Apprenticeship. Many of this NEET group lacked the qualifications, skills, aptitude and confidence to meet the entry requirements for an apprenticeship or for a job and often needed further training at college or through a training provider to progress into employment, to fulfil their aspiration. The majority of these young people are what are referred to as Foundation Learners i.e. below Level 2, with the entry requirements for Apprenticeships being Level 2 (Level 2 is the equivalent of five GCSEs at Grade C or above).
10. City of York Council (Youth Support Services) runs the Castlegate Centre which provides a range of information, advice and guidance services and signposting to education, training and employment programmes for those under 19 years of age (and up to 25 years of age if they have learning difficulties or disabilities).
11. It was acknowledged by officers and the Task Group that there were still insufficient training/employment opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and these accounted for 31% of young people aged 16 to 18 in York who were NEET. However, progress was being made in this area but there was still more to do. It was also understood that there was an ongoing business review of the CYC service arm Yorkcraft<sup>3</sup> currently taking place and once the outcomes of this were known, a potential to provide placement opportunities for

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<sup>3</sup> YorkCraft provides supported employment opportunities for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities

younger people with learning difficulties and disabilities might be possible.

12. As City of York Council already had a reasonably good understanding of and a statutory responsibility towards 16 to 18 year olds it was suggested by the Learning City York Partnership Manager and agreed by the Task Group to concentrate their focus for the purposes of this review around unemployed 18 to 24 year olds.

#### Length of time unemployed

13. On looking at the statistics/trends presented to them in **Annex A** the Task Group learned that there were approximately 1000 18-24 year olds unemployed as of February 2012 and this had been roughly the same since 2010 but was not reducing. However whilst the level of short term unemployment within this age group i.e. unemployed for less than 6 months was reducing, there had been an increase in those that had been unemployed for more than 6 and 12 months. The Task Group expressed some concern around this increase and those remaining unemployed for the longer term.
14. Of the approximate 920 unemployed 18-24 year olds (as at April 2012) there were 205 that had been out of employment for more than six months with 100 of these being without employment for over 12 months (compared to only 30 in April 2011).

#### Mismatch of opportunities to wishes

15. It was also understood that the vacancies advertised at Jobcentre Plus and those more generally advertised, were not matching the wishes of the young people who were unemployed. There was a mismatch between what was available and what the young people were asking for. However it was acknowledged to be better in York than in other parts of the country, York having the fourth lowest youth unemployment figures for 18-24 year olds of 64 UK comparator cities and the third lowest for NEET (16-18 year olds). However the Task Group still identified a requirement to do more around matching needs with opportunities.
16. The Task Group, when setting its remit, had agreed to focus on vacancies within the care sector and business administration. It was understood that there were vacancies within both of these sectors that were not being filled. Officers advised the Task Group that there may be a misconception amongst younger people as to what employment in the care sector could offer them in terms of wages, training, future prospects, transferable skills and shift working. There was also a perceived

intergenerational barrier (younger people working with older, for instance).

17. Officers indicated that there appeared to be a preference amongst younger people to work in certain fields rather than others (construction and retail being very popular).

### Welfare Reforms

18. The Government's recent Welfare Reforms had included the introduction of Get Britain Working Measures facilitated by Jobcentre Plus and the Work Programme commissioned through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It was explained that the Work Programme commenced when someone had been unemployed and claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) for circa 9 months; therefore it was effectively open to referrals from JCP for longer term unemployed residents, including young people from the age of 18.<sup>4</sup> However if a young person had been NEET previously, they were referred to the Work Programme at 3 months of claiming benefits i.e. an earlier referral point than those young people that had not previously been NEET. Referrals from Jobcentre Plus to the Work Programme were dependent on the type of claimant and could be made at any point from 3 to 12 months of their claim. In general, if a young person had previously been NEET, they were referred to the Work Programme at 3 months of claiming benefits and all other young unemployed people were referred at 9 months.
19. In York the Work Programme prime contract holders are G4S and In-Training who have sub-contracted delivery to Pertemps and Prospect Training/Barnardos respectively. They were financed nationally through the DWP and the contracts were tendered and awarded to commence from June 2011. The Prime Contractors covered a huge JCP geographic area (York, North Yorkshire, East Riding and The Humber) and were not solely York focussed; however both sub-contracted delivery organisations had permanent offices in York.
20. Pertemps and Prospect Training/Barnardos had contracts to provide and deliver pre-employment training and support for people of all ages seeking a return to work; the support was tailored to meet customer needs. As such both organisations had developed a positive relationship with their customers. They were there to implement the Work Programme for the over 18 age group that had been unemployed for over nine months or 3 months if previously NEET.

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<sup>4</sup> The majority of Job Seeker Allowance claimants in York are aged 19 and over

21. On hearing about the Work Programme and the providers in York, the Task Group decided that it would help to progress this scrutiny review if they met with staff and customers at both Pertemps and Prospect Training, along with Jobcentre Plus in order to understand the role all three organisations played in getting young people back to work.

Other issues identified at this stage in the review

22. Churning - One of the challenges highlighted by officers was ‘churning’ (where young people were in and out of employment frequently), one of the main reasons for churn being that many young people still did not have the right skills and aptitude to sustain a job. More opportunities to upskill young people needed to be developed before they applied for jobs so that they had the best opportunity to sustain employment.
23. Mentoring - Officers informed the Task Group that one of the best interventions for many young people was mentoring with evidence proving that mentoring really improved the success rate for moving young unemployed people into work and on-going mentoring also improving sustainability in work.
24. Vulnerable groups - It was acknowledged that it was difficult to make progress with some of the more vulnerable groups of young people, such as those with learning difficulties and it was hard to find sustainable employment for them. Both officers and the Task Group thought that the Local Authority could do more to employ these groups of people but realised this was challenging, especially during a time when others within Local Authorities were facing redundancy. It was also acknowledged that there was a need to encourage other employers, across the city, to look positively at ‘diverse workforce’ opportunities. This could include ‘job carving’ which is where one job is divided into two to enable two young people with learning difficulties and disabilities to perform that job.
25. In addition to the above the Chair of the Task Group mentioned a recent presentation given by the Director of Research at the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) entitled ‘The labour market for school leavers and HE5 graduates: today and tomorrow’<sup>6</sup> which set out information including the current state of the UK labour market, what it is like for school leavers and graduates, what employers are looking for and competition in the labour market. One part of this presentation indicated

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<sup>5</sup> Higher Education

<sup>6</sup> This is referenced here as it reinforces what unemployed 18-24 year olds need to develop in order to be successful in sustainable employment. However it should be noted that there is also a separate Scrutiny Review being undertaken around Careers Education.

that qualification levels were expected to rise and there was some evidence of under-employment. High growth occupations for young people were:

- *customer service (retail and hospitality)*
- *caring and personal service jobs*
- *technicians (in manufacturing and energy)*
- *creative and digital occupations*

26. Most of these jobs would require Level 2/3 qualifications. Attitudes and behaviour were important such as enthusiasm, understanding the business context, attention to detail, reliability etc coupled with generic (and some technical) competencies such as communication, problem solving, production related technical skills in manufacturing and project management.

