

Peer Review on Raising the Participation Age

Self Assessment

Date 23rd April 2013

Introduction

Surrey is a prosperous county that offers many young people a broad range of opportunities, but there is a significant proportion of 'vulnerable' young people for whom barriers to participation in education, training or employment with training put them at particular risk of becoming NEET. Surrey's young people mostly achieve high educational standards. Drawing on the latest data currently available, 84.6% of young people in Surrey achieved Level 2 by 19 and 65.5% achieved Level 3 by aged 19. This is an improving trend with Surrey ranked fifth out of 11 statistical neighbours for Level 2 performance and maintaining a ranking of third compared to statistical neighbours for Level 3. More current data for GCSE performance provides evidence of improving performance with Surrey's ranking increasing from 23rd in 2010/11 to 19th in 2011/12 for 5+ GCSEs graded A to C, including English and maths. Some 64.2% of young people achieved this level which was also an increase compared to statistical neighbours where Surrey's ranking increased from fifth to fourth. Surrey's level of participation of young people in Education, Training or Employment (ETE) 16 to 18 is comparatively high, with 95.8% of young people participating in 2012. This was a slight fall from 96.1% in 2011, but was still the second highest performance among statistical neighbours. However, we recognise we cannot be complacent as there are significant gaps, particularly for vulnerable groups and certain communities, for example:

- Looked after children (LAC) achieve less well than their peers with 11.4% 16 to 18 year olds NEET compared to 3.7% of all 16 to 18 year olds in December 2012.
- NEET young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) were more likely to have been LAC, had a child protection plan or been a child in need (CiN) than NEET - of the young people within the NEET cohort who were currently or had previously been looked after, 27% also had SEN Statements.
- There are recognised pockets of deprivation, particularly in parts of Spelthorne, Woking, Guildford, Reigate and Banstead and Surrey Heath.
- In May 2012, 56% of the NEET population in Surrey had SEND 82.2% of young people who are at risk of becoming NEET have SEND.

Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) requires that by 2013 all young people should remain in ETE until the end of Year 12 and that by 2015 this should rise to include all those under the age of 18. In Surrey, we have set our aspirations higher with the vision for all young people up to the age of 19 to be participating in education, training or employment with training (PETE). This vision and the supporting strategy is set out in our Young People's Employability Plan 2012-2017. This is one of

three key strategies in the Children's, Schools and Families (CSF) Directorate (the other two being Education and Achievement and Health and Wellbeing), which jointly set out the directorate's future strategy.

Surrey's key delivery vehicle for the Young People's Employability Plan is the Surrey 14-19 Partnership and the 12 local 14-19 Learning Networks. The 14-19 Partnership is chaired by the Assistant Director for Young People, and brings together senior representatives from the Local Authority, schools, special schools, colleges, training providers, employers as well as the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) to deliver an integrated approach to RPA. Such is the success of this work, that some local networks have deepened their collaboration through the creation of formal Federations (e.g. Waverley, Woking and Surrey Heath). Despite changes to 14-19 policy and funding, all of the networks have remained firm and have re-stated their intention to continue to work collaboratively, particularly on Raising the Participation age.

In 2010, the council decided to transform its services and its community leadership in the entire youth sector. This was facilitated by changing the entire business model, moving from a service delivery model of operation to a commissioning model. As commissioners our role became one about assigning resources to tackling the problem of meeting the aim of full participation and turning resources directly into outcomes. Our strategic approach to focusing on PETE has enabled us to make a real difference in encouraging participation and removing barriers which has led to more efficient use of public money. Our focus is now on outcomes and not just services.

SCC Services for Young People approach to full participation has moved the County Council from being a provider of services to a strategic commissioner of outcomes, enabling local communities to be part of shaping the place they live in and solving problems. Providers are free to work with young people and communities to develop approaches that work, as long as these contribute to full participation. This has meant that young people have a greater role in co-producing public services, such as the Local Prevention Framework, with professionals.

The approach relies on eight operational models of service delivery, outlined below:

- Centre Based Youth Work – providing universally accessible opportunities for approximately 7300 young people in 2012-13.
- Local Prevention Framework – reaching 1808 young people at the end of February 2013 with locally commissioned preventative services
- Youth Support Service – case-work with 1,866 young people during 2012-13, supporting 1,211 into education, training or employment
- Skills Centres – reaching 94 young people in 2012/13 with 53% progressing to positive destinations
- Pathways Team – guidance and placement for approx. 600 young people in 2012-13, with 95% supported to positive destinations from year 11 to year 12
- Youth Engagement Contract – engaging 46,546 young people in 2012-13.
- Surrey Outdoor Learning and Development (SOLD) – supporting 96 'at risk' young people into participation in 2012-13

- Year 11-12 Transition – supporting 1565 young people identified as at risk of being NEET, with 89.8% successful progression from year 11 to year 12, with retention to at least January of Year 12.

CASE STUDY – Targeted support for Looked After Children

A Directorate-wide holistic approach to the progression of looked after children has reduced the numbers of Looked After Children who are NEET from 24.7 % in March 2011 to 11.5% in March 2013. This has been matched by a reduction in unknowns from a position in March 2011 when the education, training or employment (ETE) status of 60 LAC was not known to this being known for every LAC in March 2013, with individual support and a cohort review monthly with a 'and 'deep dive' every 3 months.

In secondary education the Virtual school promotes progression pathways alongside designated teachers via the Personal Education Plans. In Year 11 the virtual school identifies with the YSS those most likely to have trouble progressing. The YSS then initiates contact with the young person with social care to ensure a 'sticky hand transfer'. The YSO will then stay with the young person wherever the young person moves. This is backed up with regular monitoring and further action e.g. in response to a evidence that there was a spike of discontinuation for LAC in the Spring of Yr 12, there are now half termly reviews with GFE colleges jointly with virtual school and YSS.

