



Report of: **Corporate Director of Children, Employment and Skills**

Meeting of:	Date	Ward(s)
Children's Services Scrutiny	16 July 2018	All

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**SUBJECT: Post-16 Education Employment and Training Review 2016/17 – 12 Month Report Back**

## 1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The Executive received a report from the Children's Service Scrutiny Committee on 28 September 2017 which reviewed Post 16 Education, Employment and Training. The Committee proposed 16 recommendations.
- 1.2 The scrutiny review:
  - Explored how to sustain improvements and continue to increase the number of young people progressing to Post 16 Education, Employment and Training.
  - Suggested ways to prevent young people becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the first place.
  - Assessed the strategic role of Islington Council to: enable an increase in the number of young people in education employment & training; and to identify specific measures which will increase progression into education, employment and training.
  - Assessed the availability and effectiveness of information, advice, guidance and employability support for young people.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the 12-month update to the Post 16 Scrutiny review.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Committee commended the Progress and iWork services for their work in reducing the number of young people NEET in Islington. However, the Committee considered that improvements could be made to these services. In particular, it was highlighted that services could be strengthened by presenting themselves as a united team. It is considered that greater coordination and joint working would lead to a more coherent employability and progression support service.
- 3.2 The Committee made several recommendations to further increase progression into education, employment and training. These include: increasing the number of 'stepping stone' approaches; reviewing careers education in alternative provision with a view to incorporating employer-led learning; reviewing the quality, range and accessibility of vocational pathways; and raising awareness of the council's progression and employment services
- 3.3 To significantly increase the number of young people progressing into education, employment and training, work is needed to tackle the root causes of barriers to progression. The Employment Commission and the Fair Futures Commission have both found that young people in Islington do not lack ambition but that many experience a lack of social capital, lack of exposure to the world of work, and inadequate careers guidance, as real barriers to social mobility and progression into good careers.
- 3.4 The iWork Youth Employment Team opens up pathways into sustainable careers for young people. This begins with supporting schools to engage with businesses who can inspire young people and in doing so bridge the gap with the world of work. The team also works with employers to develop apprenticeship and entry level roles for school leavers and NEET young people aged up to 24. iWork provides essential pre-employment support to equip young people to make a successful transition into the work place. The team also supports the council's internal apprenticeship programme, providing pastoral support and employment progression opportunities.

The Progress Team is made up of a Post 16 Participation Manager and 7 advisers who deliver NEET prevention and interventions to the most vulnerable young people not in Employment, Education and Training. They have statutory duty to follow up on all 16 to 18 year-old Islington residents and maintain an up to date record of their destination. The team also provides on-going support to young people leaving Islington schools and colleges who have not a secured place of learning.

- 3.5 Whilst the scrutiny panel heard that the teams were already collaborating in a number of ways, they made recommendations for a much clearer and integrated service.

### 4. Update on Scrutiny Recommendations

- 4.1 Recommendation 1: That the Progress and iWork teams be integrated further to develop a more coherent and efficient employment and progression support service.**

The Progress team moved to the Employment, Skills and Culture division on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018, and has been integrated within the iWork employment service.

- 4.2 Recommendation 2: That Children's Services review how the council's employment and progression support services could be further integrated with both targeted and universal youth services, to improve the accessibility of the Progress Team and to provide more holistic support to those in need. This review should be completed by July 2018 and the conclusions reported back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.**

The further integration of the Progress team into the iWork service has enabled a strategic approach to service delivery, including the development of a Team Islington approach to supporting young people.

This review has established the need for a more strategic approach to mapping and coordinating joint work between the council teams and external partners offering employment and progression support. As a result, the Aspire youth employment network that convenes these parties sits with a new, borough wide Pathways to Employment Partnership.

Stronger collaboration across the council has led to the development of several targeted programmes of work. A pilot employment, training and education project is underway with the Youth Offending Service to provide a holistic package of support to young people leaving custody, with identified pathways into employment, and an iWork coach has been colocated with the service.

A targeted outreach and employment project with the Targeted Youth Service in Finsbury Park has established a successful model that is now being extended to other areas of the borough.

iWork and the Children Looked After service are working on a joint employment action plan, and key activities include an Aspire employment event in July and the colocation of a Progress Adviser.

