

Meeting of:	Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 10 November 2022
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Youth Engagement and Progression Update
Purpose of Report:	To make Members aware of the progress made over the last 12 months of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and the current levels of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
Report Owner:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills
Responsible Officer:	Peter Williams, Lead NEETs Project Officer
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Cllr Rhiannon Birch, Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language Morwen Hudson, Head of Standards and Provision Martin Dacey, Lead for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing Rhys Jones, Pupil Engagement Manager
Policy Framework:	The recommendations of this report are within existing policy framework and budget
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report is to make Members aware of the reduction of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in the Vale of Glamorgan (VoG) as well as updates to the NEETs agenda from Welsh Government and the work being done locally within the Vale of Glamorgan. • The report consists of annual destination data of school leavers conducted by Careers Wales on behalf of Welsh Government in October 2021, with the statistical report for the destination survey being released in May 2022. • The data highlighted the level of young people classified as NEET had reduced in National Curriculum Year (NCY) 12 and 13, whilst remaining below the Welsh average for NCY groups 11 and 13. There was an increase in the percentage of year 11 young people classified as NEET by 0.10% from previous year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Year 11 young people classified as NEET in the Vale was 1.00%, below the Welsh average of 1.60%. ○ Year 12 young people classified as NEET in the Vale was 0.40%, on par with the Welsh average of 0.40%. ○ Year 13 young people classified as NEET was 2.25%, below the Welsh average of 2.29%. 	

- The reduction of NEET young people in the Vale has been a result of strong partnerships with Careers Wales, Council departments, education, training providers and European Social Fund (ESF) projects.

Recommendations

1. That Members consider the progress made in the last 12 months of the implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) to reduce the number of young people classified as NEET in the Vale of Glamorgan.
2. That Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee receives a further progress update report in 12 months.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. The Council has a strategic responsibility for implementing the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) to reduce the number of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training.
2. That the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee has continued oversight of the YEPF.

1. Background

- 1.1 The YEPF implementation plan, which was in place until September 2022, set targets to reduce the numbers of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET in Wales to 9 per cent by 2017. It aimed to further reduce the proportion of young people aged 19 to 24 who are NEET in Wales relative to the UK as a whole by 2017.
- 1.2 Welsh Government have been undertaking consultation work to review the YEPF. Updated documents have recently been released in September 2022, with links provided in the Background Papers section of this report. The key change in this release of the YEPF is the change of age to 11 to 18 years old, with the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) operating alongside for those aged 16 to 24 years old.
- 1.3 The latest milestone put in place by Welsh Government for the YEPF and YPG is that at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds are in education, employment or training by 2050.
- 1.4 This report seeks to make elected Members aware of the progress made in the Vale of Glamorgan in respect of reducing NEETs and the milestones achieved.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The Welsh Government official statistical data on NEETs for 2022 was released in May 2022. The annual survey of school leavers undertaken by Careers Wales in October of each year on behalf of the Welsh Government provides a snapshot of pupil destinations. It includes pupils in year 11 who have reached statutory

school leaving age and pupils leaving school in years 12 and 13. Overall, the data has presented positively, reducing the percentage of NEET young people in NCY 12 and 13.

- 2.2** The percentage of year 11 leavers who were NEET increased from 0.90% in 2020 to 1.00% (16 young people) in 2021, below the Welsh average of 1.60% and the VoG was ranked joint third in Wales.
- 2.3** The percentage of young people classified as NEET upon leaving year 12 in 2021 was 0.40% (three young people), reduced from 0.60% in 2020.
- 2.4** The percentage of year 13 leavers who became NEET in 2021 was 2.25% (17 young people), a reduction from 3.11% in 2020.
- 2.5** Young people across the VoG continue to access vocational pathways for 14–16-year-olds. Data received from secondary schools in the Vale show the largest provider being Motivational Preparatory College Training (MPCT) (67%), followed by Cardiff and the Vale College (27%). The remaining 6% are provided by other providers included in the directory of alternative education provision, such as Associated Community Training (ACT) and Grow at the Amelia Trust Farm. All the above have opportunity to access transition support to post 16 pathways upon leaving school.
- 2.6** European Social Fund (ESF) Programmes Inspire to Achieve (I2A) and Inspire to Work (I2W) have been instrumental to engaging young people at risk of becoming NEET. This has supported the Local Authority's (LA) work of reducing the number of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET. Both projects are managed regionally by Newport City Council, with Cardiff Council, Monmouthshire Council, Llamau, Careers Wales, Gwent College and Cardiff and the Vale College working in collaboration as partners. As I2A and I2W are regional programmes, the indicators and outcomes shown locally feed into the wider regional achievement.
- 2.7** I2A has been in place since 2016 and comes to an end in December 2022. The project has worked with a total of 611 young people in this time, 61 of whom in the 2021-2022 financial year. A total of 162 young people have entered further education or training, 165 have gained a qualification, and 318 are at a reduced risk of becoming NEET in the future. I2A is ending in December 2022, in line with the ESF funding coming to an end, with face-to-face delivery ceasing on the 31st of October 2022. This will allow for the full closure of the project in this period as well as a transition to the Youth Service's new pre-16 project. The regional breakdown and summary of I2A figures can be found in Appendix A at the end of this document.
- 2.8** I2W has been in place since 2017 and comes to an end in December 2022. The project has worked with a total of 370 young people in this time, 89 of whom in the financial year 2021-2022. A total of 27 young people have entered further education or training, 156 have achieved a qualification through the project, and 171 have progressed onto employment. The Vale of Glamorgan is the lead authority in terms of performance for I2W in the ESF regional partnership programme. I2W also ends in December 2022, with face-to-face delivery ceasing