1. Preparing young people for participation

Surrey's rates of participation compare favourably to other local authorities both regionally and nationally. In Surrey, 91.3% of young people aged 16 to 18 were participating in education or training in 2011 (a further 4.8% were in employment) which placed Surrey joint fourth (top quartile) among South East Authorities, where the average participation rate was 88%. National figures for England showed a participation rate of 90.1% among 16 to 18 year olds to the end of 2011.

Participation rates for the different year groups were also comparatively high with 94% of 16 year olds and 88% of 17 year olds in education or work based learning, ranking Surrey third and fourth respectively in the South East. Further, Surrey achieved a high level of participation in Education, Training or Employment (ETE) among young people with 96.8% of those aged 16 to 18 participating in 2012, the second highest level of performance among statistical neighbours. There are, however, a number of barriers to participation that are increasing pressure on the system including the impact of the withdrawal of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), reductions to 16-19 funding for colleges, schools and other providers and wider economic pressures, which are reducing the availability of suitable job opportunities for young people. In addition to this, we now have improved processes which are able to capture data on in-year FE leavers that had previously not been available, enhancing data reliability and increasing the number of young people recorded as NEET.

In 2012, Surrey achieved a 15% reduction in the number of young people who were NEET compared to December 2011. Despite our success, we realise that achieving full participation will be challenging, nevertheless Surrey expects to be one of the first local authorities to achieve this goal. This will require close co-operation with partners as we jointly support young people to greater independence. As well as more traditional approaches to encouraging participation, we are using a range of innovative methods to promote ETE, targeted at the specific needs of young people. For example, Ready for Work (R4W) and Skills Centres are targeting NEET young people, focusing on developing the basic skills they need to gain access to ETE. The Youth Support Service provides a case manager or 'lead professional' for every young person that is NEET or in the youth justice system, building on the Youth Offending Team (YOT) practice model that has been operating in English and Welsh local authorities since 2000.

The Youth Engagement Contract (YEC) provides young people with information in relation to things to do and places to go, education, training, careers, health and healthy lifestyles with a requirement to demonstrate considerable innovation and creativity in its delivery which is in part achieved through the use of innovative online touch points such as U-Explore and Surge.

The Year 11-12 transition provides effective support to young people in Year 11, who are at risk of becoming NEET. It identifies those young people most likely to become NEET and provides the specific support that they need to become 'college or job ready'.

The trajectory to full participation shown below was agreed for Surrey by the 14-19 Partnership, as part of the development of the Young People's Employability Plan.

Participation by year	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
16/17 year olds	93.1%	97.9%	99.4%	100%	100%	100%
17/18 year olds	86.5%	93.3%	96.6%	98.3%	99.3%	100%

For the 2010/11 academic year, which is the most recent data currently available from national sources, Surrey managed to surpass these targets achieving participation rates of 94% among 16 to 17 year olds and 88% among 17 to 18 year olds. Although this achievement is encouraging, targets for subsequent years are recognised as being increasingly ambitious and therefore will be more challenging.

The Young People's Employability Plan and the twelve 14-19 Network self-evaluations and action plans demonstrate the Council has an extensive range of strategies - both universal and targeted - aimed at raising awareness of RPA and improving participation. For example:

- Analysis of Year 11 and Year 13 destinations data by school and by network to enable better planning and identification of need
- Collaborative curriculum pathways (Levels 1-3) to facilitate progression
- Use of RPA 'tools' within lesson plans and parents events
- Clearly defined progression routes incorporated in KS4 course booklets
- Bespoke KS4 provision for the most vulnerable with careful transition pathways planning with Post-16 providers

Schools

Schools are critical in preparing young people for participation after Year 11 and there is a statutory requirement for the local authority to *work with schools to identify those who are in need of targeted support or who are at risk of not participating post-16*. Through the 14-19 Conferences, Deputy Headteacher briefings, Heads of Sixth Form briefings and 14-19 Network Coordinators, schools have been well-briefed on RPA. Their responsibilities with regard to student destinations have been well set out and they have been provided with information and literature for students and parents. Working both individually and collaboratively through the 14-19 Networks, schools have provided information to students and parents on the Raising of the Participation and what it means in practice.

Youth Support Service

The Youth Support Service provides one to one support for all NEET young people to prepare them for participation and at the end of March 2013, 978 NEET young people were being supported by the

YSS. All NEET young people in Surrey are allocated a case worker who will go through a robust assessment process with them. The aim of this process is to identify their aspirations and to develop a realistic and actionable plan that will help them achieve their aims. Part of this process is to identify the barriers particular young people experience in moving into employment training or education and to then work with these individuals to help them address any issues. For many young people the barriers can be around self esteem and confidence and therefore activities like meeting young people at familiar places taking them to training or education providers for their first and in some cases subsequent visits can all help a young person to engage.

There are many examples of the positive effects that this work has for young people. For example, a teenage parent from Spelthorne with issues around self esteem who lacked the confidence to find work joined a support group which was co-facilitated by the YSS and a children's centre. As direct result of this group, the young person has gained confidence in her abilities, which has enabled her to feel ready to apply for an apprenticeship at the children's centre. In another case, a LAC young person was falling behind in their work at college and it was felt that there was an increasing risk of them becoming NEET. The college notified the link staff from YSS and joint meeting between the YSS, college and the young person led to a change in course and continued participation.

The YSS has also developed the Ready 4 Work programme which tackles the problem many NEET young people have around not having the skills to access entry level ETE opportunities. A range of innovative activities, designed to encourage progression to participation, have been undertaken in the eleven teams involved, including art and bike projects and the opportunity to obtain a CSCS card.

Through this approach, which focuses on PETE and addressing the root causes of barriers which cause young people to become NEET, the YSS helped 1,866 young people progress in 2012.

The YSS also uses this preventative approach to reduce offending and anti-social behaviour and 388 young people were involved in the Youth Restorative Programme in 2012 as well as a range of other successful activities aimed at preventing offending among those identified as being at risk. It also provides support for homeless young people in the county, meeting the shelter needs of 70 young people in 2012/13 at a critical point in their lives.

