

All of our young people into employment – the Bath & North East Somerset 14-25 strategy *‘employment is everyone’s business’*

Purpose

The purpose of this strategy document is to bring together in one place our shared vision for young people aged 14-25 in the Bath & North East Somerset area and our strategies for achieving it.

Vision

Our vision for young people aged 14-25 in Bath and North East Somerset is that all will be able to achieve good life outcomes moving into adulthood including independence, employment, health and community participation.

While all of these outcomes are important, employment is key to achieving the other outcomes. Our ambition is that all young people in Bath and North East Somerset should ultimately achieve employment.

Context

This vision should be seen in the context of the Council’s 2020 vision and corporate strategy for the local area, the Children and Young People’s Plan and relevant statutory duties/government policy.

2020 vision: Bath and North East Somerset, a beautifully inventive place

‘Bath and North East Somerset will be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21st century place with a strong social purpose and a spirit of wellbeing, where everyone is invited to think big – a ‘connected’ area ready to create an extraordinary legacy for future generations.’

The Council aims to invest in the future, focusing on new jobs and investing in our young people.

There are 4 corporate strategy priorities –

- A strong economy and growth
- A focus on prevention
- A new relationship with customers and communities
- An efficient business.

The strategy states -

'Ambition for all children from the academically most able to those with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities is key to achieving the best outcomes and preparing them for civic and working life.'

'We know that we cannot deliver our 2020 vision in isolation and that we need to make the most of our position as a strong local leader to bring our partners – new and established – together and build on our good foundations.'

The vision from the B&NES Children and Young People's Plan 2014-17

'We want all children and young people to enjoy childhood and to be well prepared for adult life.'

3 priority outcomes have been agreed -

- Children and young people are safe
- Children and young people are healthy
- Children and young people have equal life chances.

Statutory duties and government policy

There are a number of statutory duties supporting and underpinning this strategy including (in broad terms) –

- To ensure participation in education (or full time work with training, an apprenticeship or traineeship) for all young people to the age of 18

- To support particular groups of vulnerable young people into employment including those leaving care, disabled young people and those with special educational needs (young people with SEND) up to age 25.

Specific duties in relation to these aims apply to a range of public agencies including education and training providers, local authorities and others. Young people themselves aged 16 and 17 have a duty to participate in education, training or employment with training.

Government policy is clear that all of our young people should be supported and encouraged to achieve employment as the key to success in adult life and should continue in education or training to age 18 or beyond.

Strategic aims

The proposed aims of this strategy for young people aged 14-25 are fourfold –

1. Raising aspiration
 - our ambition is that all of our young people can achieve employment
 - availability of good quality information, advice and guidance
2. Developing the curriculum offer to age 18
 - ensuring that all young people remain in education and training that prepares them well for adult life including employment
3. Promoting pathways to employment
 - providing good quality internships, apprenticeships and training on the job
4. Supporting vulnerable groups of young people into employment, narrowing the attainment gaps and promoting employment outcomes for
 - young people eligible for free schools meals
 - black and minority ethnic groups
 - young people with SEND
 - care leavers
 - young offenders
 - those at risk of being NEET (not in education, employment and training).

Stakeholders and partnerships

The strapline ‘employment is everyone’s business’ is taken from a national project promoting employment for young people with SEND which worked with us in the local area from 2015-16. It neatly encapsulates the complex and overlapping roles and responsibilities that stakeholders have in achieving this vision.

Young people

The ambition and potential of our young people are central. Their families also play a key role in promoting and supporting their aspirations. We should consider all young people who live and grow up in the local area and also young people who come into the area for further or higher education or employment within scope for our strategy.

Employers

Employers have key role both in requiring an ever-changing skill mix and providing jobs, training and working with other stakeholders to ensure pathways into employment for young people. There are a number of large employers, including several in the public sector, but also many small and medium enterprises in the B&NES area and the wider west of England sub-region/travel to work area.

Education and training providers

Mainstream and special schools, further and higher education institutions and training providers both within B&NES and in neighbouring areas play a key role. With two universities in B&NES as well as Bath College and local secondary and special schools the education sector is also a major employer.

The local authority

The local authority wears a number of hats including responsibilities for economic development, school improvement and support to vulnerable groups of young people. The local authority is also a large employer. B&NES Council no longer has either the scope or capacity to do everything for the local area, but still has a leading role in working with other stakeholders to achieve our vision.

The NHS

The B&NES Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS Trusts have an interest in good health, which is underpinned for many by access to work, and also represent a major employment sector in the local area.

Housing providers

Again housing providers both provide employment and have an interest in promoting the independence of tenants which is underpinned by employment.

Other commissioned and independent sector services and agencies, faith and community groups

There are many smaller agencies, services and groups including charities and services commissioned by the Council or CCG which have a role to play and an interest in promoting the employability of young people in B&NES.

Partnerships

Effective partnerships are key to achieving the vision. The Learning and Skills Partnership (LSP) brings together the key stakeholders in the local area in promoting employment aged 14-25 and has agreed to play a leading role in coordinating and taking forward this vision and strategy.