A stronger culture of cross departmental consultation has seen closer working in commissioning, colocation of employment and progression staff in targeted services, and projects that are co-produced with relevant services.

A single access point for iWork employment and progression services, including one telephone line and email address, will be in operation from July 2018.

- 4.3 Recommendation 3: That the council provide an induction session and supporting resources for teachers and others working with young people. This should be primarily targeted at those working with 14 – 18 year olds and professionals with careers/pastoral responsibilities. The induction and resources should focus on the specific issues faced by young people in Islington and seek to bridge knowledge gaps, such as the range of vocational opportunities available and how best to support young people into them.**

The Careers Network creates a forum for school staff to discuss priorities and concerns, as well as possible solutions to address these.

A task and finish group has been established and through the schools' Careers Network forum to compile and plan resources and training for new teachers and pastoral support staff to establish schools to utilise bespoke resources Labour Market Information was produced in October 2017 as part of the Careers Cluster programme, with specialist Continuing Professional Development delivered for school staff. Further training opportunities have included updates on apprenticeship reforms and opportunities, employment pathways within key industry sectors, and key policy developments including the DfE Careers Strategy.

- 4.4 Recommendation 4: That the council's work to increase the sustainability of employability and progression support activities; for example, by supporting schools in developing their own high-quality support to those seeking vocational pathways, and by reviewing how voluntary and community sector groups which contribute to young people's employability are supported.**

The council is developing an Islington Pledge, supporting all young people to benefit from 100 hours' experience of the world of work by the age of 16, in line with recommendations from the Fair Futures Commission. The pledge also includes an '11 by 11' enrichment offer, that will ensure young people have 11 outstanding cultural experiences by the age of 16.

Employability support for schools is being sustained through the Islington Community of Schools. A group of head teachers and council officers meet on a monthly basis to develop a strategic approach to enrichment that addresses issues of equity across schools.

Officers also convene a termly Careers Network with senior leaders from schools and relevant partners, to share practice, explore opportunities for greater collaboration and drive the employability agenda at an operational level.

iWork officers are working with partner organisations to collate the various offers of experiential careers education from employers, charities and voluntary sector groups, map the existing provision, and ensure a coordinated and equitable approach across schools.

The council have also worked with the Richard Reeves Foundation to enable schools to apply for a grant funding programme to support careers education and build capacity within schools. Six schools have subsequently been awarded grants, including Samuel Rhodes School and New River College. The council have been provisionally offered a grant to provide additional support for these schools to develop expertise at senior leadership level and meet the new required Quality in Careers Standard<sup>1</sup>.

**4.5 Recommendation 5: That the council provide tailored advice and support to families whose benefits eligibility may be affected by their child's employment. This must be handled sensitively and should not discourage young people from seeking employment.**

iWork have worked closely with DWP and the council's Income Maximisation team to ensure staff working with young people have a clear and up to date understanding of how a young person's employment may affect family benefits, and training was delivered for staff in February 2018. This is a complex area of work that is constantly changing, and with the roll out of Universal Credit in Islington iWork are also working with these partners to ensure up to date information and knowledge is shared regarding the impact on families and young people, with an information session held in June 2018.

A handout for parents and young people 16-18 is being produced by DWP and Islington Council, to help them understand the impact of their child not engaging with education, employment and training on their benefits. This will be complete by July 2018.

**4.6 Recommendation 6: That the council explore how a greater number and range of traineeship opportunities can be provided and brokered to develop the skills of young people who are not yet ready to apply for an apprenticeship**

iWork have reprofiled the team to make a greater resource available to develop traineeships and similar pre-employment programmes. A new Employment Programmes Manager is being recruited which will give additional capacity to build employment pathway programmes for those not yet ready for an apprenticeship.

The council completed its third traineeship programme in May 2018, with placements in construction roles with council teams and contractors. A further programme is planned for Summer 2018 to align with recruitment for a cohort of apprentices.

A need for traineeships in the health sector was identified, and the council has worked with partners from the sector and two neighbouring boroughs to initiate a successful programme in July 2017, with two further intakes since then.