Communications

Our approach to communication with young people is predominantly delivered through the 'What's your next move?' campaign and through the Surge platform which is part of the Youth Engagement Contract. This campaign provides a suite of web pages providing information for young people and their parents/carers, including links to U-Explore, the Council's online careers IAG platform, while Surge offers a magazine style website delivered by young people for young people. The Council also delivers the Surrey Opportunities Fair which takes place each year in October and showcases the range of options that are available to young people following Year 11. The fair specifically targets RONI and NEET groups and breaks with the tradition of careers fairs for this age group, by educating young people on the full spectrum of choices post Year 11, not just those offered by schools and colleges. It was attended by 1,500 young people with a further 200 members of the public attending the twilight session.

Some of our GFE Colleges also provide information which is specifically targeted at young people with Special educational Needs and Disabilities. As a Pathfinder site for the SEN reforms, Surrey will be providing a comprehensive 'Local Offer' which will add value to information available to young people, families and professionals.

This year, as part of our communications, we wrote to all parents and carers responsible for Year 11 learners, promoting the rise in the participation age. This has led to parents who are better informed about the changes and have been much more proactive in supporting young people into Year 12.

Information advice and guidance

While we have retained our statutory duty to *enable, encourage and assist young people's participation in education and training*, schools are responsible to provide information advice and guidance (IAG) for pathways after Year 11. While Surrey schools typically do a good job in providing this IAG, some feedback suggests that not all schools are providing advice, on what we would consider the full range of opportunities available to young people.

U-Explore, was commissioned by Surrey County Council as part of its Youth Engagement Contract, and is an online resource which offers universal web-based access to IAG. Through 14-19 Networks, U-Explore is being extensively developed to cater for young people's needs with a high level of penetration among Year 11 learners in its first year with roughly half of these 11,000 young people using the website.

Between April 2012 and March 2013, a total of 27,000 young people signed up for U-Explore and over 19,000 were actively using the system for an average of four sessions over the year, resulting in a total of 83,821 visits. In most areas across the County U-Explore is being developed in schools for usage within PSHE and IAG sessions and many parents value and use it.

CASE STUDY – U-Explore: A user's journey

Before I used U-Explore I had very little idea of what I wanted to be when I grew up, I didn't know about many different careers and the ones I did know about I still only knew very little. My only real career ideas were, art teacher and cartoonist. After using U-Explore my career ideas have changed dramatically as I have gained help and understanding through detailed and clear explanations on the site. Now I can aim much higher as I am no longer confused. I am still not one hundred percent sure as to what career I would like to do nevertheless my ideas have developed from art teacher to art director and from cartoonist to architect. And I feel this level of progression would not have been achieved without the use of U-Explore. U-Explore has influenced me take Maths and English more seriously as they are important and well recognised qualifications, even if you are interested in going into the art industry. It has also altered my decisions for the future as it has persuaded me not to do things just because I find them easy.

Centre Based Youth Work

Young people in Surrey have open access to high quality youth work, independently assessed against the NYA Quality Mark, delivered from 31 youth centres and 12 satellite centres across the County. As a result of the NYA Quality Mark process, the number of Centres observed to have 'good' quality of practice has increased from four in 2012 to 18 in 2013, with the remainder still to be assessed. In 2012/13 over 3,000 young people participated in informal learning, personal and social development and community involvement opportunities.

Outcomes achieved for both communities and young people have been encouraging. For example, young people attending Shepperton Youth Centre, who have behavioural difficulties, had been vandalising The Greeno Day Care Centre in Shepperton and the Centre Manager wanted the young people prosecuted. As the result of a successful intergenerational project, the Youth & Community Worker has restored these young people as valued members of the community. The young people now serve tea and cakes in the Greeno Centre which are handmade on site and there has been no

vandalism of the centre since. Results from this project have been so encouraging that it has received attention from the BBC who have been on site filming.

Local Prevention Framework

The Local Prevention Framework (LPF) aims to help meet the County Council's social policy objectives by preventing young people from becoming NEET or offending as well as devolving the budget for commissioning local preventative youth services to Local Committees (LCs).

This commission works with young people of secondary school age who are most at risk of becoming NEET or offending. Supported by the Local Authority, local voluntary, community and faith sector groups engage these young people in innovative, locally driven, preventative programmes, to support their re-engagement and prepare them for participation. Programmes include the Heads Together specialist counselling service, skills development such as the GASP Motor Project and high quality youth work and outreach such as the Leatherhead Youth Project. At the start of the first year (2012/13), some providers got off to a slow start. As a result of Contract Performance Officers working closely with the Local Committees and providers, by October performance had improved and by March 2013 over 2,000 young people (112% of the original target) had been engaged in the programmes. During this time, just 0.5% of those most at risk entered the criminal justice system.

Vulnerable Young People

With the statutory guidance putting a duty on local authorities to *collect information to identify young people who are not participating, or who are at risk of not doing so* the Year 11/12 Transition Commission focuses on providing intensive support to young people who have been identified as being at risk of becoming NEET through local RONI criteria. At risk groups include being a looked-after child (LAC), having SEND, having previously offended, participating in alternative learning programmes, having attendance of less than 80% and being permanently excluded from school. In total, the Council and its partners provided support to 888 young people who were at risk of becoming NEET once they left school, which facilitated the progression of 85.8% (762) into further education, apprenticeships or employment. However, while we have managed to engage 86% of RONIs, NEET figures for the county as a whole have not fallen in line with this figure and therefore more work is being done to refine the RONI predictive analytics.

SEND Young People

In Surrey during 2011/12, 57% of young people who were NEET also had some form of SEND. This group includes young people with a wide spectrum of needs, including those with a formal Statement of Special Educational Need, those on school-based School Action Plus and School Action plans.

The Pathways Team work with SEND young people from Year 9 to ensure that they have the appropriate plan in place to help them access the best opportunities for their progression into participation after Year 11. As part of this process, a multi-agency planning meeting takes place 18 months before a young person is due to leave school to plan for their post-16 placement. This is chaired independently, and attended by a range of agencies, including schools, colleges, Pathways Team, SEND Commissioning, Adult Services, SEN, Employability, Children with Disability team. Pathways advisers provide valuable information, advice and guidance on many issues, including education and training. They work directly with SEND young people and oversee their transition to adulthood. The work of the Pathways team has been effective in securing an increase in participation

for SEND young people, with 12 fewer young people with statements being NEET compared to the same time last year: a 26.6% reduction.