Crucially the LSP links with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which brings together employers and other key partners across the west of England, and brings together the Council, Bath College DWP and others within the B&NES area with an interest in this strategy.

The Bath Education Trust (BET) brings together some (but not all) of the secondary and special schools within the local area to support provision of Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to help schools to better support employability. BET is linked into the LSP which is seeking to link with all schools across the area.

The Children and Young People's Network brings together voluntary and community sector organisations working with young people in B&NES many of which have a focus and/or a significant contribution to make to the aims of this strategy.

B&NES Council is linked into the LSP and will also need to ensure coordination of the various strands of LA support for this vision and strategy including Economic Regeneration, School Improvement, Children, Young People and Family Services and Adult Services.

Plans for devolution in the West of England look likely to bring together Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire with a devolution deal that should provide significant support to the aims of this strategy.

Strategies

The Council's 2020 vision and corporate strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan for the B&NES area have already been referenced above in relation to our vision for young people.

The strategies required to achieve this vision are set out in a range of places, and it is not the purpose of this document to repeat or duplicate these other strategies. However we do need to ensure that these strategies are coordinated around this vision, and that any gaps or conflicts are addressed.

As well as the strategies already mentioned the following are also relevant to this vision for young people –

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015

Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026

B&NES Economic Strategy and Review 2014-2030

West of England LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2015/16.

Outcomes & measures – how are we doing and how will we know we are succeeding?

The Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), available through the B&NES Council website, sets out some of the key measures that are relevant including data for the level of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and attainment data. The local authority analyses attainment data for vulnerable groups of young people. Some data is included in the various strategies referenced above.

Key relevant facts include –

- the B&NES economic strategy aims to achieve a net jobs growth of 11,500 jobs across the Bath area by 2030
- 3.5% of 16-18 year olds were NEET in 2014 in Bath and North East Somerset, placing the area in the 2nd quintile nationally
- young people in key vulnerable groups including those eligible for free school meals, many (but not all) black and minority groups, young people in care and those with SEND under-achieve educationally in relation to their peers – and these ‘gaps’ in B&NES are generally worse than in many other areas.

So a significant growth in jobs is planned, and there is generally a relatively high level of participation in EET by young people, however there is work to do to ensure vulnerable groups are prepared for the world of work and supported to achieve employment.

The local authority already seeks to track all young people to age 19 and individual care leavers to age 25 and is developing the mechanisms to track outcomes for young people with SEND up to age 25 following new duties introduced in 2014 in relation to this group.

To measure our achievement of the vision set out in this document we will need to monitor all of this data when available and consider whether further data is required and how it can be achieved.

We should note that OFSTED inspect education provision including FE, support for children and young people in need of help and protection and support for young people with SEND. Government collect various data relevant to the work covered by this strategy to hold the local area to account. This external scrutiny will assist us in knowing how well we are doing.

Accountability & governance

The B&NES Learning and Skills Partnership will coordinate and oversee this strategy.

Lead officers to support each workstream within the strategy are identified within the local authority. The lead within the local authority for the strategy is the Divisional Director for Children, Young People and Family Services Richard Baldwin, who will bring together the workstream leads 3 times a year/4 monthly.

It is not proposed to establish additional bodies or groups in relation to this strategy in order to maximise the capacity available to progress the necessary work.

Areas of work – action plans

1. Raising aspiration and improving information, advice and guidance

- Our ambition is that all of our young people can achieve employment
- We need to ensure availability of good quality information, advice and guidance (IAG)

There is a statutory duty on schools to provide IAG.

The Bath Education Trust (BET) provides support for this for some schools. Some specialist IAG is available from Youth Connect. Bath College provides IAG for its own students as well as supporting schools with this through BET.

A vocational profiling tool has been developed and piloted for young people with SEND and some schools including both special and mainstream school are now rolling this out.

Joint leads for this workstream are Jackie Fielder within the local authority and Jacqui Buffton who supports the Learning and Skills Partnership.

Action plan

1. Develop, publish and circulate an annual booklet/flyer/insert in Council Connect to all households in B&NES providing information about routes to employment and sources of IAG for young people 14-25 – Jacqui Buffton & Jackie Fielder with Karen Fraser (Bath College), Tracey Pike (Youth Connect) and Kate Starks (Economic Regeneration)
2. Launch Uzone as a universal platform for young people to provide information about opportunities and access to IAG – Tracey Pike & Sam Plummer (Youth Connect)
3. Ensure coherent joined up access to online resources including Uzone, Career Pilot, 1BigDatabase, Rainbow Resource/SEND local offer and Preparing for Adulthood etc – Jackie Fielder
4. Ensure a programme of sector based careers events – Jacqui Buffton with Kate Starks and Karen Fraser
5. Promote apprenticeships, with the Council and other public sector employers modelling best practice – Kate Starks

2. Improving the curriculum offer up to age 18

- Ensure that all young people remain in education and training that prepares them well for adult life including employment

The Raising the Participation Age statutory guidance Sept 2014 applies. All young people are required to remain in education to age 18. We need to ensure that the curriculum across schools and colleges, including IAG provision, provides a good education for all young people to prepare them for the world of work.