### **Meeting with Key People**

#### Visit to Jobcentre Plus

27. In advance of visiting Jobcentre Plus (JCP) The Task Group met again on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2012 to specifically look at information on how JCP referred claimants to the Work Programme. This is summarised in the bullet points below:
- Short term youth unemployed (i.e. under 9 months) are served by JCP at their Stonebow office and supported by different strands of the 'Get Britain Working' campaign including work experience opportunities (insufficient opportunities across the city to meet demand) and training programmes delivered by organisations such as York College, YH Training and City of York Council (through adult education programmes, Future Prospects and York Training Centre, which is a training arm of the Council and is funded through a contract with the Skills Funding Agency)
  - Once a young person becomes longer term unemployed (i.e. nine months or over) they are referred to the Work Programme and hence to Pertemps or Prospect Training or Barnardos (if 18-24)
  - If, however, an 18-24 year old has already been NEET they get referred to the Work Programme at 3 months.
28. On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012 two members of the Task Group and the Scrutiny Officer visited JCP and met with the District Manager and two members of staff from the Stonebow branch of JCP. Outcomes of the discussions are set out in the paragraphs below:

- Of those going onto Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) 60% are in work after 13 weeks<sup>7</sup>
- Longer term unemployed always used to be defined as 6 months + but this has now been re-defined to the point where JCP refer customers to the Work Programme at 9 months for 18-24 year olds and after 1 year for those aged 25+
- York had 920 18-24 year olds on the JSA unemployment register with 164<sup>8</sup> of these being graduates (figures as of August 2012 which was when the Task Group visited JCP)
- It was hard to claim JSA benefits if you were under 18 (there were fewer than 20 claimants in York fitting this description)
- There were 30,000 vacancies in the care sector across the Yorkshire and Humber region; however there was a known skills mismatch and an employability mismatch.

29. Barriers to employment – these can be anything from a lack of confidence, difficulties in finding/affording childcare, a poor CV, lack of references, lack of work experience, the need for a bank account, no access to the internet and no e-mail address. Literacy and numeracy were also an issue with 36% of 18-24 year olds currently unemployed in York not having achieved Level 2. The Task Group felt that addressing this low basic skill level was critical in improving a young person's chances of obtaining and sustaining employment. It was, therefore, important, to address low skills levels through the provision of further training.

30. Transport was felt to be one of the major barriers to finding employment; many young people did not have access to a car and found public transport costly. JCP could help in some circumstances with costs associated with attending interviews.

31. In addition to this some jobs were in places not easily accessible by public transport and some shift work meant that public transport was not available at an appropriate time.

32. The District Manager at JCP cited an example of an industrial estate in Sherburn in Elmet that was difficult to get to without a car and where there were frequently vacancies as several major companies had

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<sup>7</sup> The latest figure (December 2012) is 65.85 % for all people combined (not just 18-24 year olds). However JCP do not keep statistics on the sustainability of this work so are unable to say whether they are still in employment after 3 to 6 months

<sup>8</sup> JCP have since provided an updated figure as of October 2012 which shows that there were 100 graduates (18-24) claiming Job Seeker's Allowance. This equates to 11% of all claimants aged 18 to 24



warehouses there. Selby Council had worked with the local bus companies to ensure that there was a bus service at appropriate times (to fit in with shift patterns) to make it easier for people to secure and sustain employment there.

33. Enterprise Allowance Scheme – this was a new scheme set up to provide flexible support to help people of all ages (who had been claiming JSA for 6 months+) to become self-employed and start their own businesses. The scheme provided mentoring and support to set a business plan and also provided a loan of £1000, an allowance of £65 for 13 weeks and £33 for a further 13 weeks. Two people aged between 18 and 24 had entered this scheme<sup>9</sup>. However some had also accessed support via Future Prospects to set up market stalls.
34. Partnership working and raising awareness of success stories– it was acknowledged that there were some really good success stories about young people gaining employment and/or setting up their own businesses; however it had not always been easy or possible to get publicity for these in York. There was still work to be done. The Task Group suggested that JCP could make contact with the Council’s Media and Communications Department to see if they could assist in any way and the Task Group would also talk to them as well. Discussions were had around working more proactively with the media in York to advertise success stories, including working with City of York Council’s Media and Communications Department. There was further discussion about possible links with the York Means Business website and York Press.
35. The above discussions have already led to the District Manager at JCP proactively looking at current partnership arrangements in place within the City. In addition to this the Head of Economic Development at City of York Council intended to contact the District Manager at JCP to instigate further discussions around how they might potentially use the York Means Business web-portal to promote success stories.
36. In York there were already a number of multi-agency meetings/networks that brought key partners together; namely the Learning City Board which leads on the strategic development of a refreshed Skills and Employment Strategy to underpin the Economic Strategy and JCP attended this. There was also a Connecting People to Jobs and Opportunities Network (also facilitated by the Learning City Partnership Manager - an officer of CYC) which was an operational group bringing all

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<sup>9</sup> Information correct as of December 2012

the delivery partners and agencies supporting unemployed people together.

37. Both the Task Group and representatives from JCP believed that partnership working was a key factor to tackling youth unemployment. There needed to be a more collective approach to providing solutions to youth unemployment. Good partnership working could positively help advertise some of the success stories but there were other ways that partnership working could help as well. City of York Council already had many of the right partnership infrastructures in place but was currently seeking ways of maximising working with these groups.
38. JCP also worked with organisations such as National Careers Service (delivered by Babcock Enterprise in York) who provide information, advice and guidance support to JCP clients to help get people back to work, as well as with Pertemps and Prospect Training and a range of other training providers.
39. The District Manager at JCP thought there had been problems in York getting key partners together for a round table discussion to talk about youth unemployment. However, (as identified in **paragraph 36**) there was a Learning City partnership network group entitled 'Connecting People to Jobs and Opportunities in York' scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and the Task Group suggested that the District Manager at JCP be invited to attend this to take part in discussions. The network was still relatively new and it was acknowledged that key to this group would be engagement with the Work Programme providers and JCP and this needed to be built upon.
40. Jobs in the care sector – As mentioned above (**paragraph 28 refers**) there were many vacancies within the care sector, however jobs in this field ranked tenth in the list of what jobs people were looking for. Many jobs in this sector required people to visit people in their own homes which often meant that a person required their own transport. Many jobs of this nature did not pay the employee for their time spent travelling between shifts. Shift work and travelling between shifts/split shifts i.e. to put a client to bed as part of care work was difficult and often required the employee to travel at unsociable hours and when public transport was not available. In addition to this it was felt that dealing with personal care required patience and sensitivity and not all young people had the aptitude to do this kind of work in a way that maintained a good relationship with the person being cared for; who could be confused, forgetful or argumentative for instance.