A recent detailed needs analysis to inform the re-commissioning of the LPF has shown that 80% of Surrey's RONI cohort has some form of SEND. All LPF providers have been provided with a detailed profile of the RONI cohort to inform their bids and the market has been better developed with the aim of catering more specifically for these groups.

In addition to this, and to further support the Year 11/12 transition, the Pathways team provide intensive support to SEND young people in year 11 who have been identified as being at risk of becoming NEET through national RONI criteria. Each at risk young person in Year 11 is allocated a key worker and provided with mentoring to help them to identify a progression route following their compulsory schooling. National research indicates that young people are most vulnerable to dropping out of further education during the period leading up to Christmas, as they may struggle to keep up with the work or decide that they have chosen the wrong courses. Therefore, the Pathways team ensure these young people receive targeted support for the first term of Year 12.

Information and Planning Sessions for young people in Out of County Provision.

A series of sessions have been set up jointly with the Pathways Team and the Transition Team to provide information about services and opportunities available in Surrey. The sessions have had a focus on planning in order for young people to think about their next steps and set some goals for when they finish their Education. This gives young people an opportunity to provide commissioners with information about where they feel the gaps in provision are which is further helping the County to develop and commission opportunities targeted at the needs of all its young people. These sessions have had representation from Local Colleges, Employability, Health and Social Care as well as some voluntary sector providers.

2. Commissioning and developing opportunities

Commissioning and developing provision

Surrey's approach is to commission provision to fill gaps, whilst maintaining an overview of the breadth, balance and quality of provision overall, providing support and challenge to ensure provision is high quality and addresses current and future needs. For example, we have commissioned Skills Centres and R4W provision to provide pathways for young people who would otherwise be NEET and we have developed capital bids with colleges to increase SEND provision.

Skills Centres

Skills Centres run vocational classes from our youth centres and provide NEET young people with the basic skills they need to find work, secure a further education place or fill an apprenticeship. A total of 200 Skills Centre places have been commissioned for young people who would otherwise be NEET. Stage one of the skills Centres roll out took place between October and December 2012 and centres were opened in four of the five county 'NEET hotspots': Elmbridge; Reigate and Banstead; Runnymede and Spelthorne. While referrals during this first stage of the project were low, this was not unexpected. Results from Skills Centres have been positive and more than four in five (82%) Young People have had a positive outcome from Skills Centres. Over a third (53%) of the young people participating during Stage One have already progressed into positive destinations. Alongside this, just under half (29%) of the young people who took part in Stage One have continued to Stage

Two. Many of these learners have multiple barriers to participation which are best addressed through this sort of provision before they can progress to positive destinations.

Ready 4 Work

Ready for Work is the sister programme to Skills Centres and targets the PETE readiness needs of more sustained NEET groups. The outcome focussed, primary aim of the programme is not to change the NEET status of these young people but to bring them to a position where they are ready to participate, possibly via the Skills Centres programme. Both these programmes help to fulfil the statutory requirement to *develop provision that will meet the needs of 16-17 year olds NEET in the area and referring those who are eligible for support to local providers.*

The Quality of Post-16 Provision

The quality of provision and choice of Post-16 curriculum across Surrey as judged by Ofsted (schools, academies, Sixth Form Colleges and Further Education Colleges) is rated overall as Good or better. In Surrey's School/Academy Sixth forms, Sixth Form Colleges and FE Colleges and there is no provision which has been judged to be inadequate. The vast majority are judged to be Good or Outstanding. In Schools or Academies with Sixth Forms, 98.6% of post-16 provision was rated as Good or Outstanding in March 2013.

Vocational provision

Through the Young People's Employability Plan we are also promoting parity of esteem between vocational and academic pathways by increasing the emphasis on recruitment of vocational learners into further and higher education and ensuring that we promote vocational qualifications as equally viable routes to employability. The review of vocational education in the Wolf report provides evidence that vocational qualifications which are demanding and provide a clear route into employment will gain prestige not only among young people and their parents, but also among employers. To better support the development of vocational education in Surrey, we are offering advice and guidance on the qualification frameworks and are continuing to champion academic, applied vocational and occupational pathways according to local and individual need and preference. We are also actively promoting apprenticeships as an alternative option to formal qualifications, enabling young people to gain a vocational qualification at the same time as valuable work experience.

Surrey schools and colleges have been working to ensure that they adjust their curriculum accordingly, with high value qualifications and accredited work experience. In 2011/12, the number of young people aged 14-16 following at least one vocational or alternative qualification increased to 6,147, similar to the level seen in 2009/10. After Year 11, 17.5% of young people in maintained secondary sixth forms were following at least one vocational or alternative qualification.

Alternative Learning Provision

Working collaboratively with pooled funding, shared quality assurance and tracking on attendance and achievement, the 14-19 networks commission an extensive range of off-site vocational or alternative provision which build skills and confidence needed for participation and match closely with local Post-16 pathways. Local decision making and close working with Post-16 providers ensures a good match of provision to need. The summary of 14-19 Network Plans lists an extensive range of vocational opportunities. Currently 2,500 'at risk' students in KS4 are benefiting from collaboratively delivered, off-site vocational or alternative learning placements designed to increase motivation and

engagement and ensure participation post-16. These are largely aimed at students who have been identified as at Risk of becoming NEET or otherwise vulnerable, among whom are high percentages of Looked After Children and those with SEND.

For example, in Runnymede there is a wide range of alternative learning provision for all students and there are currently 155 students accessing 18 alternative courses which have clear progression routes. Basic functional skills that help mitigate barriers to ETE are taught to all students who attend this alternative provision. Students are supported by school staff who provide IAG in line with statutory requirements. This alternative provision has helped students avoid temporary or permanent exclusion and has helped the Borough achieve 11 fewer NEET young people than at the same point last year, with a shorter average duration.

