

Date: 25th February 2014

Title of Report: Report on Integrated Young People's Support Services; Service overview, performance, achievements and challenges and impact of budget reductions

Ward(s): All

Portfolio: Cllr R Andrew – Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Executive Summary:

Integrated Young People's Support Services (IYPSS) have undergone significant change in recent years as the service has re-designed in a context of reduced budgets (from over £9.1m in 2009/10 to £5.6m in 2014/15).

A range of service re-designs, improved leadership at all levels, and related culture changes have all helped support the service(s) improved performance.

Over this period (since 2010) there have been significant and sustained reductions in youth crime, youth related anti-social behaviour and in our NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training) figures. We do need, alongside partners to do more to continue to improve performance on the reduction of teenage pregnancy and to support reductions in youth unemployment.

Scrutiny are asked to note this report and to provide comments.

Reason for scrutiny:

The report was requested by the chair of Scrutiny.

Recommendations

That:

- 1. Scrutiny notes the contents of the report and gives consideration to the information provided.*

Background papers:

Report and appendices (A-C) attached

Resource and legal considerations:

Any resource implications arising from this report will be found from within approved budgets. There are no legal considerations arising from this report.

Citizen impact:

The effective provision of IYPSS's impact on the outcomes for Walsall children and young people.

Environmental impact:

There is no specific environmental impact from this report.

Performance management:

All functions within IYPSS comply with required performance management arrangements.

Equality Implications:


All IYPSS services are intended to impact on the outcomes for all Walsall children and young people. The appropriate Equality Impact Assessments have been prepared and submitted.

Consultation:

There has been no formal consultation in relation to this report but there has been corporate and IYPSS consultation activity as regards the budget reduction outlined above.

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Integrated Young People's Support Services – Overview, performance and challenges

1. Service Overview

1.1 The development of IYPSS in 2010 saw the integration of three then separate significant service areas (Youth Service, Connexions and the Youth Justice Service), into one coherent set of leadership arrangements, alignment to the Area Partnership structure and development of a new service area, 'Targeted Youth Support'.

1.2 The IYPSS family now consists of 8 teams or service areas:

1.2.1 Education Business Partnership: a traded service that seeks to engage business with education to enhance the curriculum offer and improve the employability and entrepreneurial skills of young people.

1.2.2 Parent Partnership Service (PPS): work with the parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), to provide information and publicity, training, advice and support to foster networking and collaboration and to inform and influence local SEN policy and practice.

1.2.3 Positive Activities/ youth work: provides targeted informal education opportunities for young people via positive activities delivered in a variety of settings including centre based detailed work, residential and project work and targeted at reducing youth related anti-social behaviour.

1.2.4 Targeted careers information: advice and guidance responsible for reducing the numbers of young people not in Education, Employment and Training.

1.2.5 Targeted Youth Support (TYS): targeted intervention with individual and groups of young people assessed as vulnerable or/and at risk of engaging in crime. TYS provides direct support to Walsall's Early Help offer.

1.2.6 Teenage Pregnancy reduction: activity and strategy

1.2.7 Youth Justice Services: responsible for the prevention and reduction of youth offending including managing court orders and a related public protection function. The service works with some of the most vulnerable and the most risky young people in Walsall.

1.2.8 Youth Opinions Unite team (voice of young people): responsible for ensuring the voice of children and young people including work related to Corporate Parenting and United Kingdom Youth Parliament and the underpinning of aspects of the delivery of the

2. IYPSS Performance and Achievements

2.1 Performance across a range of IYPSS related indicators is good when considered against agreed targets and either statistical neighbours or/and the national average. **Appendix A**, the IYPSS Scorecard 12/13 attached shows that IYPSS met the majority of its targets and all of its priority targets in that period.

Youth Related Anti-Social Behaviour

2.2 This is an area of significant success with a reduction of 34.6% in 2011/12 and 36% in 12/13 (See table below). The recent summer period 2013 showed a further reduction of 10.53% compared with the same period in 2012. West Midlands police have reported that Walsall and Staffordshire have seen the largest reduction in youth related ASB in the West Midlands in the 2011-13 period.

