

<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY PANEL</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 5</b>
<b>21 JULY 2009</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Report Author – Jenni Hepworth**  
**Contact Details – 01733 863957**

### **16 TO 18 YEAR OLDS NOT IN EDUCATION, TRAINING OR EMPLOYMENT (NEET)**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

To update the scrutiny committee on the rising numbers of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in Peterborough and associated plans to reduce this number.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That committee members consider the report and offer support to intervention activities to reduce NEET where appropriate.

#### **3. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT**

The reduction of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is a critical national indicator (NI117) in the Local Area Agreement.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

The Young People's Service delivers connexions services within Peterborough to meet the following statutory responsibilities:

- Under Section 8 of the Employment and Training Act 1973 (amended by the Trade Union and Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993) to provide a careers service for young people, including careers information, advice and guidance and support to find suitable employment and training
- Under Section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 to provide support to young people to encourage and enable their participation in education or training
- Under Section 139 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, to carry out an assessment for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to assist their transition into post 16 education and training opportunities
- The 14-19 Implementation Plan (2005) made a commitment of offer, by the end of September, a suitable place in post 16 learning to all young people leaving compulsory education. This is known as the September Guarantee. This year the September Guarantee has been extended to all those who reached statutory school leaving age in 2008 and 2009. While these are shared responsibilities, Connexions Service providers are responsible for tracking offers made and supporting young people who have not received an offer.

#### **5. KEY ISSUES**

Key national indicators around NEET (young people not in education, employment or training) that sit with the Young People's Service are:

- NI 91 – increase the % of 17 year olds in learning. The target for 2009/10 is 87%, based on the average performance across November 09 to January 10. As of June 09, 84% of 17 year olds are in learning
- NI 117 – reduce the % of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). The target for 09/10 is 7.5%, based on the average performance across November 2009 – January 2010. This local authority target was based on a planned reduction of 2 % points by 2010.
- Linked to these national indicators is the measure of the % of young people who are in a ‘not known’ situation.

While connexions service providers have specific responsibilities for NEET targets, NEET is a shared responsibility that forms a key part of strategies and planning locally, both through the Achieving Economic Well-Being Outcome Group (within the Children’s Trust Partnership Board structure) and through the 14-19 Education Plan.

## 5.1 Performance on reducing NEETs

### 5.1.1 Annual targets:

	Nov 06	Nov 07	Nov 08 – Jan 09	Nov 09 – Jan 10	Current situation June 09
% 16-18 NEET	9.2%	8.4%	9.1%	Target 7.5%	10.1%
Not known	2.7%	2.5%	2.5%	Target 2%	1.8%
17 year olds in learning	-	-	82.9%	Target 87%	84%

### 5.1.2 Comparative data for Nov 2008 – Jan 2009:

	England average	East of England average	Peterborough	Peterborough target
% 16-18 NEET	6.7%	6.2%	9.1%	8.5%

### 5.1.3 Position at the end of May 2009:

	National average	East of England average	Peterborough
% 16-18 NEET	7.3%	6.7%	9.7%

Source: (NCCIS data, verified by DCSF) Comparative data for June will not be available until August.

The attached data (monitoring NEET target) shows the annual highs and low of NEET levels, which reflect the academic year. Figures usually increase from August as young people leave statutory education and levels fall again as young people move into new education, training or work situations through September and October.

Compared to the previous year, NEET levels started to rise in Peterborough from January 2009. The % change in Peterborough at the end of May 2009 was 15.5%, which is higher than the national and regional average change of 11.6%. The numbers of 16-18 year olds in employment has fallen significantly over the last 12 months. By the end of May 2009, Peterborough saw a minus 20% change in numbers in employment, the same as the East of England average but above the national average of minus 18%.

As NEET levels continue to rise above the expected rate for the time of year, this suggests that meeting this year’s target of 7.5% will be even more challenging than anticipated.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

The following data aims to give an insight into the characteristics of the 'NEET group' in Peterborough, and is taken from the monthly Connexions Management Information summary and NCCIS data (drawn from the Connexions Client Information System – CCIS) managed through the Young People's Service.

### 6.1 Figures behind the %s

- As at the end of June 2009, 509 16-18 year olds in Peterborough are NEET. This represents an increase of 77 young people from June 08. Of these 509, 414 (81%) are available for work or training. The other 19% are not currently available (mainly due to illness, pregnancy or being teenage parents).
- While the overall % of 16-18 year olds in learning has increased slightly from 79% in June 2008 to 80.3% in June 2009, the overall % of young people in education, employment and training has fallen from 89.6% to 88.2%. There are 176 fewer young people in employment (both with and without training) than this time last year, reflecting the impact of the economic downturn that is affecting all people of working age.

#### *Gender*

- Slightly more young males than females are NEET (51% of NEET group is male, 49% female)
- Significantly more males than females are available for and actively seeking work or training (62% of this group is male, 38% female). This reflects the 66 young women who are currently pregnant or teenage parents in Peterborough

#### *Geographical spread*

- Monthly data is available on NEET levels at ward level across Peterborough.
- The highest pockets of NEET are in Orton Longueville (64 young people), Central (48 young people), Bretton North (46 young people) and Dogsthorpe (45 young people).