41. In summary partnership working and better promotion of success stories were the two major themes that emerged from this visit. However, it was also realised that collectively there was a need to strive towards lowering the number of 18-24 year olds currently unemployed. York had a relatively buoyant employment market, in comparison to many other areas of the country, so there was scope to make improvement. The number of unemployed 18-24 year olds in York was comparatively low however there were fewer easily placed persons now on the register. It was believed that everyone was ultimately employable but significant barriers would need to be overcome for some clients to get a sustainable paid job or become self employed.
42. Other – In addition to this an update was received from JCP in December 2012 informing the Task Group that they currently only had 17 work experience opportunities available in York (for all ages of benefit claimants) and these were run on a rolling programme of between 4 and 8 weeks in various occupations – 50% of customers undertaking work experience move into work, either with the host employer or with another employer, within 13 weeks of completing the work experience opportunity. These opportunities ranged from retail to logistics – however there was a shortage of business administration roles.

#### Visit to Pertemps

43. On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 the Task Group and the Scrutiny Officer visited Pertemps, based in Eboracum Way which is located off the Malton Road. The Task Group sat in on a CV workshop for 18 to 24 year olds and was impressed with the way the trainer built a good rapport with the young people present and how he engaged them in the workshop, encouraging them to involve themselves in the discussions.
44. During the break in the workshop the Task Group had the opportunity to talk to some of the group and found that all present had either previously been in paid employment or had some work experience. Further conversation highlighted the following:
- One person had got work experience at a Charity Shop through Pertemps and another had organised her own retail work experience in a Charity Shop
  - Both of the above thought that the Council offering work experience opportunities would help them to get paid work in the future

- Two members of the group said one advantage of Pertemps over JCP was in the amount of support time offered. JCP tended to offer less support time than Pertemps and Pertemps also offered more 1 to 1 and in-depth support
  - Some Members of the group had a clear idea of what kind of work they were looking for whilst others didn't. Pertemps helped those that didn't know to narrow their options.
  - One person would have appreciated being targeted towards where the job vacancies were and was glad to know that there were vacancies in both the care sector and in administration and business support.
  - One person in the group was not interested in doing work experience or gaining further qualifications if it meant he wasn't going to be paid at the same time.
45. However these comments were anecdotal and were not necessarily representative of all 18-24 year olds as they were from a very small sample of young people.

#### Visit to Prospect Training

46. On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2012 the Chair of Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Officer visited Prospect Training where they met with the Regional Manager and the Employer Engagement and York Specialist (who has subsequently left Prospect Training).
47. Prospect are the Work Programme sub-contract providers for the Prime Contractors, In-Training and have been delivering the contract since June 2011. They are centrally located in Piccadilly, close to bus transport links. They have a client list of approximately 1100 people (not just 18 – 24 year olds), but longer-term unemployed York residents of all working ages.
48. A client is referred to them by JCP and a small fee of £240 is attached to this referral. This attachment fee is to cover office and staff costs, plus reimbursing client travel costs, postage, phone calls, resources and contributions to appropriate clothing for interviews etc. Clients attract additional success related funding to Prospect Training once they have been in a job for 13 weeks or 26 weeks (depending on assessed employability).

49. It was understood that 50% of Work Programme clients were allocated to G4S (Pertemps) and 50% to In-Training (which included Prospect Training and Barnados for 18-24 year olds).

50. Prospect Training can offer courses/training in:

- Telephone skills
- English, Maths and ICT
- Employability (CV preparation, presenting yourself in a positive manner)
- Completing application forms
- Interview skills

Many of these are certified courses with the telephone skills course being a documented course rather than a certified one.

51. Prospect Training identified what they felt to be the five key steps to obtaining employment:

- A relevant CV – the CV and the Personal Profile within the CV should reflect the sector and role being applied for
- The ability to complete an application form (neat handwriting, good grammar)
- A clear covering letter stating why you are applying for the role and what you can bring to it
- Good telephone skills
- Interview techniques – including dressing appropriately and being prepared

52. The Chair of Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked the Employer Engagement and York Specialist at Prospect Training what City of York Council could do to help partner organisations reduce levels of youth unemployment? Networking with City of York Council colleagues was seen as key as was networking with employers in the city. The Employer Engagement and York Specialist was also keen to build relationships with the Universities in the city.

53. Working with employers and partners - working with the major supermarkets was also seen as beneficial (by Prospect Training) as they were a major employer within the city; there was still work to be done to improve relationships with them as they could potentially generate a significant number of jobs for unemployed residents within the city. The Employer Engagement and York Specialist said that currently most

supermarket vacancies (and those in the hospitality industry) required the candidate to complete an on-line application form. He felt that often those applying for entry level jobs found this difficult and Prospect Training could potentially save time by working with the supermarkets (and other employers) to pre-interview and then ask those candidates that they liked to fill in application forms. If it was possible to gain agreement with the head offices of some of these organisations work could begin to develop local recruitment solutions.

54. When told more about the focus of this review, he said that in his experience many 18 to 24 year olds looking for entry level jobs were more suited to working in supermarkets and the hospitality industry rather than working in the care sector or business administration. In addition to this if a young person wanted to stay in that type of work the supermarkets tended to promote and train young people very well.
55. The Employer Engagement and York Specialist was very keen to build relationships and networks with supermarkets, key players (both locally and nationally) in the hospitality industry (such as Wetherspoons) and retail. He specifically thought that a meeting with the Chair of York Hospitality Network and the Chair of York Retail Network would be beneficial. In addition to this he acknowledged that the NHS and the Dean and Chapter were other employers within the city that it would be useful to work with on a closer basis as they offered entry level jobs.
56. Further discussion around Jobs Fairs ensued and the Employer Engagement and York Specialist felt that Job Fairs offered a useful networking opportunity for employers to meet not only with those seeking employment but other employers as well. The representative of Prospect Training felt that employer senior decision makers should be attending future Job Fairs.
57. Employment within the care sector – the Chair and Scrutiny Officer further discussed vacancies within the care sector with the Employer Engagement and York Specialist; in particular why these did not seem to appeal to 18 to 24 year olds. The Employer Engagement and York Specialist agreed that there were many vacancies in this sector but believed that these were not suited to 18 to 24 year olds in part due to the generation gap and partly because personal care wasn't something that very many young people saw themselves doing. He mentioned that the work was often low paid, young people did not see it as having any prospects for promotion and hours were often unsociable. He also mentioned that it could be difficult for care providers to get insurance for those under 25 years of age. There were also entry barriers to this

sector, with a need to have a CRB check; this meant that it was difficult to gain any work experience in this area prior to applying for a job<sup>10</sup>.