CASE STUDY – Orpheus Bird Song Project

'The Orpheus Bird Song Project is a joint project between the Orpheus Centre in Godstone and 'at risk' students from Kings College to deliver a 'bird-song' engagement project into mainstream schools using SEND students so that all benefit from the work'. Additionally the partnership provides for extremely vulnerable students, including those with EBD through the off-site 'Well Programme' for KS3 and KS4 students. (Guildford Partnership)

Capital investment

We were successful in securing capital investment of £1.5m for East Surrey College and NESOCOT from the EFA in 2011/12. This has led to the creation of new facilities for young people with SEND which will be available from 2013/14 and will allow for more young people to access provision closer to home, in line with our wider strategy. We are also currently in the process of bidding for £23 million of investment in the County's youth estate in order to update our youth centres not only making them more appealing to young people but also updating them to help inspire young people to engage with ETE and to better prepare them for their participation.

Post 16 SEND Provision

Following the development of Surrey's Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) Strategy 2011-15, there has been a positive increase in local provision for SEND young people which has resulted in a 29% reduction in the need for placements outside Surrey (down from 121 to 86 over a 3 year period). Surrey's Closer to Home approach has directly helped SEND young people engage with ETE without the need for out of county for specialist provision. The evidence from young people suggests choosing to attend a local college leads to a smoother transition from school into further learning and, at the end of the placement, from learning back into the local community. This is being further developed as the integrated local offer as part of the Children and Families SE7 Pathfinder.

As well as making better use of limited resources, the main benefit of this enhanced local offer has been better coordination during the young person's transition from education and training into supported living and employment. Local placements offer a more seamless transition for young people and are therefore a preferable approach to a potentially difficult transition.

CASE STUDY – Blended provision/transition

A blended programme for a learner was established between East Surrey College (ESC) and Young Epilepsy (YE) to enable the learner to be enrolled at ESC, but to have staff from YE who knew the learner to come to the college and support her, whilst she settled into college, and train staff to support the learner with her epilepsy in case she had a fit. The learner has successfully progressed to a Level 1 course in Hair and Beauty.

Co-location of the Transition Team has led to a much more joined up approach and the Pathways Team are better enabled to ensure that young people are able to continue their education locally after Year 11 where possible.

3. Aligning aspirations with opportunities

Triangulating young people's aspirations, employment opportunities and learning needs with PETE provision is a key aspect of Surrey County Council's Young People's Employability Plan. Surrey produces an Aspirations and Opportunities report, which gathers information about the aspirations of young people in years 12 to 14 who are NEET in Surrey. This data currently includes known aspirations for about half of NEET young people that the YSS is supporting, as many of these young people require close support over time to clarify their aspirations. The YSS is continuing to work to improve the data captured by this report in the future which will in turn help us to understand this cohort better and deliver better support.

Apprenticeships

Surrey County Council's Leader has prioritised apprenticeships for young people, with high profile campaigns and direct funding support for their provision. A target for 200 apprenticeships in 100 days was exceeded in 2012/13 and there is an ambitious target for 500 apprenticeships in 2013-14. In 2012-13, 265 young people started apprenticeships who might otherwise have become NEET. Between 2011/12 and 2012/13 the number of apprentice starts for 16-18 year olds increased from 579 to 690. This was a 19.2% increase compared to statistical neighbours whose starts declined by 10.4% over the same period. In addition, apprentice participation amongst 16-18 year olds increased from 1,305 to 1,444 over the same period.

To boost apprenticeships in the County we are using a threefold approach: as an employer, as a purchaser and as a partner. Firstly, the County Council has committed to employing more apprentices. Secondly, we are working collaboratively with our contractors to ensure that all contracts for the provision of services (rather than goods) are let with a condition that the contractor employs an agreed number of apprentices aged 16-24 years. Thirdly, we work closely and effectively with our partners in the public sector to do the same.

Engagement with employers

Surrey has funded a tried and tested 'work pairing' pilot run by the Surrey Care Trust (SCT). This puts a young person with a SME on a trial basis with no commitment on either part for longer term commitment. This concept stems from work undertaken by a Glaswegian charity called Working Rite, who claim that upwards of 70% of young people who start the scheme move into an apprenticeship or other formal employment with their SME. Our expectation is that, with large number of SMEs, it will work just as well in Surrey, and it is a positive indication that SCT have kept the project going beyond the timeframe originally envisaged.

We are also working with employers, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chambers of Commerce to do more to equip young people with 'employability skills' by exploring the possibility of creating additional work experience opportunities to compliment the work of R4W and Skills centres and further enhancing this offer and its appeal to young people.

Surrey is also developing a programme with the Federation of Small Businesses where we are seeking business sector champions who will act as a gateway for young people wanting to enter employment in that sector. This sort of mentoring is invaluable for young people in helping to set realistic goals and expectations for work.

The BuildSurrey web portal gives construction industry SMEs in Surrey the chance to register as potential subcontractors for SCC work and backs up our plan to spend at least 60% of our budget with Surrey businesses. A pre-qualification questionnaire built into the process asked whether SMEs would be prepared to offer a Surrey young person an apprenticeship, work experience, work trial or practice interview. This has yielded around 200 expressions of interest from over 100 businesses.

Assessing need and planning for SEND young people

Surrey was part of the successful regional bid with six other Local Authorities in the South East (SE7), to develop and trial a single Education, Health and Care Plan under the SEN reforms.. These councils have worked closely with Primary Care Trusts, Parent Carer Forums and other agencies to ensure that families are central to the way a child's needs are assessed and to the support they receive. A pilot of the integrated Education, Health and Care plan is currently underway with Phase 1 completed at the end of March 2013. Phase 2 will scale up the process under the new legislation and will incorporate Phase 1 learning and principles. Currently, three Post 16 SEND Pathways Advisers (PA) have been trained to become Plan Co-ordinators with the intention of all PAs to be fully trained by September 2013.