#### *Ethnicity*

The ethnic breakdown of the NEET group broadly mirrors the overall ethnic make up of young people

	% white British	% other white	% Pakistani	% ethnicity not recorded
<b>All YP 16-19</b>	63%	7%	7%	14%
<b>Overall EET</b>	61%	8%	7%	16%
<b>Full time education</b>	55%	6%	8%	20%
<b>Employed</b>	76%	8%	6%	5%
<b>Employed no training</b>	74%	8%	7%	2%
<b>Training course</b>	68%	6%	8%	12%
<b>NEET</b>	75%	8%	7%	2%
<b>Not known</b>	67%	8%	6%	8%

- all other ethnic groups (based on DCSF groupings) represent 1% or less of cohort and of activity groups
- relatively high numbers of data not recorded in full time education reflects the targeted support for those young people looking for work/training and/or at risk of becoming NEET
- The accuracy of the data is affected by the % where no ethnicity is recorded, but overall the figures suggest that young people who are White British/White other are slightly over-represented in NEET and in employment.

## **6.2 Young people facing additional barriers**

It is widely recognised that young people from particular groups are at risk of becoming NEET, and local data bears this out:

- on average 1 in 10 young people over school leaving age is NEET in Peterborough
- 2.5 in 10 young people with learning difficulties and disabilities are NEET
- 3 in 10 young people who are looked after/ care leavers are NEET
- 3 in 10 young people who attended alternative provision pre 16 are NEET
- 5.5 in 10 young people who've been involved with the Youth Offending Service are NEET
- 7 in 10 teenage mothers are NEET
- 64% of the NEET group have qualifications below level 2 (equivalent to below 5 GCSEs A-C).

## **7. CONSULTATION**

The tracking and analysis of NEET data, performance and intervention to improve performance all form key agenda matters at the Achieve Economic Well-Being Partnership Group and therefore is regularly fed into the Children's Trust Partnership Board for consideration.

## **8. EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

### **8.1 What we are already doing**

- The Young People's Service continues to focus resources on work to prevent education leavers becoming NEET, and to target resources to track and to support those who are NEET, and to enable them to access suitable opportunities and provision. We work in close partnership with a range of services and organisations around these strands. Current work includes:
- on-going tracking of every NEET young person to check if they are still looking for work and to offer support
- range of information, advice and guidance services, including specialist careers guidance, support with job search skills and access to hardship benefits, to personal development opportunities (such as the Princes Trust Team Programme), and support to access job and training vacancies. Over the last year, around 7000 young people, many of whom were NEET, have visited the Youth Access Point in the Central library. Connexions Information Advisers offer front line support, information and advice to these young people, together with duty Personal Advisers providing careers guidance and in-depth support for those young people in crisis due to homelessness, financial hardship or other issues
- Under 18 Adviser from Job Centre Plus works 2 days a week from the Youth Access Point, making it easier for young people in financial hardship to access benefits and supporting more young people onto training courses as a first step towards work
- Intensive Personal Advisers work with a small caseload of young people who are facing multiple barriers, both to move into and then to sustain a place in college, training or work
- early identification with schools of Year 11 and Year 12 leavers who are at risk of becoming NEET
- liaising with partner services (including Youth Offending Service, Teenage Pregnancy support, Children in Care teams, Attendance Service and Inclusion Officers) to identify school leavers from vulnerable groups and offering careers information, advice and guidance to support them to make plans for once they finish education
- targeting school leaver follow up on those who are still undecided about their plans, whose plans are not known, and who are looking for work and training
- targeted support and provision for Year 11 leavers at risk of becoming NEET, including early access to ESF funded programmes and activity programmes such as U Project
- a range of partners is planning a NEET activity week in early September, launched by interactive stands in Queensgate on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September to engage NEET young

people and their parents and give them tasters of education, training and volunteering opportunities on offer and involve employers in advising young people on the skills they are looking for

- engaging staff in reflecting on and suggesting improvements to Young People's Service work with NEET young people – their suggestions are now being taken forward
- multi-agency Targeted Learner Needs Group continues to monitor trends and needs locally and feed information through to the 14-19 Planning Group on approaches to identifying gaps and broadening the range of provision available

## **8.2 What we plan to do**

- develop a Peterborough NEET Strategy by early September, with involvement from all key stakeholders
- run training in conjunction with Job Centre Plus to raise awareness of and support early access for 18 year olds to Flexible New Deal
- review young people's vacancy service (currently provided through a Service Level Agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council) and implement a locally focussed service to support more young people into work and training
- develop close links with the newly formed National Apprenticeship Service to raise awareness of and access to the new Vacancy Matching Service for apprenticeships
- contribute to the implementation of the Future Jobs Fund programme in the city
- continue to strengthen and improve internal systems to track and support NEET young people
- through a new young people's website, promote the full range of positive activities to young people, including targeted marketing to NEET young people
- develop additional personal development opportunities through youth work provision targeted on NEET young people and help them on the journey towards education, employment and training by gaining informal qualifications and broader life skills

## **9. NEXT STEPS**

Return to the scrutiny committee for monitoring of progress in February 2010 – following performance information on the annual target – measured as an average across November, December and January.

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

All data tables and comparators have been drawn utilising current data from the Connexions Client Information System (CCIS)

This page is intentionally left blank