58. However, if enough young people were interested in working in this sector then Prospect Training could use some funding they had from the Skills Funding Agency to put on an 'introduction to care' course.
59. Employment within the business administration sector – the Employer Engagement and York Specialist said that this was a very competitive area and often very specialised (i.e. legal or medical secretarial work); any knowledge that a candidate had needed to be very up to date and there were very few vacancies that suited those looking for entry level jobs.
60. The Wage Incentive Scheme – employers can get £2275 if they employ an 18-24 year old client from the Work Programme for 30+ hours a week for 24 weeks, or £1137.50 if they employ them for 13 weeks. There is a limited pot of funding but there hasn't been a great take-up yet and it needed to be better advertised as it could potentially go some way to helping companies with cash flow (especially as apprenticeship wages were low). The Employer Engagement and York Specialist offered to give a presentation to employers outlining the assistance available to them when employing currently unemployed young people. The Chair thought that Science City York might be interested in publishing an article on this or adding it to one of their programmes and suggested that the Employer Engagement and York Specialist at Prospect Training contact them. She also thought that there may be a demand for a presentation like this at the York Business Conference, next due to take place in November 2013.
61. Transport as a barrier to employment - Further discussions were had with Prospect Training around transport, which again was identified as a barrier. Public transport needed to be available to fit shift patterns. It was again acknowledged that there was warehouse work available in Sherburn in Elmet but that it was difficult for many currently unemployed 18 to 24 year olds in York to access this. The Chair of Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee thought there might be

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<sup>10</sup> In response to the comments made by the Work Programme provider a representative of JCP had made the following comment: 'JCP and Future Prospects have been working together with the North Yorkshire Care Ambassador and care sector employers to deliver a series of awareness events about the care sector for Job Centre customers. This is aimed at dispelling some of the myths around this type of work i.e. that all care work is low paid, that there are no progression prospects and that it is only working with elderly people.'

a role that City of York Council could play in advertising lift shares or looking at where improvements could be made with public transport. Whilst the Council didn't provide public transport direct it had strong links with providers across the city and the Chair agreed to raise this with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability.

62. Involving the Press – both the Employer Engagement and York Specialist and the Chair of the Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee were keen to involve the Press in publishing success stories.

### **Analysing the Information Received to Date**

63. Up-skilling - The Task Group considered the information received to date and felt that one of the key missing pieces of the picture they had built to date was around what additional skills support the different agencies offered 18 to 24 year olds, particularly for the longer term unemployed. They believed it was imperative to ensure that any up-skilling and pre-employment training opportunities provided were relevant in order to support currently unemployed young people on their journey to gaining sustainable employment. For example, if it were established that young people were unable or found it difficult to complete an on-line application form then perhaps there was a need for IT skills training in general (not just support, from someone else, on completing on-line application forms), which would also be useful in any job gained as well as in the application process.
64. It was felt there was a fine balance (from a contract payment perspective) between taking time to upskill a client with some applied training and moving them quickly into a job. However, those with less than a Level 2 qualification should be able to access 'free training' through York College or other Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funded providers. It was not known how many clients Prospect Training or Pertemps were supporting in this way and there had been no evidence to date as to whether they were just focussing on CV writing, applying for jobs and job interview techniques.
65. As per the NEET group, a rising number of 18 to 24 year olds did not appear to be 'job ready' or 'apprenticeship ready' as they did not have the right skills, aptitudes and qualifications, including literacy, numeracy and IT. The Task Group wanted to be assured that the 'offer' of support for those going through JCP and the Work Programme was meeting the needs of the clients and included relevant pre-employment training.



66. Through JCP, as an example, young people could benefit from something called a 'sector based work academy' which covered work experience, a relevant pre-employment vocational qualification, literacy/numeracy and interview practice with an employer. This could be delivered through core SFA funding accessed by the likes of York College, YH Training and/or CYC Adult Services. It was not immediately obvious, from the information received to date, whether the Work Programme providers were offering a similar package to this through their contracts; however it was later understood that this was *not* available through the Work Programme contracts. Information contained within the paragraphs above indicated a top line approach to support: i.e. CV writing, job search which are all important, however there appeared to be less emphasis on work experience, pre-employment skills training and literacy and numeracy in order to better prepare young people to compete for and sustain jobs.
67. It was acknowledged that Work Programme providers such as Prospect Training did help clients to complete on-line application forms, however they also saw merit in employers pre-interviewing at Prospect Training's offices to get a feel for which candidates they might like to complete an application form and then select for the formal interview process. IT literacy was acknowledged to be a key skill needed for sustaining a job. If Work Programme providers continued to complete on-line applications with and/or for young people then they would not acquire an essential skill that they would need for a job or to apply for other jobs in the future. There was strong evidence that poor levels of IT, literacy and numeracy were impeding the progression of adults and the Task Group wanted to understand what support the Work Programme providers were giving young people to help them acquire these skills.
68. As an example, if young people were interested in working in a particular field, for example, the retail or hospitality sectors then Work Programme providers could better prepare young people by providing relevant pre-employment training. To this effect the Task Group particularly welcomed the offer from Prospect Training to potentially provide an 'introduction to care course' (**Paragraph 58** refers).
69. Addressing the city skills deficit of adults who have yet to attain a Level 2 qualification is a key priority, within the new City Skills Strategy, in order to bring about an improvement to the productivity of those already working and to improve the job prospects of those not working. 18% of adults aged 19+ do not have a Level 2 qualification and it would be advantageous, whilst staying within the remit of this review, to prioritise supporting the longer term unemployed clients referred to Prospect

Training and Pertemps to help them gain a Level 2 qualification as well as basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills.

70. After consideration of this issue the Task Group decided that further information was required from G4S and In-Training to better clarify what pre-employment training their sub-contractors can and do support over and above general CV writing and job search, in order to identify whether there are gaps that we can challenge.
71. Work Programme Providers – On 27th November 2012 both the BBC News website and The Guardian newspaper website reported that only 3.5% of people referred to the Work Programme found a job for six months or more – missing the Government’s target of 5.5%. Analysis by the Guardian revealed that none of the 18 Work Programme contractors managed to get 5.5% of unemployed people referred to the scheme a job for six months or more.
72. The recently published Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion’s analysis of the DWP’s first Work Programme performance statistics<sup>11</sup> gives details of performance broken down to ages and claimant types for both the contract package (North, East Yorkshire and the Humber) and individual Local Authority job outcomes.
73. North, East Yorkshire and the Humber has very low job outcomes from the Work Programme in relation to the rest of the country with only 2.9% of job outcomes as a proportion of referrals and only one other contract package area having a poorer performance figure. In York specifically only 3.8% of those referred to the Work Programme had a job for six months or more and only 2.7% of 18-24 year olds.
74. City of York Council had already recognised the need to enhance the current national arrangements with various network meetings. Primes and local delivery partners have been invited to join the Learning City ‘Connecting People to Jobs and Opportunities’ network. Two meetings have been held to date (October 2012 and March 2013); as yet the Work Programme providers have not attended. Individual meetings with each provider have been held with the Partnership Manager, but the engagement of the providers with wider local networks would be welcome.
75. In light of the above the Task Group met with representatives from G4S and In-Training along with representatives from Pertemps on 19<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.cesi.org.uk/keypolicy/work-programme-performance-statistics-inclusion-analysis>

February 2013. Discussions ensued around the figures set out in **paragraph 73** above and the low job outcomes that had been achieved from the Work Programme.