In September 2012, we undertook a Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) which was focused on reducing the number of NEET young people with SEND. The RIE gathered as much input as possible from a wide range of stakeholders and service users before and during the event. Some of the main issues identified were:

- Transition for young people from school to college.
- Communication between services/providers and knowing what is available.
- Young people were not being equipped with employability or life skills.
- The need for more detailed information to understand the needs of this NEET cohort.

During the week, the RIE team developed high level solutions in conjunction with stakeholders and young people. Some of the key outcomes were:

- Supported employment with job coaching was recognised as being highly valued. As a result, a NEET pilot is planned for two Boroughs in Surrey.
- SYP, SEN and Transport are now jointly funding an independent travel training support post.
- The Transition Work stream has successfully commissioned and delivered joint Outcomes and Person Centred Planning Training with further planning training to be offered to a range of practitioners across Surrey.
- Three joint Transition/Pathways Team transition events for parents and young people are planned throughout the year. This is key to supporting transition for SEND learners and families.

Performance data indicates these improvements are starting to work. Since January 2013 the proportion of NEET young people with some form of SEND has fallen for three months in a row (from 58.5%, 57% to 55%) for the first time in a year. Numbers of SEND young people who are NEET have stayed broadly static while the total number of NEET young people has risen.

Employment opportunities for SEND young people

A post-16 employment pathway for SEND young people is currently being established and a pilot is being developed, working with a local Independent Specialist College (Young Epilepsy) to transform the third year of their programme into an employment focused year, where students will spend their time in employments and moving into supported living, if appropriate.

The Pathfinder programme is also giving us the opportunity to really look at an outcomes approach to planning for young people including employment opportunities.

A key project which is currently being piloted at NESCOL to support the transition of young people with SEND into adulthood and employment involves a broad range of partners, including NESCOL, secondary schools and EmployAbility. It has a specific focus on achieving better outcomes for SEND young people with a focus on 30 students during the pilot phase. Other key aims are:

- An extension of the NESCOL/Surrey EmployAbility supported employment partnership model to other providers within Surrey
- Better dissemination of good practice and transition planning among special schools, mainstream schools, college and supported employment agencies
- A clear format for the transition plan, made available to all partners
- Parental support obtained for enhanced transition models

The pilot is showing initial success, an example of which can be seen in the alternative offer being developed by a mainstream school as part of the pilot which draws on ideas from the project and focuses on helping young people achieve the work skills which meet their needs. Ofsted and students have reported that they are 'delighted' with the initial results which have seen students at high risk of disengagement regularly attending sessions and with one student improving in their Maths from an F to a D level. These results have already been shared with another school involved in the pilot who are developing a similar offer.

For those SEND young people who are ready, supported employment with job coaching is recognised as extremely valuable. As a result of the RIE, an innovative NEET pilot is now planned to take place in two Boroughs in Surrey. This pilot will see learners with SEND provided with additional support through one to one interviews with a qualified Pathways Adviser, through broader careers activities and through targeted personalised learning where appropriate. Surrey is linking in with local providers to ensure the future sustainability of this programme if the pilot is recognised as being successful.

The County has also successfully negotiated with a national construction company to take on at least ten long term paid work experience places in Surrey over 2013. These places will be exclusively offered to the vulnerable people supported by SCC.

Listening to SEND young people and their families

The Pathways Team have sought feedback from young people and their parents/carers in order to understand which areas they felt were most important to SEND young people as they moved from Year 11 to 12 and where there was need for further support. This feedback identified that SEND young people and their families were keen to receive more information in relation to transitions and the available support at key stages. In addition to this, further information on the options open to young people as well as more one to one support at key stages in the transition was felt to be beneficial. One of the key things that was identified as part of the process was that a significant proportion of parents were concerned about feeling uninformed or excluded during the process. Improved communications at key stages have since been developed.

4. Overcoming barriers to participation

Understanding the barriers

Young people experience a range of different barriers to participation depending on their personal circumstances. Qualitative research undertaken with young people in 2012 identified a number of barriers to participation, including transport. Typically, this was either because transport was not readily available to them or, more often, because it was too expensive for them to access on an ongoing basis.

Overcoming barriers

In line with statutory requirements, we are providing targeted support for young people for whom the cost or availability of transport holds them back from education, training or employment, including securing contributions from travel companies or other business sponsorship.

We are the first local authority to provide colleges and training providers with a grant, in advance of each term, and based on the forecasts for enrolment of students eligible for free meals, for a free meal for all Year 12 learners in further education with an entitlement. This means that all young people in Year 12 now have access to a meal at lunch time and their capacity to concentrate and learn has been enhanced. So far this year, evaluation of the initiative indicates it has benefited 326 young people and case studies indicate that it has made a real difference to our most vulnerable young people.

Emotional Barriers

As well as financial barriers, the research uncovered that young people perceived their opportunities to be limited. These barriers existed because of previous low attainment, lack of qualifications or because of limited work experience. However, a lack of suitable education, training or employment opportunities as well as what was considered to be inadequate information, advice and guidance also contributed to a perception that opportunities were limited. These issues were often closely linked with a number of emotional barriers and young people reported having negative experiences at school such as bullying or victimisation by students and teachers. This had frequently led to a lack of confidence and self-esteem when it came to participating in education, training or employment with training. Work outlined earlier in this document, such as the case work undertaken by the YSS and alternative learning provision such as Skills Centres, specifically targets these perceived barriers to move NEET young people to a place where they feel ready to participate.

Bursary scheme

We have developed a bursary scheme, responsive to the needs of individuals, which is delivered locally through youth task groups. It specifically targets support to young people for whom financial hardship is a barrier to participation. Where the costs of equipment or kit which are necessary for participation on vocational courses are prohibitive, we are supporting individuals to cover these costs and allow them to continue in learning. Skills Centre learners have been supported to purchase formal clothing for interviews. We are also paying all transport costs and providing breakfast and lunch for Skills Centre learners. In some of the most rural parts of the county, this involves providing taxis for learners initially and building in independent travel training to support progression into further study or employment.