on the 31st October 2022. The Youth Service will have no employability project to replace I2W, however the Communities for Work Plus (CFW+) programme has secured additional funding through the Young Person's Guarantee to support this work in the future. The regional breakdown and summary of I2W figures can be found in Appendix B at the end of this document.

- 2.9** The Youth Engagement and Progression Strategic Board, chaired by the Head of Provision and Standards, meet quarterly. The group analyses the NEETs data, monitors performance, and provides strategic direction in addressing the NEETs agenda accordingly. The Board's Terms of Reference are reviewed annually to ensure appropriacy.
- 2.10** Lead Worker Meetings with key education and training providers take place monthly, to ensure up to date NEETs data is considered. Offers of provision are discussed and can be adapted to ensure flexibility to cater for young people at risk of becoming NEET. During the summer and autumn months, the key focus is to engage young people, ensuring they are enrolled onto appropriate courses and learning pathways. This ties in with the run up to the destination survey at the end of October each year. The Post-16 and Seren Advisor meets with the local Working Wales manager on a weekly basis to look at tier 3 NEETs data and to consider which progression routes are provided to support these individuals.
- 2.11** A directory of alternative education provision for statutory school age was updated for 2022/23 academic year by the new Pupil Engagement casework Coordinator. The directory is used by schools to source bespoke, contracted provision for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs who may benefit from more bespoke learning pathways. The range of provision is varied and subject specific to meet the needs and interests of young people. The providers have worked with the LA and supported young people to enhance their engagement and attainment in many instances. The directory provides details of delivery options, expected learning outcomes, qualifications, progression routes and costs.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Reducing the percentage of young people from becoming NEET is set out in the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and the Welsh Government Child Poverty Strategy. It helps support the national and local indicator of percentage of young people in education, employment, or training, under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
- 3.2** The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2025 'working together for a brighter future' demonstrates a direct link with Objective 2 'to support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth', with specific actions set out to "ensure there is appropriate access to quality early years, nursery and education provision enabling people to achieve their best possible outcome whatever their age" and to "work with education, training business and other agencies to provide a range

of advice, support and training opportunities which improve people's skills in readiness for work" and "work as part of Cardiff Capital Region to progress strategic planning in transport, initiatives and promote sustainable economic growth and employment".

- 3.3** The variety of provision continues to develop with a wide range of offers from alternative education providers, vocational learning with progression routes, tailored support, and information and guidance. This supports learners to explore their interests and realise their potential. We are proud to be offering a wide range of subject pathways through our partners that will help inspire young people to fulfil their potential.
- 3.4** Improving standards of alternative education provision is important to us and we want to ensure that provision is quality assured through regular contracts management meetings with the providers. The process ensures we monitor the progress of learners. Monitoring is undertaken to ascertain those learners are receiving value for money and that provision has a positive impact on young people's education and wellbeing. The LA has adopted a more robust process of conducting quality assurance, with panel representation from a range of stakeholders. In addition to LA officers, representation includes Careers Wales and secondary headteachers.
- 3.5** We work collaboratively with internal and external partners that include agencies, education and training providers, Careers Wales and Welsh Government to help meet the well-being objective.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** Climate change and nature implications affect young people accessing employment or education. The Corporate Plan 2020-2025 Objectives including 'to support learning, employment, and sustainable economic growth, is relevant to the work in relation to climate change and economical use of natural resources.
- 4.2** Throughout the work of officers within this area, most meetings with partners, stakeholders and internal staff are held over Microsoft Teams to help minimise transport between meeting locations.
- 4.3** Moving away from ESF funded projects allows for a more sustainable approach to the need for paper-based files. By using digital management of information systems within the Council, we can move more towards a paperless service. To support this work, we are undertaking impact assessments to use digital methods for consent to reduce the carbon footprint further.
- 4.4** With the implementation of the wider electric pool car strategies from the Council, it is expected that these will be used, once available, along with carpooling with other staff when available to attend face-to-face meetings.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1 The Welsh Government Youth Engagement & Progression Framework (YEPF) is part of the Core Youth Support Service Grant of £414,573, of which £63,040, is assigned to the work of the YEPF, including provision. Welsh Government have confirmed that the grant will be in place from August 2022 to March 2025.
- 5.2 The total cost of the European Social Fund (ESF) projects Inspire to Achieve (I2A) and Inspire to Work (I2W) for the Vale is £2,015,018. The amount of grant funding income received is £939,395. This funding is from 1st April 2016 to 31st December 2022 for the I2A project and from the 1st April 2017 to 31st December 2022 for the I2W project.