76. The Work Programme ran on a two year cycle and was now approximately 18 months in, with the end of the first two year period being June 2013. Those who were still out of work at the two year point would be referred back to JCP for support. Normally the Work Programme provider would only see clients one day in a fortnight but as the first tranche of Work Programme referrals was coming towards the two year point it was understood that the providers were running intensive workshops (for up to eight days consecutively) with those young people who were still out of work. These workshops covered basic skills and also attempted to look at what the barriers were for them gaining employment.
77. G4S and Pertemps said that there was a struggle to upskill those who were at pre-entry level or entry level 1. 36% of JSA claimants of ages had poor literacy and numeracy skills (cannot read and write to Level 2). The Work Programme providers said that such clients posed a significant problem as they often needed one to one reading and writing lessons. G4S could offer Maths, English and Computing to Level 1. Both G4S and In-Training acknowledged that in future, the programme of intensive training should be done at an earlier stage of the Work Programme.
78. Work Programme clients were split into nine different payment groups. For the purposes of this review Group 1 and Group 3 clients were the ones that the Task Group needed to know more about. Group 1 clients were 18-24 year olds who had been unemployed for 6 months on reaching the Work Programme. A success payment was triggered when a client had 26 weeks of work within the two year cycle; however this did not have to be consecutive and could take the form of several shorter contracts. The Work Programme success rates for Group 1 clients were quoted to the Task Group as 31% for In-training and 34% for G4S; however these have not been verified.
79. Group 3 clients were longer term unemployed i.e. 1 year + and included 18 to 24 year olds. These clients were often harder to place as they may have previously been NEET, may be lower skilled and often had more complex backgrounds and needs. They were considered to have more barriers to entering and sustaining employment than Group 1 clients. Payments for Group 3 clients were triggered at 13 weeks. Neither Work Programme provider had figures for the success rate of getting Group 3 clients age 18-24 years into work.

80. Generally speaking it was acknowledged that there was a lot of 'churn' and people on the Work Programme were taking more than one job. The Task Group felt that the ultimate outcome should be sustainable employment for those referred to the Work Programme. It was explained that some job contracts were temporary, casual or short term and it was not always within the control of the individual or the Work Programme provider whether employment was terminated. It was acknowledged that nationally there was more casual and short term work and it was not just a local issue.
81. The Task Group asked why there were apprenticeship places still vacant and the representative of Pertemps said that in some cases young people could not afford to take an apprenticeship position at £95 per week. The Learning City York Partnership Manager asked if it would be useful to set up apprenticeship workshops as apprenticeships were available in many different sectors at varying pay rates and there were vacancies that needed filling. This was considered to be a positive step forward.
82. Transport – this was a barrier that had been identified on several occasions and discussed at previous points in this report. However on 19th November 2012 the BBC reported on its website that Essex County Council had set up a group to look at giving free travel passes to unemployed people... *'there are large number of youngsters genuinely looking for work or apprenticeships' ... 'we are obviously very concerned that young people have a problem travelling to find jobs and apprenticeships and we want to take away any barriers to them.'*
83. The Learning City York Partnership Manager informed the Task Group that lobbying for cheaper travel for the 16 to 18 year old student market i.e. for those still in education had been ongoing for a number of years with bus companies. It is felt that there is a genuine evidence based travel barrier to supporting unemployed young people into work (which could include to Leeds/Selby etc) then some scoping of 'affordable' options could take place.
84. In an article on the Guardian newspaper website on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012 it was announced that free bus travel was being offered to unemployed people in an attempt to help them find work. About 70% of all bus routes in England, Wales and Scotland would be covered by the initiative and it was understood that this was available to anyone over 3 months unemployed (but not on the Work Programme). However it was dependent on bus companies participating and was currently only for the

month of January 2013 with a view to extending this if there is good feedback.

85. It was later reported in the York Press on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013 that job seekers in York were being offered free bus travel in a scheme aimed at helping the long-term unemployed get back to work. The initiative, which is a joint effort by bus operators First, Arriva, Coastliner and East Yorkshire Motor Services (EYMS), is part of the national Bus for Jobs scheme and will offer free journeys for those who have been unemployed between three months and a year for the month of January 2013.
86. In addition to this the Work Foundation which was part of Lancaster University had, in December 2012, published a paper entitled 'Missing Million Policy Paper 2: Transport Barriers to Youth Unemployment'<sup>12</sup> which said that rising transport costs were making it difficult for thousands of young people to participate in education and training, leaving many unable to enter or stay in work.

### **Further Evidence Gathered**

#### City of York Council Apprenticeship Scheme

87. Young people were particularly vulnerable in these difficult economic times because of their lack of job-specific skills and work experience. In addition to this, the number of young people that were NEET (16-18 year olds) was rising. City of York Council was therefore creating a 'support and employment offer' for young people to create conditions that would facilitate their transition from education to working life in the following areas:
  - Apprenticeships (16-24 year olds)
  - Foundation Learning Placements (Pre-Apprenticeships, 16-18 year olds)
  - Work Experience Placements (16-24 year olds)
  - Work Experience Placements (14-16 year olds)
  - Student and Graduate Internships
  - Mentoring Scheme for Apprentices and Care Leavers
88. The Task Group learned about the apprenticeship programme at City of York Council which was now in its second year. As of 25<sup>th</sup> September

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.theworkfoundation.com/Reports/327/Missing-Million-Policy-Paper-2-Transport-barriers-to-youth-employment>

2012 City of York Council employed a total of 57 apprentices. A recruitment campaign took place during June/July 2012. For those young people who were classed as NEET City of York Council had worked with 'Connexions'<sup>13</sup> to assist with the recruitment campaign which had included:

- Letters sent to all young people registered NEET (16-18 year olds)
- 1000 mobile texts to wider 'targeted group' aged 16 to 18
- Identified group of 160 ethnic minority group clients aged 16-18 and texts sent
- Information sent to partners who may 'access hard to reach groups'