Runnymede piloted the Individual Prevention Grants (IPG) (similar to personal budgets) to remove young people's barriers to participation. IPGs help to remove a broad range of barriers and are used as part of a solution which was coproduced with young people. IPGs focus on:

- The young person and their real wealth
- An equal and productive relationship with the professional
- A mutual commitment to positive outcomes

By January 2013, 20 young people who were NEET had received a total of £1,466 in personal budgets as a result of the pilot. An average of £73 has been given to each young person, but individual payments ranged from a high of £229 down to £0.99. As a result of the work of the local borough team and the allocation of a personal budget, 12 of these 20 young people moved into PETE and are still participating, a rate of 60%. For the eight young people who have remained NEET, a range of softer emotional and wellbeing outcomes have been achieved, to move them towards participation. These include building confidence and self-esteem, restoring relationships with family members and addressing anger management issues.

IPGs will be available from 22 April 2013 across the rest of Surrey and will be administered by the Youth Support Service.

CASE STUDY – Runnymede individual prevention grants

Case A: As a result of receiving an individual prevention grant, alongside support from the YSS, 'A' was able to take part in a training programme at MPCT. The money allowed him to buy the army issue trousers and uniform he needed for the course, as well as a new pair of trainers, so he could complete the physical training. He has since achieved 100% attendance and is set to be put forward to enter into final selection process for the Army.

Case B: 'B' had no internet access at home, so was finding it difficult to search and apply for jobs. His lack of self-confidence meant he found it hard to access internet elsewhere. As a result the YSS agreed an individual prevention grant to buy him a wireless dongle for his computer. Having access to the internet at home means he has now been able to access the job centre, upload his CV to 10 job search websites and can receive and respond to emails, whilst feeling relaxed and safe at his own home.

Improving literacy and numeracy skills

Working collaboratively, 14-19 networks provide both universal and targeted strategies to improve literacy and numeracy skills, develop appropriate pathways and mentor young people most at risk of not participating. 14-19 Self Evaluation and Planning show a wide range of strategies aimed ensuring that the most vulnerable have the tools and skills with which to participate Post-16:

“Learners with LLDD are well catered for and integrated into vocational programmes through support from schools. Schools support access to the curriculum through the support of TA's in vocational provision, additional support groups in schools and catch up sessions for those in need of additional support in order to achieve.”(Elmbridge)

“Literacy and numeracy skills are incorporated into all vocational provision and learners undertake functional skills as part of their vocational courses.’ [...] Local Special Schools attend college on a weekly basis and study accredited vocational courses from entry 3 – level 1” (South East Surrey)

Supporting vulnerable young people

The proportion of young people eligible for FSM who achieved Level 3 by 19 increased by 3 percentage points in 2010/11, to 31%. This places Surrey 6th amongst statistical neighbours, a drop of one place compared to last year. The attainment gap between those eligible for FSM and those not eligible remains the same as last year at 33%. For seven of Surrey's statistical neighbours the gap widened this year, meaning that Surrey moved up to 5th in the rankings from 2010 to 2011. However, Surrey is almost ten percentage points behind the England average where there is a gap of only 24% between those eligible for FSM and those not eligible for FSM who achieve a Level 3 qualification by age 19. Surrey is in the lowest quartile nationally for this gap measure.

Other measures to support vulnerable young people include the youth Homelessness Prevention Service (HPS) which has seen record performance in preventing homelessness for 16 and 17 year olds in the County. Over the Christmas 2012 period no young people who were designated as a child in need were placed in bed and breakfast accommodation.

As a result of the way young people are policed and diverted post arrest in Surrey we have witnessed a reduction of 90% in the number of young people who enter the criminal justice system over the last five years. The projection for the year to April 2013 is for there to be 2,138 young people identified as having committed an offence in Surrey. This is a 43% reduction from 2010 when 3,751 young people were dealt with by Surrey Police by way of prosecution, caution or informal resolution.

In 2012, no LAC living in Surrey entered the criminal justice system. This is predominantly due to our restorative approach, commissioned by the corporate parenting board and delivered in partnership with SYP. We have delivered over 1,000 restorative interventions in 2012 which has given these young people the opportunity to start their adult life without the additional difficulties associated with a criminal record.

Young people whose destination is unknown

The County Council has made good progress in identifying the destinations for those Year 12 and 13 students for whom we currently hold no data. We have managed to reduce the proportion of ‘unknown’ young people in these year groups to 3.4%, with much higher rates of success in some areas. For example, in Woking where an additional Tracking Officer has been recruited, the proportion of unknowns has fallen to only 1.7% of the total Year 12 and 13 population. We have also had further success for older students and managed to almost halve our Year 14 unknowns from 4,859 to 2,690 during February 2013. Improvements in identifying unknowns can primarily be attributed to our work in fostering better data sharing relationships and procedures between the Council and post-16 ETE providers.

Young offenders and those in custody

Young people with court orders represent a far smaller group than three years ago. An even smaller sub group are those in custody with only seven Surrey young people in this group on 1st January 2013. These young people will have education as a central part of their assessment. For all who do not have full time provision and clear lines of progression, the area education lead will hold responsibility for them and will advocate and support them into provision. Regarding those in custody the lead will ensure they attend reviews and support progression on release.

The main reason for the decline in young people on court orders has been the increasing use of the Youth Restorative intervention. Each of these young people will have an education check completed and have a YSO allocated if NEET. This has involved training police to ask the NEET question.

GRT

The development of a Gypsy skills Project has been focussed on members of the Gypsy, Romany and traveller communities, many of whom have rejected formal education. The incidence of mental health, anti social behaviour and unemployment is high in this group demonstrating the need for support. With the opt-out of home education existing within RPA guidelines, there is a fear this group will become a hidden, non participating group, a concern that Gypsy Skills can help to address.

CASE STUDY – Gypsy Skills at Lintons Lane Youth Centre

There are about 15 young people involved in the Gypsy Skills programme at Lintons Lane Youth Centre in Epsom. The aim is for the programme to act as a stepping stone for these young people, helping them to engage with ETE, get into college and learn a trade. The theory is that once they have got experience and have demonstrated what they can do, they have a better to get into college than without this experience.

