

## **EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 1 OCTOBER 2015**

### **YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEETs) WORKING GROUP - PROGRESS REPORT**

**Report by Councillor Peter Handley, Chairman of the NEETs Working Group**

#### **Introduction**

1. Under its Terms of Reference, the Education Scrutiny Committee may establish working groups in order to explore issues further.
2. At the July 2015 meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee it was agreed that a working group of the committee be set up to consider into further detail the issue of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) in Oxfordshire.
3. This report provides a summary of the discussion and the recommendations of the working group to the Education Scrutiny Committee.

#### **Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) Working Group**

4. The NEETs working group is chaired by Cllr Peter Handley. Membership consists of the following Education Scrutiny Committee councillors: Cllr Mark Gray, Cllr Michael Waine, and Cllr Steve Curran. In addition, the Deputy Director for Education & Learning and other relevant officers attend the meetings of the group as required.
5. The group's initial meeting was held at County Hall on Thursday 03 September 2015. It is envisaged that a follow up meeting of the working group will be held in November 2015 to consider some of the matters arising from the initial discussion.

#### **Summary of Discussion**

6. At the September meeting, the working group were provided with an overview of the number of NEETs in Oxfordshire and the county council's statutory duties in relation to NEETs. Members heard that figures have improved significantly over the last few years and that Oxfordshire is in a strong position compared to its statistical neighbours.
7. Furthermore the working group discussed the employment and apprenticeship opportunities available to young people in Oxfordshire, and heard from officers that the county council is working closely with local employers and schools to match job opportunities with young people and to make sure young people have the right skills and training when they leave education.

8. Further information about the local and national picture in relation to NEETs and the council's responsibilities and work to support NEETs is available in the report attached at Annex 1.
9. Overall the working group were satisfied that the county council has robust systems in place to deal with NEETs and recommended that the issue does not require further attention from the committee.
10. In particular, the group noted that figures compare very favourably with neighbours and nationally, and advised that the council continue to look at areas of further improvement. There was acknowledgment that while individual cases of concern may occur, the county council provides appropriate support to young people not in education, employment or training in Oxfordshire and that the system used for updating children leaving education is working well.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

11. **The Education Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to:**
  - (a) **recognise the positive trajectory of Oxfordshire County Council in supporting young people not in education, employment or training;**
  - (b) **encourage Early Intervention and Economy & Skills teams to link on a regular basis with the Education and Learning Senior Management Team to ensure clarity and joint working; and**
  - (c) **ensure governors are aware of their statutory responsibilities in relation to NEETs.**

COUNCILLOR PETER HANDLEY

Chairman of the Young People not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) Working Group

Contact Officer: Andreea Anastasiu, Policy Officer, Chief Executive's Office;  
Tel: (01865) 323535

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