2.2.1 IYPSS leads the partnership approach to engaging young people in positive activities working closely with the police and other partners to target hotspot areas. IYPSS utilises a tiered approach to its referrals and intervention.

2012/13 Youth related ASB

Area	Youth ASB			
	Apr 11 - Mar 12	Apr 12 - Mar 13	Change	% Change
Brownhills / Pelsall / Shelfield / Rushall	409	222	-187	-45.7
Darlaston / Bentley	624	244	-380	-60.9
North Walsall	1022	766	-256	-25.0
Streetly / Pheasey / Aldridge / Walsall Wood	365	248	-117	-32.1
Walsall South	583	425	-158	-27.1
Willenhall / Short Heath	711	440	-271	-38.1
Borough	3714	2345	-1369	-36.9

2.2.2 This tiered approach differentiates the focus of the response, further assessment, group and/or 1:1 intervention with the required level of enforcement actions based on assessed need.

2.3 The reduction in youth related ASB has been supported by an increase in the numbers of young people engaged in a wide range of Positive Activities (19, 310 in 2012/13) and a number of high profile events such as Walsall Youth Achievement Awards and the United Kingdom Young People's Parliament elections including the related Big Announcement evening.

2.3.1 These events have helped celebrate, promote and profile the achievements of Children & Young people in Walsall and have been used as a springboard by Children & Young people to become further involved in decision making and community action.

2.4 In July 2012 the National Youth Agency completed a review of Walsall IYPSS's contribution to the reduction in youth related ASB and stated that 'the contribution by detached youth workers and positive activities has been integral to that success'.

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

2.5 Performance in relation to young people not in Education, Employment or Training (and those in learning and those not known) has also continued to improve outperforming the mean for our statistical neighbours.

2.6 The figures below show that performance remains good; the numbers of NEET young people continue to reduce while Participation in Learning is increasing. We have achieved on or above target in most NEET related areas and are set to continue to do so.

	2012/13 Target	2012/13 Performance	2013/14 Target	2013/14 Projection	Statistical Neighbour – Walsall (Dec 2013)	Statistical Neighbour- Mean Indicator (Dec 2013)
NEET Nov, Dec and Jan average	6.9%	6.4%	6.4%	6.1%	6.0%	6.2%
Not Known	5.0%	5.1%	4.8%	4.5%	4.9%	8.5%
In Learning	85%	85%	87%	87%	85.4%	81.3%

2.7 It is worth noting our very low 'not known' number as the lower the Not Known number the more reliable the NEET and In Learning figures. Keeping the Not Known figure low requires constant follow up activity and is also important to support the Raising of the Participation Age legislation.

2.8 Walsall's performance compares well with our ten Statistical Neighbours.

We currently rank (out of 11);

- NEET 5th,
- Not Known 3rd,
- Learning 3rd

2.9 Prospects who deliver as an integrated part of IYPSS on the NEET agenda are also responsible for the delivery of the 'Youth Contract' in Walsall (Providing mentoring support to disadvantaged NEET young people). When considering in the round the rate of 'enrolments' of young people, 're-engagement' and sustaining of involvement of young people (and population size), Walsall is currently the best performing area in the West Midlands. **(See table in Appendix B).**

Youth Crime

2.10 Both rates of first time entrants and those young people that reoffend (recidivism) have reduced year on year.

2.11 The table below shows a significant reduction in first time entrants to the youth justice system of 35% in 2012/13 compared to 2011/12.

	11/12		12/13
Number of F.T.E.	177		115
Percentage Change (compared to same period previous year)	-8.8		-35.0

2.12 The rate of youth custody has also reduced by nearly 50% between the period of October 2010- September 2011 to October 2012 to September 2013

3. Challenges

3.1 Reducing teenage pregnancy rates have been more challenging as has supporting partners in having a positive impact on youth unemployment.

