

Education to Employment: supporting youth participation

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

York Consulting have been commissioned by the Board to undertake an action learning project focussed on developing a better understanding of the barriers/challenges that exist for councils in fulfilling their statutory duties for young people. Their work builds on the findings of the Education to Employment: supporting youth participation project. York Consulting will be attending the Board to provide an update on their work and to give members a chance to reflect on the findings.

The youth participation work is jointly developed by City Regions, People and Places and Children and Young People Boards to ensure read-across.

Recommendations

Members are invited to:

- i. Note the summary findings of the project (Annex A).
- ii. Comment on the findings of the project and the extent to which they reflect the challenges in members' local areas.
- iii. Provide a steer on the next steps for this project (para 11).

Action

Officers to take forward any comments and steer from members.

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Education to Employment: supporting youth participation

Background

1. Improving youth participation in education, employment and training (EET) as part of their statutory duties is key for councils. The Covid-19 crisis has had an adverse effect on young peoples' ability to transition into education or employment effectively.
2. Last autumn the Board approved a piece of research to advance our youth policy work and to support the sector. York Consulting have been commissioned to undertake an action learning project with eleven areas (councils/combined authorities).
3. The project aims to develop a better understanding of the barriers/challenges that exist for councils in fulfilling their statutory duties for young people, for instance, in relation to NEETs and to explore solutions. The project is due to complete at the end of March. A final report will outline what works in overcoming barriers to youth participation and showcase innovative approaches by the areas involved.
4. Following a request from Lead Members, York Consultancy have been invited to share some early insights of the project findings.

Progress to date

5. The project initially set out to support six to eight council areas through action learning. However, due to the overwhelming interest from the sector to be involved in this piece of research, the project was rapidly expanded to eleven areas.
6. The first action planning workshop in January focussed on identifying the barriers and the scale of the challenge overall. The second workshop in February provided an overview of the councils' action plans, along with profiling of some good practice. Local areas were able to share their experiences and learning with participating councils.
7. Due to the short timescales for the project and workload/capacity issues related to Covid-19 pressures has resulted in some areas taking a measured approach to implementing their action plans. Therefore, the real impact of their activities will be more evident over the next six to twelve months.
8. York Consulting are in the process of drafting the final report and the findings will be presented at the board. Annex A provides a summary note for the presentation.

Implications for Wales

9. Skills and employment are devolved matters. The LGA liaises with WLGA colleagues.

Financial Implications

10. To be covered through the existing budget.

Next steps

11. Members are invited to:
 - 11.1. Note the summary findings of the project (Annex A).
 - 11.2. Comment on the findings of the project and the extent to which they reflect the challenges in members' local areas.
 - 11.3. Work will continue to finalise the report for publication, considering members comments.
 - 11.4. The final report will be presented to the boards (CRB, P&P and CYP) for approval.