All schools and colleges have duties to ensure all young people remain in education and to develop the curriculum to support this.

The local authority has a duty to track all young people to age 19, which is carried out by the Youth Connect service.

Tom Morrison, Secondary Adviser in the School Improvement Service will lead on post 16 provision for the local authority. A significant challenge for the local authority is to collect outcomes and destination data from all post 16 education providers and the School Improvement Service is working with education providers to address this.

Tracey Pike (Youth Connect) leads on tracking all young people's participation in education, employment and training.

Action plan

6. Seek outcomes and destination data from education settings – Tom Morrison
7. Track all young people's participation in EET to 19 – Tracey Pike
8. Support education settings in B&NES to develop a high quality and broad curriculum offer 14-19 – Tom Morrison.

3. Promoting pathways to employment

- Providing good quality internships, apprenticeships and training on the job

The role of employers is key. A number of large public sector employers including the Council should lead by example in providing internships, apprenticeships and promoting routes into employment for young people.

We need to understand the needs of employers and develop schemes that meet those needs while providing routes in and appropriate support to meet needs of young people. Project Search and the SuRE Futures programme are good examples of collaboration between Bath College, employers (including the Council and RUH for Project Search) and the Employment Inclusion Service (part of Sirona's commissioned services for young disabled adults).

The Council has an employment and skills action plan within the Economic Strategy which is coordinated with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board. This includes the following themes –

- Preventing low skills and worklessness in young people
- Young people leaving care 16-21
- NEETS
- Young people with physical and mental health, learning difficulties and disabilities.

The West of England devolution deal is likely to enhance our ability to progress this workstream within our 14-215 strategy.

Kate Starks, Principal Enterprise Development Officer will lead on promoting pathways to employment within this strategy. She will coordinate this through the Council's Economic Strategy and ensuring linkages with devolution as work on this progresses.

Action plan

9. Ensure coordination of the Economic Strategy employment and skills action plan and the emerging devolution deal with the aims of this strategy – Kate Starks
4. **Supporting vulnerable groups of young people into employment, narrowing the attainment gaps and promoting employment outcomes** for
 - young people eligible for free school meals
 - black and minority ethnic groups
 - young people with SEND
 - care leavers
 - young offenders
 - those at risk of being NEET (not in education, employment and training).

The Youth Connect service seeks to track all young people's participation in EET to 19 and uses this information to identify those at risk of being NEET and to ensure they receive targeted support.

In addition to the statutory duty to track all young people to 19 the local authority has specific duties to support care leavers and young people with SEND up to age 25.

In respect of care leavers there is good support offered through the Virtual School for children in care and the Children in Care and Moving on Team. These support systems are well established and achieve good results compared to national data for this group, although care leavers still do less well than the B&NES average. There is good data on care leavers' participation in EET. This work needs to continue and to be coordinated with the wider strategy.

For young people with SEND the duty to support up to age 25 with a focus on life outcomes including employment was introduced in 2014 and there is work to be done to track outcomes and destinations for this group better, and to improve participation in EET up to age 25. However there are 2 successful Project Search sites in B&NES providing supported routes into employment with the Council and RUH for young people with learning difficulties, and more recently the SuRE Futures Programme has been established following a successful pilot, to provide supported routes into employment with small and medium size enterprises for young people with social and communication barriers to employment (often with Autistic Spectrum Conditions).

There is a Learning Difficulty and Disability sub-group of the LSP which coordinates efforts to promote employability for this group of young people, coordinated by Jacqui Buffton. This brings together the Local Authority, Sirona, Bath College, local special schools and other key partners.

The work to improve employability for young people with SEND has been supported over the last year by the Employment is Everyone's Business project, funded by DfE and delivered by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTI). As well as the pilot project leading to SuRE futures this work has included the development of a vocational profiling tool for young people with SEND which is now being rolled out in some education settings. Young people were also consulted as part of this work on how they can best be supported into employment.

Action plan

- 10. Track and provide targeted support 14-19 for young people at risk of being NEET including particularly those within vulnerable groups - Tracey Pike**

11. Continue to coordinate support to care leavers through the Virtual School – Mike Gorman
12. Continue to coordinate work to improve employability support for young people with SEND through the LDD group of the LSP – Jacqui Buffton
13. Establish an ‘into EET’ panel to coordinate targeted support for those most at risk of being NNET with multiple and complex needs – Tracey Pike
14. Develop the dataset to track outcomes and destinations for young people with SEND – Chris Wilford
15. Support the roll out of vocational profiling for young people with SEND across education settings through the SEND team – Chris Wilford.

Coordination and accountability for this strategy

Progress on the strategy will be overseen by the Learning and Skills Partnership.

The work of workstream leads to coordinate the strategy will be pulled together through a coordinating group to be convened by Richard Baldwin. This should also include the relevant Service Managers within the Council as needed.

Richard Baldwin will coordinate with other relevant Divisional Directors within the Council as needed.