Offer pre-employment programmes in the borough, including hospitality masterclasses organised in partnership with Arsenal in the Community and local employers, as well as digital taster programmes, have seen a broad range of opportunities across sectors.

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<sup>1</sup> The Quality in Careers Standard in the national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance <http://www.qualityincareers.org.uk/>

**Recommendation 7: Secondary schools and colleges should make use of alumni groups to support their careers education offer. This should help young people to access professional networks and sector specific knowledge, and may identify role models for young people.**

4.7

Making the best use of alumni support is a theme that is being discussed with the Islington Community of Schools, and schools have individual approaches and networks in place. Future First, a charity established with this remit, is working well with one Islington secondary school and presented at a recent Careers Network forum.

**Recommendation 8: That the ‘gold standard’ for careers education in Alternative Provision and New River College be reviewed and developed further. This should include high-impact employer-led sessions focusing on ambitions and work readiness. It would be appropriate for these to be provided by local businesses which offer apprenticeships.**

4.8

The council has begun a pilot partnership with NRC and BIG Alliance to provide a programme of employability support drawing on council and other business volunteers, including mentoring, work shadowing and work experience placements, and insight sessions with various industry sectors including hospitality, construction, retail and digital.

On-going support from officers will further extend the New River College network of employers and training providers to ease the transition for students at the end of Year 11. An arrangement has been agreed with City & Islington College who will provide transition support to students. This includes a day at college, mentoring support and guidance on progression and pathways into college.

New River College has been successful in its bid to the Richard Reeves Foundation for external funding that will build capacity, deliver a programme of work experience placements, and enable additional support and expertise on careers education. The funding is for a two-year period and will enable New River College to work towards achieving the Quality in Careers Standard, with further consultancy support provided through the council’s own grant that has been provisionally awarded by the Richard Reeves Foundation.

**Recommendation 9: That Children’s Services undertake a strategic review of the quality, range and accessibility of vocational pathways to determine if there are appropriate pathways available to young people. The findings of this review should be completed by July 2018 and the conclusions reported to the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee.**

4.9

The council commissioned a study of the local labour market by the Learning and Work Institute, which showed a continued shift in the market towards highly skilled occupations, and higher level apprenticeships identified as a parallel route into the labour market for those not going to university. Further analysis of the labour market information (LMI) is underway by officers, that will inform future Employment and Skills priorities.

Key findings from the latest labour market study will be shared with schools and the Careers Network will review the appropriateness of the current Post-16 vocational offer in creating pathways into key sectors and establish stronger links with employers. For example, discussions are underway with the London Screen Academy over the launch of a new post-16 provision in 2019 that will aim to increase diversity in the film industry through industry led vocational training.

Recruitment is underway for an iWork Employment Programmes Manager who will take responsibility for assessing the current vocational offer, and developing new pathways into key local sectors.

We are now using data from a range of sources to review and assess the impact of the local offer. The figures have shown us that Apprenticeships continue to offer a viable route for those seeking a vocational pathway, and that the council continued to support a high number of young people into

apprenticeships over the 2017-18 financial year despite a dip in figures nationally, with 83 18-25 year olds placed by council officers.

The latest destination figures indicate that Islington has the highest proportion of school leavers going into apprenticeships or employment with training, of any Central London borough. The council has realigned recruitment for its apprenticeship programme to offer two main intakes, one of which is aligned with the academic year to enable a smoother transition into apprenticeships for those leaving education.

Currently data on the take up of apprenticeships from the council, partners and the National Apprenticeship Service show a high proportion of roles in construction, business and IT. Other key industry sectors including hospitality and health and social care were less strongly represented; and so we have developed new local pre-employment programmes in these sectors to create a talent pipeline.

A new corporate indicator has been introduced to monitor the progression of council apprentices into further employment, as a measure of quality.

**4.10 Recommendation 10: That the profile of the council's progression and employment services be raised with school leaders to ensure that the council has access to data on the pupils who may not attain the required grades, and those who have not attained their expected grades on results day. This should include the pupil's name, contact details, expected and actual grades, information on their ambitions, and any other relevant information. This will ensure that young people NEET receive appropriate support as soon as possible.**

Schools have a statutory duty to provide this data and there is a well-established process to meet DfE deadlines and requirements.

