

**To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board**

**Date 28 November 2019**

**Subject: Post-16 Transition and NEETs**

## **1 Purpose of the Note**

1.1 To update members on:

- Definition of NEET;
- Partnership working with Prospects to support young people's transition;
- Employment support for young people;
- Coventry's performance of post-16 young people who are not participating in education, employment and training (NEET).

## **2 Recommendations**

2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:

- 1) Consider the information in the briefing note and comment and/or raise questions.
- 2) Identify any recommendations for Councillor Maton, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

## **3 Information/Background**

### **3.1 Definition of NEET**

3.2 The term NEET refers to the group of 16- and 17-year olds who have left school and are not engaged in any form of further education, employment or training, this includes those who are actively seeking help via other agencies. Whilst many young people are NEET for a relatively short period, there are others; especially more disadvantaged young people, who struggle to progress to sustainable education, employment or training. The young people who populate this group can join or leave at any time; therefore the figures can change on a daily basis. A young person may be in the NEET group for a few days or several months depending on their circumstances.

3.3 The term 'activity not known' refers to young people aged 16 and 17 who are believed to be resident in the area but whose current activity is not known, this can be due to the following:

- the young person cannot be contacted (e.g. may have moved out of area or abroad);
- the young person refuses to disclose.

3.4 Young people whose activity has not been confirmed within a set time period are also recorded as 'activity not known'.

3.5 In 2016 the DfE changed the definition of NEET to **include** those young people whose activity is not known. It changed the age range to 16- and 17-year olds rather than 16 to 18-year olds and the period for which the average figures are based, from November, December

and January to December, January and February. Three-month averages provide a more robust assessment of year-on-year performance.

- 3.6 The DfE introduced a new headline measure in 2016 which combines the proportion of young people who are NEET with the proportion of young people whose activity is 'not known' (the new definition of NEET).
- 3.7 Local Authorities are required to collect and report to the Department for Education (DfE) the following information about a young person's post-16 activity on a monthly basis:
  - basic information about young people in their area (name and address)
  - their needs and characteristics (gender, ethnic group, disability, care leaver)
  - their post-16 plans (intended destination, September Guarantee offers)
  - their current activity and when it was last confirmed (i.e. education, apprenticeship, employment combined with study, training).

#### **4 Partnership working with Prospects to support young people's transition**

- 4.1 Local Authorities (LAs) have a critical role to play in supporting young people to access education and training and therefore in understanding the characteristics and current activity of the young people in their area. The government provides the framework to increase post-16 participation and reduce the proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). However, responsibility and accountability for delivery lies with local authorities.
- 4.2 In 2015 Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council ran a joint procurement exercise for the delivery of the service which is currently supplied by a single provider for both LAs but with separate contracts for each authority. Prospects won the tender and a contract was awarded for 4 years on a 2+2 model (2016-2018 and 2018-2020). This contract is due to finish on 31 March 2020.
- 4.3 The service aims are to;
  - keep young people in education and/or training and prevent them from becoming NEET;
  - significantly contribute to increasing the participation of 16-18-year olds and raising awareness of local labour market opportunities;
  - raise aspirations and set high expectations of young people who are NEET;
  - link to the local authority planning and data collection for the Department for Education (DFE);
  - link with National Careers Service providers, NEET delivery providers and JobCentre Plus.
- 4.3 The current specification requirements include joint working arrangements with Through Care, SEND & Specialist Services and the Youth Offending Service.
- 4.4 In Coventry Prospects deliver services at outreach locations including the Coventry Job Shop, Valley House, The Foyer and Key2. Prospects Advisers will also always arrange to see a young person at a convenient local venue if they cannot get to any of the regular venues. Services are also delivered to young people attending mainstream secondary schools, special schools and colleges. Prospects managers network with key stakeholders and are members of a range of local planning meetings aiming to support the integration of the services delivered by the contract with other Council services, eg Ambition Coventry.
- 4.5 Young people are referred through the following routes:
  - self-referral;
  - referral from an education setting, eg school, college, training provider;

- referral from a range of professionals working with young people;
- referral from parents/carers.