89. The recruitment campaign was launched in June 2012 and leading up to this a number of activities took place to promote the scheme. A promotional leaflet was produced and distributed to all schools and colleges on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012 to highlight City of York Council as an apprenticeship employer. City of York Council also attended a number of information events, using current apprentices to share their views and experiences to help possible candidates gain a further insight into the scheme. In addition to this there were press releases and information on Twitter and all vacancies were advertised on the Council's website and via the National Apprenticeship Service website. Those young people recruited to CYC Apprenticeships over the last 18 months have been between the ages of 16-24, including unemployed Graduates.
90. City of York Council also has 10 learners enrolled with York Training Centre who are completing the pre-apprenticeship programme; these placements are designed to provide an introduction to employment and learning, for 16 to 18 year olds.
91. This Authority is currently looking at facilitating other work experience schemes aimed at other young people (16-24). These placements will offer the opportunity to participate in the world of work and gain practical experience within the workplace and therefore we will be looking for departments within the organisation to make offers for these.
92. In addition to this the University of York is offering a January – February 2013 Internship Programme to its most recent graduates. The Graduates of 2012 identified as unemployed in November of 2012 will be offered a

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<sup>13</sup> The service aims to help young people up to 19 (and 25 if they have a learning difficulty and disability) get advice, guidance and access to opportunities and to help make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life

package of support measures which will include the offer of a substantive piece of 'paid' work experience to run for eight weeks from early January 2013. City of York Council is working with the University of York and encouraging managers to offer project work for this scheme. Seven placements are being supported. These 'internships' will be paid for and employed by University of York.

### Connecting People to Jobs & Opportunities in York

93. 'Connecting People to Jobs & Opportunities in York' is a partnership network chaired by the Learning City York Partnership Manager. The multi-agency network met for the first time on 9<sup>th</sup> October and all Members of the Task Group attended to give an update on the work that had happened in relation to this Scrutiny Review and to learn about some of the other things happening in the city around creating jobs and opportunities.
94. The Task Group were present at the meeting and asked the network whether they had any suggestions that they might like to put forward for ways City of York Council could better support young unemployed people to navigate the employment market and get a job.
95. As a result of this meeting JCP provided the following link to the Task Group which details Jobcentre Plus's Youth Contract offer for 16-24 year olds.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/youth-contract/key-initiatives/>

This provides information on:

- Wage incentives for employers - From 2 April 2012 until April 2015, employers are able to take advantage of 160,000 wage incentives. These are worth up to £2,275 each where they employ an 18 to 24 year old from:
  - the Work Programme
  - Jobcentre Plus, for employers who take on a young person living in one of 20 local authority areas (this does not include York) (since Jan 2013, this has been extended to those young people, aged 18-24, who have been unemployed for 6 months + i.e.: on JSA with JCP, as well as those eligible for the Work Programme)
- Work experience - Extra work experience places will be available across Great Britain over the next 3 years ensuring there is an offer of a place for every 18 to 24 year-old who wants one, before they enter the Work Programme (dependent on local employers providing placements).

- Sector based work academies - Extra places will be available in England and Scotland over the next three years, ensuring there is an offer of a place for every 18 to 24 year-old who wants one, before they enter the Work Programme. This facilitates the opportunity to gain a vocational qualification, up to 8 weeks work experience and a guaranteed interview with an employer (subject to local provision being offered).
- Apprenticeship wage incentives - £1500 is available to encourage small to medium-sized businesses to take-on Apprentices aged 16-24 in England, who have not previously taken on apprentices. In relation to support for disengaged 16 to 17 year olds in England - the Government will invest £126 million over the next three years to support very low qualified young people aged 16 to 17 who are not in education, employment or training in England. For York, those eligible for support i.e. no GCSEs Grades A\*-C equates to around 90.

96. Following the input of the Task Group into the October 2012 meeting of 'Connecting People to Jobs & Opportunities' Higher York liaised with its Higher Education partners to provide a briefing paper regarding graduates (from York-based Higher Education Institutions) accessing the job market in York. This is at **Annex C** to this report. Graduates were part of the 18-24 age bracket that this review was looking at.
97. The paper at **Annex C** states that '*... we know (anecdotally) that graduates choose to stay or return to York and we know that some remain unemployed and some are underemployed. We can see that if graduates are taking on roles previously taken by those with lower levels of education that this is potentially having an effect on the rest of the labour market in York.*'

It was understood that more research needed to be done around this displacement and Higher York were seeking to make a bid to the CYC Delivery and Innovation Fund (DIF) to conduct some research into this area.

### Future Prospects

98. Future Prospects is a City of York Council service that supports free learning & work advice (over and above the nationally funded National Careers Service, contracted through Babcock Enterprises in York), as well as the delivery of a number of contracted training programmes for unemployed residents in York e.g. ex-offenders; families with multiple issues and support for redundancies. Future Prospects is a multi-funded, not for profit service arm of CYC that ensures people have access to



impartial and objective advice and guidance. The service is constantly changing to reflect the needs of local people. Future Prospects provides a central point for information and advice on training and education opportunities in the area (alongside the National Careers Service) and is currently based in Swinegate. They offer a varied programme of information events in conjunction with JCP such as:

- Find out about the range of opportunities and skills required for working in the hospitality sector
- Apprenticeships
- Social care awareness information events
- working within the sports and leisure sector – information and employment event
- Working in administration
- Working in retail
- Working within the science sector
- Transport and logistics information and employment day

99. Such sector specific workshops as those mentioned above were seen as very valuable by the Task Group and they expressed the wish that these should continue as they were likely to be effective at helping young people get a flavour of different work sectors and help them decide which jobs might suit them. They could also go some way towards overcoming prejudices and preconceptions about what it is like to work in certain sectors.

100. The Task Group also understood that a Jobs Fair had been held at the Hilton Hotel on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2012. This had been organised by Learning City York and the Economic Development Unit at City of York Council but co-ordinated by Future Prospects working in partnership with JCP. Job Fairs were where recruiting employers, training providers and employment support agencies had stands and afforded both the employer and job seekers the opportunity to meet face to face. The Jobs Fair held in October 2012 was attended by 1556 people of all ages. It is unknown exactly how many of these were between 18 and 24 years of age but taking into account the adviser referral activity for this event it is estimated that it is approximately 51%.

101. The Task Group saw Job Fairs as a positive way for both employers and potential employees to meet and would like to see them continue and held on a six monthly basis.

## **GeniUS**

102. The Chair of Economic and City Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee was keen to gauge the views of a wider audience and to this effect posted a question to the GeniUS website, namely:

*'How can City of York Council help young people to get work?'*

103. This ran until 16<sup>th</sup> November 2012 and there were three responses received. These were from 'Reaching Out', Gap Training Limited and Inspired Youth (Youth Inclusion). A copy of the responses is at **Annex D** to this report. The respondents were invited to an informal meeting of the Task Group but were unfortunately unable to attend. However the Learning City York Partnership Manager is following up these responses.