Employment

- 5.3 Supporting the YEPF, the Youth Service uses core funding to cover the EPC role within the Council. In addition, Welsh Government grant funding is used to support the costs and the work plan for both the Post-16 and Seren Advisor role and the Post-16 Learning Coach and Mentor positions.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.4 The Engagement and Progression Framework supports the early identification of pupils at risk of becoming NEET and enables support to be put in place to ensure equality of access to education, training, and employment opportunities regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Welsh Government Guidance: Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Overview, available at: [Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Overview \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)
- 6.2 Welsh Government Guidance: Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Handbook, available at: [Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Handbook \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

Appendix A: Inspire to Achieve (I2A) Regional Performance

Summary Cumulative Performance per Joint Beneficiary

QUARTER	25
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Performance	Cardiff			Coleg Gwent			Monmouthshire			Newport			Vale of Glamorgan			CaVC		
	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance
Output: Participants at Risk of becoming NEET	1167	1167	0	798	859	61	847	882	35	749	591	-158	657	608	-49	556	520	-36
Participants at Risk of becoming NEET (11 - 24 years of age) - MALE	610	680	70	340	361	21	466	486	20	407	355	-52	399	374	-25	278	253	-25
Participants at Risk of becoming NEET (11 - 24 years of age) - FEMALE	557	487	-70	458	498	40	380	396	16	342	236	-106	260	234	-26	278	267	-11
Result: gaining qualifications upon leaving	132	96	-36	2	2	0	198	224	26	146	119	-27	177	165	-12	123	60	-63
Result: in education or training upon leaving	292	314	22	71	68	-3	165	216	51	117	131	14	141	162	21	9	29	20
Result: at reduced risk of NEET upon leaving	683	658	-25	539	588	49	383	420	37	385	215	-170	383	320	-63	265	227	-38
<i>Red font denotes actuals under target</i>																		
<i>Black font denotes actuals over target</i>																		

CUMULATIVE TOTAL			
Target	Actual	Variance	% Achieved
4774	4627	-147	97%
2500	2509	9	100%
2275	2118	-157	93%
778	666	-112	86%
795	920	125	116%
2638	2428	-210	92%
<i>% Achieved - Red font denotes indicator outside 15% tolerance</i>			

Appendix B: Inspire to Work (I2W) Regional Performance

Summary Cumulative Performance per Joint Beneficiary

Performance	Cardiff			Llanaugoch			Monmouthshire			Newport			Vale of Glamorgan		
	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance	Target	Actual	Variance
NEET Participants (16-24 years of age)	484	435	-49	115	77	-38	456	361	-95	650	439	-211	261	363	102
NEET Participants (16-24 years of age) - male	251	305	54	64	38	-26	241	214	-27	330	270	-60	145	253	108
NEET Participants (16-24 years of age) - female	233	130	-103	51	39	-12	215	147	-68	320	169	-151	116	110	-6
NEET Participants (16-24 years of age) gaining qualifications upon leaving	115	123	8	39	36	-3	114	74	-40	117	69	-48	38	157	119
NEET Participants (16-24 years of age) in education/training upon leaving	46	45	-1	19	24	5	70	50	-20	65	56	-9	18	28	10
NEET Participants (16-24 years of age) entering employment upon leaving	161	203	42	24	10	-14	134	149	15	163	114	-49	73	172	99
<i>Red font denotes actuals under target</i>															
<i>Black font denotes actuals over target</i>															

QUARTER	22
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CUMULATIVE TOTAL			
Target	Actual	Variance	%
1966	1675	-291	85%
1031	1080	49	105%
935	595	-340	64%
423	459	36	109%
218	203	-15	93%
555	648	93	117%
<i>% Achieved - Red font denotes indicator outside 15% tolerance</i>			