- 4.6 Young people are allocated to a named Prospects Careers Adviser within two weeks of being identified as NEET. This ensures continuity for the young person and enables a positive relationship to be developed. The Adviser can get to know the young person and their specific support requirements and can measure progress over time.
- 4.7 Young people recorded as 'activity not known' and those whose destinations are due to expire in the month ahead are allocated a Prospects Adviser according to the ward area in which they live. This provides efficiency and the benefit of local knowledge if home visits are necessary.
- 4.8 Joint home visits take place with social workers, personal advisers, YOS Case Managers, Key 2 support workers and specialist careers advisers.
- 4.9 An interview room at New Union Street (Prospects' Office) is used for appointments with young people, parents/carers and other professionals. It provides an alternative meeting place for young people who suffer from anxiety and who may be uncomfortable in the busy setting of the Job Shop. Where young people lack the confidence, motivation or means to travel into the city centre, meetings take place at their home, a café or local community venue, eg Family Hubs.
- 4.10 Prospects Advisers accompany young people to interviews, taster sessions and course inductions. For example, to Adult Education, Coventry College, Coventry City Council Apprenticeship Team, CWT, MGTS, Hereward College, Hitz, Aspire 2 Be, Positive Youth Foundation. Advisers can support with preparation and help reduce anxiety. They help to allay fears over travelling and locating the venue as well as ensuring attendance and supporting the young person to reflect on their experience. Travel training has taken place with several young people to help them access specific opportunities and to teach them about attendance and punctuality to help secure and sustain a positive destination.
- 4.11 Prospects Advisers contribute when necessary to Child in Need meetings with young people, family members and relevant professionals. Young people are signposted for support with mental health issues and housing and welfare/benefits as they are more likely to engage in career planning if other issues/barriers have been addressed/overcome.
- 4.12 **Teen parents:** meetings with teen parents are generally at home and often jointly with other professionals who have an established relationship. Many teen parents are reluctant to engage with services following previous negative experiences and feelings of being judged. They state that their immediate focus is on caring for their child and are (often) not ready to consider education or training opportunities. Much work is done around identifying transferable skills and providing support to build confidence and self-esteem so that longer term goals can be developed. Meetings also take place in child-friendly community venues, eg Family Hubs.
- 4.13 **Young offenders:** Prospects attend YOS management meetings and YODOC multi-agency meetings with the Probation Service, police, health and housing organisations. Prospects contribute to Personal Education Plans, case planning meetings, case reviews and early release reviews. Joint home visits take place with YOS Case Managers and social workers. Young people have attended group recruitment sessions for Hitz at Coventry YOS and young people have been supported to attend interviews at Coventry College.
- 4.14 **LAC/Care Leavers:** Prospects Advisers are involved in and contribute to Personal Education Plans, LAC reviews, housing reviews, core group conferences, cluster meetings and strategy meetings with other professionals. Joint working takes place with supported accommodation providers and home visits are carried out jointly with social workers, personal advisers and housing support workers. Prospects attend inter-agency meetings with Through Care, the Virtual School, Adult Education and the Council's Apprenticeship and Early Careers Team.

4.15 **SEND:** All school leavers with an EHC Plan are followed up to ensure they have an offer of learning, wherever possible. A full range of follow-up activity including meetings in schools, home visits, and telephone and email liaison with families and providers. Young people without an offer are referred to the Council's EHC Plan Co-ordinators to agree next steps. Prospects Advisers have identified limited provision for young people with complex SEN (particularly mental health and behavioural difficulties) who are not able to manage in a mainstream college setting. Where appropriate young people are supported to BBO and Ambition Coventry.

## **5 Employment support for young people**

- 5.1 Coventry City Council utilises grant funding via the European Social Fund (ESF) and Youth Employment Initiative funding (YEI) and applies the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) programme priorities to increase the City's labour market participation, promote social inclusion, and develop the skills of the potential and existing workforce.
- 5.2 The Council delivers this via 'Ambition Coventry', which provides an opportunity to draw together skills and expertise from six delivery partners across the city; whose aims are to significantly reduce youth unemployment in the City and support marginalised groups of young people, including: care leavers, lone parents, young people with convictions, ethnic minorities, young people with disabilities or health problems and those living in areas of high deprivation.
- 5.3 Prospects Services are one of Ambition Coventry's identified delivery partners and are therefore able to provide enhanced support for young people they work with.
- 5.4 Ambition Coventry works with anyone aged between 16 and 29 who lives in Coventry and is not in any form of employment, education or training (NEET).
- 5.5 Ambition Coventry supports young people with:
- self-development and confidence building
  - careers advice
  - 1-2-1 support
  - training and qualifications
  - work experience and paid placements
  - traineeships and apprenticeships
  - business start-up support.
- 5.6 Ambition Coventry's partnerships provide a unique opportunity to draw together skills and expertise from specialist organisations across the city so that young people can easily access the support they need and get tailored support to help them access employment, education or training.

## **6 Performance**

6.1 The DfE published the 2018/19 Local Authority NEET and Not Known figures on 20 June 2019:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neet-and-participation-local-authority-figures#history>

6.2 The NEET group is made up of young people who are not participating in education, employment or training but who are available to the labour market and those young people who are not currently available to the labour market (for example because of illness, caring responsibilities, pregnancy or parenting responsibilities). The cohort size is based on residency rather than the place of education or training.