## **Options**

104. There are no direct options associated with the recommendations in this report. Members are asked to consider the report and its associated recommendations and indicate any amendments they may wish to make prior to them being submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

## **Analysis**

105. Analysis of the information received is contained within the body of this report and on consideration of this and the discussions had as part of this review the Task Group believed that recommendation should be made as follows:

### **Recommendation 1 - Reducing youth unemployment**

106. The Task Group felt that setting quantifiable targets would be a positive way of working towards reducing youth unemployment. However they realised that any target set needed to be achievable and would need discussion with key partners such as JCP and the Work Programme providers. It would be overly ambitious to set a target to reduce youth unemployment by 50%, for example, as this would take the unemployment levels back to those of 2008, prior to the current economic climate. There would also need to be a clear rationale and appropriate interventions to secure such an ambitious reduction, and the realisation that there would always be a certain level of unemployment, even in times of economic growth. However, on behalf of CYC, the Learning City York Partnership Manager was aiming to include a target in the new City Skills and Employment Strategy to reduce youth unemployment by 2016.

107. The Task Group, therefore, felt that the overall aim of any recommendation made should be to both reduce the overall number of 18-24 year olds that were out of work but more specifically to aim for a reduction in those that had been unemployed for more than 6 months. Any target suggested would be to reduce the numbers claiming JSA, not just the number of people aged 18-24 who were longer term unemployed.

108. They realised that it was important that someone took ownership of the target, especially as all the agencies concerned had different contracts and worked in different ways. They felt that this could be effectively managed by the Connecting People to Jobs and Opportunities partnership network (and subsequently the Learning City Board, which this network reported to). On further discussion with the Learning City York Partnership Manager it was felt that the overall aim should be:

- To reduce youth unemployment by 40% to pre-recessions levels by 2016
  - As of January 2013<sup>14</sup> youth unemployment (18-24 year olds) stood at 725
  - As of January 2008 the figure was 440

109. The two 'jobs' and 'unemployment' targets that we should be articulating within the overall skills strategy (for all ages) will focus on:

- Increasing employment rates to pre-recession levels and;
- Reducing unemployment (JSA claimant benefits) to pre-recession levels

110. To this effect the Task Group make the following recommendation:

***Recommendation 1: 'That the Learning City York Partnership Manager, via the 'Connecting People to Jobs and Opportunities' partnership network and the Learning City Strategic Board, take overall responsibility for setting an achievable target with key partners within the city to reduce longer term unemployment in the 18-24 year old age bracket'.***

**Recommendation 2 – Apprenticeships**

111. The Task Group felt that City of York Council's apprenticeship programme had been successful and would like to see the offer continued. In addition to this they thought an understanding of how

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<sup>14</sup> January 2013 are the latest published figures available

successful the programme was could be gauged by gathering information on whether young people who had undertaken an apprenticeship at the Council were still in work (in or outside of the Council) or had decided to undertake further training 6 – 12 months later.

112. The progression of young people who had completed an apprenticeship to go on to obtain sustainable employment or further training was critical to identifying how successful the programme actually was.
113. However it was acknowledged that there were unfilled apprenticeship vacancies with a variety of other employers in the city and this needed to be addressed to ensure maximum take-up.
114. This led to the following two part recommendation being made:

***Recommendation 2:*** *‘That City of York Council continue to offer apprenticeships to young people under the age of 24 and evaluate the success of this by collecting information on how many of those that have completed an apprenticeship at the Local Authority are still in work or further training 6 – 12 months later’ and ‘that the Learning City York Partnership Manager lead on a programme with the Head of Adult Services to develop a programme that better supports unemployed 18-24 year olds into unfilled apprenticeship vacancies.’*

**Recommendation 3 – Work experience**

115. As part of this review the Task Group considered information around the work experience the Council offered to both under 16s and those between the ages of 16 and 24. They noted that the Council offered work experience opportunities for under 16s (whilst still at school) and for those aged under 18 (who were not ready for an apprenticeship). It was acknowledged that work was taking place around facilitating other work experience schemes aimed at young people aged between 16 and 24 however the Task Group felt that there was a gap in work experience opportunities offered by the Council for those 18-24 year olds who had been unemployed in excess of 3 months.
116. Initial discussions between the Learning City York Partnership Manager and the Head of Strategic Workforce Development and Resourcing indicated that staff resources were already stretched in terms of facilitating and managing any further work experience placements and there would need to be further discussion to see if there was potential to support a small scale offer to match unemployed 18 to 24 year olds to specific opportunities within the Council.

117. Incidentally the Learning City York Partnership Manager has recently confirmed that she is working with Human Resources and other service users of the Council's new headquarters e.g. Citizen Advice Bureau, the Credit Union and the Police to set up a programme to support work experience placements for unemployed 18 to 24 year olds and other age groups.
118. To supplement this and to offer a full and rounded range of work experience placements the Task Group also felt that the Council needed to ensure that there was a proper Graduate and Student Internship Programme in place.

***Recommendation 3:*** *That City of York Council continue to offer work experience placements to under 16's (whilst still at school) and under 18s not yet ready for an apprenticeship. And in addition to this:*

- i. That the Head of Strategic Workforce Development and Resourcing, in conjunction with the Learning City York Partnership Manager, offer a discrete, managed, matched pilot, of work experience placement opportunities for unemployed 18 to 24 year olds, who have been unemployed in excess of three months*
- ii. That the Head of Strategic Workforce Development and Resourcing ensures that there is a robust Graduate and Student Internship Programme in place within the authority.*

#### **Recommendation 4 – Job Fairs**

119. Whilst gathering evidence for this review the Task Group heard about a Job Fair that had been held in October 2012, this was well attended and considered to have been a success. It was understood by the Task Group that these were likely to continue and they wanted to offer their support for this to happen on a twice yearly basis; seeing them as a valuable tool for both employers and potential employees to meet face to face to discuss various aspects of work.
120. Job Fairs, however, came with a cost and there was no central or currently allocated budget for this type of activity. Job Fairs cost approximately £5,000 each, so if they are held twice yearly costs will be in the region of £10,000. The Learning City York Partnership Manager informed the Task Group that she had prepared a bid (in liaison with the Head of CYC Adult Services) to the economic inclusion strand of the Economic Infrastructure Fund (EIF). This had recently been considered by the project board for Creating Growth and Growing the Economy and had been approved. This means that Job Fairs will take place in May and

October until and including 2016. They will be facilitated by CYC Adult Services in liaison with JCP.

121. This Task Group were happy to support the bid and hoped that in the future costs of supporting Job Fairs could be shared between other agencies and those employers taking part.