“This project's different from school because I'm with my cousins and I love working and I'm learning at the same time. At school there's too many and it's distracting. In here you have a much smaller class and you get much more attention and much more help with your work, my favourite part of gypsy skills is the construction bus.” GRT Young person

The construction bus provides a lot of resources for young people to learn new skills around bricklaying, woodwork, plumbing. On the construction bus we make copper tables, boomerangs and other stuff. Construction bus helps them to get self confidence, self worth and achievement in the things they make.

“I like the construction bus because it helps you when you're in college.” GRT Young person

Tier 4 mental health issues-The HOPE service

Surrey is unique in having a Tier 4 provision for young people with mental health issues, the HOPE service. The YSS has a strong link with a designated worker who will work with the HOPE service when a young person is 3 months from being discharged. They will visit the young person jointly with the case worker and then prepare a plan that can be passed onto boroughs for them to be picked up in their community. This focuses on young people in Year 11-13 and went live in January with four young people already re- engaged

Teenage Parents

Teenage parents make up between 10 and 15% of the NEET cohort. The statutory guidance requires the County Council to have *appropriate support mechanisms in their area to enable these young people to re-engage in education or training as soon as is reasonably possible*. A number of trials have been run to ensure that progression expectations remain high, if young people want them.

In particular a Spelthorne pilot has successfully engaged eight teenage parents in a Readiness for Work project which has led to one moving onto an apprenticeship in the local hospital and one currently short listed for an apprenticeship in the local children's centre. The pilot is part of a health good practice seminar in collaboration with Public Health, Early years and YSS.

5. Tackling worklessness in families

The Council is currently in the final stages of developing a strategy which aims to tackle the issue of worklessness across Surrey. This strategy will start to be rolled out across Surrey in April 2013. This strategy consists of three central strands:

Firstly, Surrey has undertaken a multi-agency project examining how the recent welfare reforms will impact upon families in the county with a view to coordinating the local public sector response to benefit changes. Included are workstreams on preventing homelessness; improving family financial resilience; improving access to good quality advice, and; access to employment and employment support. In partnership with key stakeholders across the county, Surrey has developed a database of all back to work opportunities. Once this database is rolled out, it will provide a valuable resource which can be used to target workless families with the most suitable opportunities across the county.

Secondly, the County Council is in the final stages of developing a Memorandum of Understanding with Skills Training UK, the regional provider of European Social Fund (ESF) Troubled Families Work Support Programme. This agreement will deploy the resources of that programme alongside those of the Surrey Family Support Programme, to enable provision of Back to Work support for around 600 to 800 families across the county over the next two years. The Surrey Family Support Programme is multi-agency delivery vehicle through which the national Troubled Families Programme will be implemented locally. As part of the local discretionary additional criteria being applied in Surrey we are using a definition of families of concern which incorporate families with multiple needs that includes RONI and NEET young people.

Thirdly, Surrey has agreed with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that two Employment Advisers from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will be seconded to the council for a period of two years. These Officers will act as dedicated liaison between the County Council and its partners in relation to the Family Support Programme and DWP funded opportunities that aim to help workless individuals and their families re-engage with work.

Further, Surrey County Council has commissioned ESRO to conduct qualitative research on the likely impacts of welfare reform on residents' day-to-day lives. The report which was produced as part of this research has been important in shaping our understanding as a Local Authority and we have shared it with partners across Surrey as we work with them to prepare for the implementation of welfare reform. While the report uncovered that some people will be incentivised to work, others will find it increasingly difficult to meet household expenses due to a reduction in welfare payments. This in turn will lead to an anxiety around reassessment of eligibility to work and some claimants will be anxious about the increased conditionality of some benefits.

A benefits task and finish group has been established to ensure families are aware of the implications of the changes from DLA to PIP during this year. This is to include an opportunity for individual advice sessions to ensure families are claiming what they are entitled to.

The role and influence of the family has always been recognised as an important factor to consider when supporting a young person to realise their aspirations. Therefore the YSS see their work with

the families of young people as much a part of the solution as the work they do with young people themselves.

Once the young person has given their agreement, the YSS works with the wider family to develop actions which are jointly agreed with the young person. This approach helps to cement the relationship the young person has with the YSS in a much broader social context, and makes it more likely the young person will succeed. Much of the work undertaken with families has a focus on mediation and restorative approaches within the family.

6. Next steps

We have identified the key challenges ahead and have plans to address these. In particular we recognise the challenge of achieving and maintaining full participation for our young people. We have set out our plans in the Young People's Employability Plan 2012-17, which is supported by an annual programme plan. In particular, in 2013-14, we are developing the Leader's Ready for Work Programme to draw together our planning for engaging young people, who would otherwise be NEET, on Ready 4 Work Programmes, with progression to Skills Centres, apprenticeships, further education or employment with training.

We also recognise the challenge of securing full participation and effective transition to adulthood for young people with SEND. We are already working as a Pathfinder on the Green Paper, Support and Aspiration for young people with SEND, for the Draft Children and Families Bill. We have had some national recognition for the work we are doing and Surrey was put forward as a "Champion Authority" as part of the SE7 Group.. We are taking holistic, person centred approaches to the planning, assessment of need and commissioning of provision for young people with SEND, including the use of plan co-ordinators. There are challenges presented by the pace of change and the more integrated approaches required with Health. However we are already receiving positive feedback from families on how the approach feels much more in partnership. As part of our work as a "Champion Authority", we are proposing to introduce comprehensive education, health and care plans, from September 2013, for those young people who would otherwise have had a section 139a assessment.

Securing participation for all young people, which motivates them and provides clear pathways that fulfil their aspirations will be a further challenge. The Ready 4 Work programme and progression to employment with training, apprenticeships, further education or training, offers significant potential for a win-win approach with more challenging groups, which achieves better outcomes for them and better outcomes for Surrey.

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