- 3.2** Walsall continues to have a higher than national average rate of unemployed of 8.9% of 18-24 year olds compared to a national average of 4.9%. In addition to its work on the NEET agenda, IYPSS is a key partner in supporting the Walsall Works apprenticeship programme.
- 3.3** The national average rates for teenage pregnancy have fallen steadily since 1998 and a similar trend is shown for Walsall with a rate of reduction of 30.5% since 1998 from 67.2 per 100 to 49.2 per 1,000 in 2011. Coupled with this Walsall's termination rate remains comparatively low compared to statistical neighbours, and has reduced from 20.0% per 1,000 females in 2011 to 17.5% per 1,000 females in 2012.
- 3.4** The trend for teenage pregnancy (TP) rates continue to reduce but at a slower pace than nationally (**See Appendix C**), and our rolling rate for teenage pregnancy in Walsall at 46.7, is significantly higher than that of the West Midlands (36.5) and England (29.4) average.
- 3.5** Health, Education and IYPSS colleagues continue to work in partnership (including within the TP reduction advisory group) to further reduce TP rates in Walsall.
- 3.5.1** A range of related initiatives are expected to have a positive impact on the Walsall T.P. rates including:
- A significant increase in the number of Teens & Toddlers programmes delivered.
 - Public Health commissioning of Brook to deliver sex & relationship education in 8 targeted schools.
 - A new robust referral pathway for all pregnant young women under 20.
 - The development of a future pathway for CASH (Contraceptive and Sexual Health) services.
 - The incorporation of the 'Talk the talk' DVD for parents into the Triple 'P' programme and promotion within the Easy SRE website.

4. Impact of budget reductions for 2014/15

- 4.1** IYPSS was charged with securing £615k of budget reductions for 2014/15.
- 4.2** The total figure was made up of 3 broad areas:

- Review of TYS and careers information, advice and guidance £450k
- Review of 'youth contracts' (this figure was reduced from 75K by cabinet following the public consultation) £45k
- Efficiencies within IYPSS £90k

4.3. A further area of budget reduction will be secured via a managed vacancy factor within IYPSS (to accommodate the youth contract reduction figure as above - £30K)

4.4 Detail of the budget areas to be reduced and potential impact are identified below:

4.4.1

- Efficiencies in the Parent Partnership Service (no direct service or staff impact)
- Reduce the value of the contract with Prospects for the delivery of careers advice, information and guidance by 10% with loss of 3 personal advisor posts. The opening hours of Station Street centre will reduce by about 10% (details to be confirmed). Year 11/12 transition support will be reduced and the Walsall Skills Club (providing additional support to disadvantaged year 11s) will cease. Schools will be offered the opportunity to purchase related services.
- Reduce the number of young apprentice posts by three (all posts are vacant). This reduction will support a remodelling of the IYPSS apprenticeship work to support more effective recruitment and retention.
- Redesign of IYPSS leadership removing a layer of management (operational managers) across the service.
- Managed vacancy factor to secure £30k savings with service impact to be minimised.
- Reduction of value of youth work and targeted work with third sector providers by £45k. This will result in some reduction in the number of youth club evenings provided including junior

club provision. Details are to be confirmed in discussion with providers.

- Remodelling of Targeted Youth Support to support improved quality but with some loss of case holding capacity.
- End of monies managed by young people to support new projects.
- Reduction in educational resources and media campaigns targeting teenage pregnancy reduction.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1** IYPSS is undertaking a baseline budget building exercise to ensure all resources are clearly allocated and focused on meeting priority needs.
- 5.2** The service is currently undertaking an options appraisal to consider the most effective delivery and governance mechanism for the future delivery of IYPSS functions.
- 5.3** Alongside activity to support the Active Involvement agenda (and delivery of the related strategy) we will further strengthen the voice of children and young people across all aspects of IYPSS.
- 5.4** Continued service improvement will be a focus within the Youth Justice Service to ensure we strive for excellence in service delivery to support work with some of our most vulnerable young people and those that pose the highest level of potential risk to the public.
 - 5.4.1** This focus will also ensure we are prepared for any further HMIP (Her Majesties Inspectorate of Probation) inspection of our Youth Justice Service.
 - 5.4.2** Continued service improvement within IYPSS including Y.J.S will be supported by and help support our wider children services improvement journey and inspection readiness.