***Recommendation 4: That the Head of Adult Services at City of York Council ensures that Future Prospects works in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and leads on the co-ordinating of twice yearly Job Fairs.***

**Recommendation 5 – Sector specific workshops**

122. Sector specific workshops were seen as a positive way for people to learn about different work sectors and get a taste for what working in specific sectors might be like. As can be seen from the information contained within **paragraph 98** of this report Future Prospects, in conjunction with JCP, already offer a wide range of workshops and the Task Group were keen that these were continued and better promoted.
123. There was currently an identifiable gap in the service offered in terms of who was invited to attend the workshops; with the Task Group very keen that these should be opened up to *all* unemployed 18-24 year olds. At the moment they were not offered to those on the Work Programme.
124. They felt that Future Prospects, working with other agencies across the city, were well placed to co-ordinate and organise this type of activity and felt one of the critical success factors of Future Prospects was their ability to offer a neutral and welcoming environment to hold these workshops in.
125. Despite this the Task Group was still keen that these workshops continued to be held at Future Prospects' premises if at all possible; with the justification that it was a neutral venue and clients from all organisations could be invited there. Work Programme providers, for example, were only contracted to work with their own clients and so it was unlikely that they would be able to open up their premises to those that had not been referred to them.
126. They also believed that cross-agency working was needed because the sector specific workshops had to attract a critical mass of people to be successful. They therefore suggested that it might be possible for the various agencies involved to contribute to the costs of these events, either financially or by way of sharing staff. The overall aim was co-

operation between all agencies to help currently unemployed people back into work.

***Recommendation 5: That the Head of Adult Services at City of York Council ensures that the Future Prospects team continue to work in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus, to offer sector specific workshops and that both Work Programme providers and their clients\* are made aware of the sector specific workshops on offer.***

*\*in this instance clients means unemployed 18 to 24 year olds, including those on the Work Programme*

### **Recommendation 6 – Networking**

127. In October 2012, the Learning City York Partnership Manager established a networking group called 'Connecting People to Jobs and Opportunities' which has representation from many agencies actively helping unemployed/out of work residents. This has now met on several occasions and actively works on solutions to bring people of all ages back into employment.

***Recommendation 6: That the Learning City York Partnership Manager continue to facilitate quarterly networking meetings of 'Connecting People to Jobs and Opportunities' to support residents on out of work benefits and seeking employment. This networking meeting should include a standing item on looking at potential solutions to enable currently unemployed 18-24 year olds back into work.***

### **Recommendation 7 – Marketing campaign – support for and business benefits of employing York's Young People**

128. Having considered all the evidence received to date and listened to and spoke with various key partners the Task Group did not feel that there was enough media coverage about the support available for young people and those young people who had successfully gained employment. They believed that there was a distinct gap when it came to things such as:

- marketing the success stories of young people who had gained employment/become self employed
- promoting the success of apprenticeships and graduate interns
- promoting some of the initiatives available to employers such as the wage incentive
- promoting Job Fairs

129. With a focus on the longer term unemployed who had successfully gained employment it was suggested that the Head of Communications collect regular articles and stories with an aim to attract success stories into print, on the radio, through in-house publications and by using digital meeting. The recent '100 in 100 days Apprenticeship Campaign' facilitated by Learning City (City of York Council) with partners, had had some very positive media coverage and the Task Group were keen that this should continue but as part of a more structured package of marketing.

130. On discussion with the Head of Communications the Task Group thought that a package of about 12 to 14 articles (delivered via various mediums) would be an achievable target and this may include a video from the next Job Fair.

***Recommendation 7: That the Council's Head of Communications lead on a branded campaign that effectively markets:***

- i. success stories and inspiring cases about York's young people finding jobs/self employment and those that have overcome barriers to gain employment*
- ii. apprentices and interns*
- iii. a video of the next Job Fair*
- iv. wage incentives and support available to employers*

**Recommendation 8 – Support available to employers**

131. The Task Group gave consideration to the support on offer to employers and how better to raise awareness of what was available to them. The Learning City York Partnership Manager confirmed she was already working with partners on how best to do this via workshops, conferences, direct business engagement, websites etc with the aim of ensuring good advice was being given as to what support was available.

132. After further discussion the Task Group suggested that a news bulletin be sent to employers prior to any future Job Fairs to raise awareness of when these were happening and what employers could gain from attending. In addition to promoting wage incentives as per **Recommendation 7** above the Task Group also asked that York Business Week include a workshop/information for employers on the different wage incentives available to them if they employed someone from the Work Programme.



**Recommendation 8:** *That the Learning City York Partnership Manager continue to promote the range of support available to employers.*

**Recommendation 9 – Transport barriers**

133. As part of this review the Task Group heard on several occasions that transport was a barrier for some young people when seeking employment. Whilst there were some moves to providing assistance for free bus travel for those that had been unemployed in excess of 3 months, currently this was only for a trial period during the month of January 2013.

**Recommendation 9:** *That the Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Transport explore potential ways and investigate the feasibility of funding/providing sustainable subsidised travel that fits shift patterns and would help young people to access entry level jobs outside of the city centre (e.g. bicycles, public transport, car share)*

**Recommendation 10 – Supporting earlier employability interventions for those on the Work Programme**

134. The payment methodology appears to incentivise the Work Programme providers to prioritise support for the most work ready clients first. Those who have more complex needs and required more intensive support appear to be overlooked during the earlier stages of the Work Programme cycle.

135. The Task Group acknowledge that this is the first two year cycle of the Work Programme and providers will be reviewing the supporting interventions for clients, seeking to improve their current job outcomes and performance.

**Recommendation 10:** *That the Work Programme providers, working with the Learning City York Partnership Manager and the Head of Adult Services at City of York Council, develop a plan for improving the skills of those clients without basic literacy and numeracy. This should happen in the first year of the Work Programme's two year cycle.*

**Council Plan 2011-15**

136. This Scrutiny Review is directly linked to the 'Create Jobs and Grow the Economy' priority of the Council Plan 2011-15. The aim of the priority is for all of the City's residents to enjoy the opportunity to achieve their potential within York's economy. A strong and growing economy will

provide new job opportunities and the ability for residents to achieve a high quality of life for themselves and their families.

### **Implications**

137. Many of the relevant service managers have been involved during the course of this review and have had conversations with the Task Group around deliverability of the proposed recommendations. More in depth information in relation to the implications associated with the recommendations will be tabled at the meeting.

### **Risk Management**

138. In order to meet the priority in the Council Plan 2011-15 around creating jobs and growing the economy there is a need to address what opportunities there are for young people to become gainfully employed. There is a danger that if we do not introduce some or all of the measures set out in this report the Council would not meet some of the ambitions contained within the Council plan.

### **Recommendations**

139. Members are asked to agree the ten recommendations set out in the paragraphs above prior to them being referred to Cabinet for consideration.

Reason: To bring this Scrutiny Review to a close.

### **Contact Details**

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 14.03.2013

#### **Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

None

**Annexes**

**Annex A** Introductory paper

**Annex B** Apprenticeship development in York and programmes supporting young people 16-24 into work

**Annex C** Paper from Higher York – Graduates accessing the job market in York

**Annex D** Responses to question posted on the GeniUS website