Annual NEET and Not Known rates (3-month average – Dec, Jan & Feb)	2017 (16-17 year olds)			2018 (16-17 year olds)			2019 (16-17 year olds)		
	Com- bined figure	NEET	Not Known	Com- bined figure	NEET	Not Known	Com- bined figure	NEET	Not Known
Coventry	<b>6.8</b>	3.1	3.7	<b>5.4</b>	3.5	1.9	<b>5.4</b>	3.3	2.1
England	<b>6.0</b>	2.8	3.2	<b>6.0</b>	2.7	3.3	<b>5.5</b>	2.6	2.9
Stat neighbours	<b>7.1</b>	3.6	3.5	<b>7.9</b>	3.5	4.4	<b>6.7</b>	3.5	3.3
West Midlands	<b>7.3</b>	2.7	4.6	<b>6.4</b>	2.4	4.0	<b>5.3</b>	2.4	3.0

**Commentary**

- Coventry's performance has continued to improve over the last three years and the 2019 combined figure of **5.4%** remains **below (better than)** both national and our statistical neighbours.

2019 Annual NEET and Not Known rate by:  <b>ACADEMIC AGE</b>	Cohort known to the LA  (West Midlands and national in brackets)	Proportion of young people who are NEET and Not Known  (West Midlands and national in brackets)	Estimated number of young people who are NEET and Not Known  (West Midlands and national in brackets)
<b>Coventry age 16 and 17</b>	<b>7,130</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>390</b>
(West Midlands / National)	(123,320 / 1,119,100)	(5.3% / 5.5%)	(6,590 / 61,830)
<b>Coventry age 16</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>120</b>
(West Midlands / National)	(61,810 / 554,670)	(3.3% / 3.6%)	(2,030 / 19,980)
<b>Coventry age 17</b>	<b>3,630</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>270</b>
(West Midlands / National)	(61,510 / 564,430)	(7.4% / 7.4%)	(4,560 / 41,850)

**Commentary**

- The NEET figure is higher at age 16 than at age 17 in Coventry, the West Midlands and nationally.
- During 2018-2019, **120** Coventry young people aged 16 were NEET compared to **270** young people aged 17.

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2019 Annual NEET and Not Known rate by: <b>GENDER</b>	Proportion of males and females who are NEET and Not Known	Estimated number of males and females who are NEET and Not Known
<b>Coventry Males</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>210</b>
(West Midlands / National)	(6.3% / 6.3%)	(3,820 / 35,350)
<b>Coventry Females</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>130</b>
(West Midlands / National)	(4.5% / 4.8%)	(2,630 / 25,850)

### Commentary

- The number of 16/17 year old males who are NEET is higher than the number of 16/17 year old females in Coventry, the West Midlands and nationally.
- The proportion of 16/17 year old males who are NEET in Coventry is higher at 7.2% than in the West Midlands (6.3%) and nationally (6.3%).
- The proportion of 16/17 year old females who are NEET in Coventry is the same as in the West Midlands (4.5%) and lower than nationally (4.8%).

2019 Annual NEET and Not Known rate by: <b>SEND</b>	with SEND (EHCP or statement)		with SEN support		without SEND (no EHCP or statement, no SEN support)	
	Number of 16-17 year olds known to LA	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known	Number of 16-17-year olds known to LA <sup>1</sup>	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known	Number of 16-17 year olds known to LA <sup>1</sup>	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known
<b>Coventry</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	Not published	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>6,820</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
England	43,310	9.2%	47,030	9.2%	1,028,760	5.2%
West Midlands	4,690	7.8%	3,980	7.3%	114,640	5.2%

### Commentary

- The proportion of 16/17 year old young people with an EHCP or statement who are NEET in Coventry is higher at 11.3% than nationally (9.2%) and in the West Midlands (7.8%).

2019 Annual NEET and Not Known rate by:  ETHNIC GROUP	White		Mixed race		Black or black British		Asian or Asian British		Chinese		Other	
	Number of 16/17 year olds known to LA	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known	Number of 16/17 year olds known to LA	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known	Number of 16/17 year olds known to LA	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known	Number of 16/17 year olds known to LA	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known	Number of 16/17 year olds known to LA	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known	Number of 16/17 year olds known to LA	% 16-17-year olds recorded as NEET or not known
<b>Coventry</b>	<b>3,590</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>7.0%</b>
England	743,000	5.8%	43,160	6.2%	50,950	4.5%	99,920	3.0%	3,510	2.2%	18,980	5.1%
West Midlands	75,120	5.6%	4,540	7.9%	3,650	6.0%	14,190	4.2%	250	2.6%	1,650	6.7%

### Commentary

- The proportion of 16/17 old white, mixed race, Chinese and 'other' ethnic group young people in Coventry who are NEET is **higher** than in England and the West Midlands.
- The proportion of 16/17 year old Black/Black British and Asian/Asian British young people in Coventry who are NEET is **lower** than in England and the West Midlands.

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