The Intended Destinations for 98% of all young people have been gathered to date with planned interventions to take place with young people who are educated at home.

Ongoing follow up and support will ensure young people have a guaranteed offer of a place for September 2018. Follow up activities and sharing of data on those young people who are most at risk will enable early interventions will ensure NEET reduction.

Awareness of the council's progression and employment services is being raised with school leaders through involvement with established forums, including a presentation at the head teachers' forum in March 2018, termly meetings with the Careers Network and the wider Islington Community of Schools. Officers will be present in all secondary schools on GCSE results day to offer information, advice and guidance and promote the support available through the Progress Team.

**4.11 Recommendation 11: That further work be undertaken to raise awareness of the council's progression and employment services to young people and the wider public. This should include assemblies or workshops, as well as follow up advertising in public spaces, publications such as 'Islington Life', social media, and relevant publications produced by partner organisations.**

A communications plan has been produced to raise the profile of the council's progression and employment services. Key to this is clear messaging and branding of the service with a single access point to ease the journey for young people and residents. A directory of support available through council teams and external partners is under development and will be published on the council website by September 2018. A programme of engagement activity is also underway with schools, including assemblies, parents' evenings, and careers events.

An extended employment section in the Spring issue of Islington Life promoted the single employment and progression service to young people, and prompted an increase in the number of enquiries received from young people and families.

**Recommendation 12: That further work be carried out to publicise the successes of those who have completed apprenticeships. This should raise the profile of apprenticeships and provide role models to young people**

4.12

A programme of activities in schools and community settings has been established to celebrate success and raise awareness of the range of available opportunities, and work is underway with the council's Communications team to showcase successful local apprentices across a range of sectors and apprenticeship levels. Case studies are shared across online and offline media, and tied in with national campaigns.

During National Apprenticeship Week in March 2018 a successful communications campaign shared examples of apprentices across Islington through social media, while officers supported 20 events in schools, the community and the council. The events reached over 500 young people and 50 head teachers, and involved current apprentices as well as over 30 employers. A session aimed at parents was also trialled at an Aspire event for 16-24 year olds; this was led by parents and grandparents of current apprentices, and having drawn positive feedback it will become a regular fixture at these events.

Apprenticeship promotion in schools and across the community continues throughout the year, and has reached over 2000 young people since June 2017.

An apprentice forum was launched in March 2018 to give current council apprentices a stronger voice and engagement; the initial event was attended by 35 apprentices and recruitment for chair positions is underway.

**Recommendation 13: That a single access route to the employability support services offered by the council and its partner organisations be established and publicised.**

4.13

An Islington Pathways to Employment Partnership has been developed through the convening of key partners, to create a 'Team Islington' approach to employability support for residents of all ages. Promotion for this has begun, and will be further publicised over the coming months.

The Aspire youth employment network is now aligned with the wider partnership as a sub group, meaning that all of the 80 organisations who have joined the partnership's wider practitioner network are briefed about the access route to the youth employment services in the borough

**Recommendation 14: That the council continue to develop cross-London working relationships to share best practice with other boroughs. This should support Islington pupils in accessing a wide range of opportunities and developing sector-specific knowledge of the opportunities available**

4.14

The council has participated in cross-borough partnerships through involvement in relevant forums such as Central London Forward and the GLA Careers Cluster. The Central London Connexions partnership meets quarterly for updates on policy from DfE, to review management information, share good practice, and provides a valuable link with other local authorities.

There is a positive relationship with Camden Council that includes joint support for Kings Cross Construction Skills Centre which delivers training and apprenticeship opportunities for residents of both boroughs.

A health and social care steering group involving officers from the boroughs of Islington, Camden and Haringey along with a range of NHS and other employers provides ongoing support for schools to engage with the sector. Work is underway to improve access to new apprenticeship opportunities in the sector.

Collaboration between the Islington and Camden Youth Councils and the Kings Cross and St Pancras Business Partnership enabled a careers event to be hosted at Google in October 2017, attended by 200 young people. Two further events are planned for 2018.

The Richard Reeves Foundation funded careers education work with schools has facilitated further collaboration with colleagues in Camden, with an equal number of schools from the two boroughs benefitting from the grants programme. Joint Careers Network meetings will be held annually, while a cohort of staff from both boroughs will undergo the Careers Leader award together to encourage sharing of good practice.

**Recommendation 15: Each secondary school and college should nominate one of their governors to oversee their careers education offer. The council should engage with those governors to support them in this role. This could include providing them with information, such as destinations data for their former pupils, including those who were referred to alternative provision.**

4.15

Statutory guidance from the DfE published in January 2018 states that every secondary school should have a member of the governing body who takes a strategic interest in careers education.

This will be discussed again at the next Chair of Governors' meeting in Autumn 2018.

The council will help schools to achieve this through the support funded by the Richard Reeves Foundation careers education grant to meet the Quality in Careers Standard, with additional support available to upskill governors.

**Recommendation 16: Actions arising as a result of this review should be developed in partnership with young people to ensure that the council's employment and progression support services meet their needs effectively.**

4.16

Both the Youth Employment Team and the Progress Team have agreed that in all their work they will use a range of methods :- surveys, feedback , consulting the youth council and utilising young ambassadors ( for example the councils own young apprentices):- to ensure that services meet the needs of young people and are effective

A survey was taken to establish what young people had found to be most useful about the support offered by the Progress team and what was most beneficial to them. It found young people benefitted most from one-to -one work with one adviser who listened to their opinions, provided support when they needed it, helped them to think and plan for their future and enabled them to get into education or employment. There was a high satisfaction level of the services young people had received overall, while feedback on areas for improvement included greater promotion and earlier notification of the services at school.

The Youth Employment Team have recently recruited a young person as a marketing and events apprentice to support them to market and effectively reach their target audiences

## 5. Implications

### 5.1 Financial implications:



The council has been provisionally awarded a grant of £60,000 across three years by the Richard Reeves Foundation. This grant is to provide expert support and guidance to six schools to train Careers Leaders, and support schools in working towards, and achieving the Quality in Careers Standard.

## **5.2 Legal Implications:**

The Council must secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in Islington who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care plan is maintained (Sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996 and Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014). The Council has a duty to make available to all young people aged 13-19, and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities, support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training (Section 68 Education and Skills Act 2008). Educational institutions have a duty to provide information to the Council in order for the Council to deliver its section 68 duties (Section 72 Education and Skills Act 2008). The legislation provides the Council with additional data sharing powers in order to support it to deliver its section 68 duties (Sections 76 and 77 Education and Skills Act 2008). The Council must promote the effective participation in education and training of 16 and 17 year olds in Islington with a view to ensuring that they participate in education or training (Section 10 Education and Skills Act 2008). The Council has a duty to make arrangements to identify 16 and 17 year olds who are not participating in education or training (Section 12 Education and Skills Act 2008). The Council should have due regard to the statutory guidance, Participation of young people in education, employment or training.

## **5.3 Environmental Implications:**

N/A

## **5.4 Resident Impact Assessment**

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The proposals set out in this report and in the attached Resident Impact Assessment aim to improve the overall service for young people by aligning the Progress Team and the Youth Employment Team. The re-designed service will be fully inclusive and provide opportunities for the most vulnerable. The council will be better placed to ensure that offers brokered with local employers and education providers meet the needs of all young people including those with most barriers, for example those in Alternative Provision, Pupil Referral Unit and the Youth Offending Service. The services offered by both the Youth Employment and Progress teams are designed to address social inequality by ensuring that pathways to progression are designed for all young people. This will be achieved by:

- Opportunities to ensure access for all young people to progression pathways through the development of traineeships, work tasters and adjusted apprenticeships.
- Offering a bespoke service and one to one support for vulnerable young people including those who have SEND needs, have protected characteristics, are in care, are known to social services or the criminal justice system.
- Offering a seamless service offer with a reduction in duplication or conflicting offers.
- Offering a combined service by June 2018.

## **Appendices**

- Resident Impact Assessment

**Background papers:** None

Final report clearance:

**Signed by:**



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Date: 16 July 2018

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