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12th February 2014

Appendix A

IYPSS Scorecard 12/13

IYPSS Scorecard 12/13 - Q4										
PI	Outturn 2009-10	Out- turn 2010- 11	Out- turn 2011- 12	Outturn Q1	Outturn Q2	Outturn Q3	Outturn Q4	Target 12/13	RAG Q4	Comments
Youth Justice Service										
Reduce Offending (First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (rolling 4-quarters))	785	717	658	567 (-13.8%)	516 (-21.6%)	487 (-26.0%)	425 (-35.4%)	565	G	In total, in 12/13 there were 115 FTEs giving a rate of 425 per 100,000 using the 2011 census population age 10 to 17 (27,921). Showing a reduction of 35.4% on 11/12.
Reduction in re-offending amongst young people	0.68	0.83	0.54	0.17	0.43	0.58	0.76	0.96	G	Cohort = 86 offenders; data reported a quarter in arrears; 27 out of 86 had re-offended in 12/13 (Q4), committing 65 offences.
Offending by children who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months	6%	7.7%	6.2%	2.8%	5.5%	6.3%	7.2%	7.5	G	In 11/12, 12 out of a cohort of 193 LAC aged 10 or over offended. (17 of 221 in 10/11). In 12/13, 15 looked after children had offended out of a cohort of 209.
Young Offenders engaged in suitable EET	66.8%	57.7%	65.5%	70.0%	69.7%	67.7%	67.3%	69.3%	R	Of 182 cases closed during 12/13, 123 were engage in suitable EET.
Young people within YJ system receiving a conviction/sentenced to custody	8%	9.9%	11.7%	6.7%	11.1%	9.6%	7.7%	9.6%	G	In 2011/12 in total there were 32 custodial sentences out of 274 disposals; In 2012/13 there were 16 custodial sentences out of 207 disposals.
Young Offenders receiving a custodial sentence per 1,000 age 10 to 17		1.2	1.17	1.07	0.93	0.86	0.57	tbc	N	At the end of quarter 4 there was a 4-quarter rolling number of custodial sentences of 16 out of the 2011 census population of 27,921
Use of secure estates for remands	19.4%	14.1%	14.8%	6.8%	9.4%	11.8%	12.6%	12.6%	G	Out of 158 remand episodes in 12/13, 21 were secure estate remands

IYPSS Scorecard 12/13 - Q4										
PI	Outturn 2009-10	Out- turn 2010- 11	Out- turn 2011- 12	Outturn Q1	Outturn Q2	Outturn Q3	Outturn Q4	Target 12/13	RAG Q4	Comments
Positive Activities										
Increase numbers of young people engaged in positive activities			14251	3661	15662	17175	19310	10% increase	G	In 12/13 there were 19,310 young people engaged in positive activities which exceeds the target set of 15,676.
Reduce incidences of youth related Anti-Social Behaviour	6192	4389 (-29.1%)	2870 (-34.6%)	726	1308	1747	2344	2583	G	In 2012/13 there were 2344 incidents of youth related anti-social behaviour.
Overall customer satisfaction on Summer Holiday activities programme			89.7%	n/a	91.3%	n/a	n/a	85%	G	
Increase young people taking part in UKYP elections		13,600	12,589	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	tbc	G	Note: the 2011 turnout in Walsall was the 2nd highest nationally. 2012 data available in Q4.
Increase LAC involved in strategic consultation			31.0%	n/a	n/a			25%	N	151 children age 5 or above were involved in strategic consultation in 11/12 out of a Total cohort (aged 0-18) of 487 age 5 or above, giving an approx outturn of 31%.
IAG										
16 18-year-olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET)	8.1%	7.6%	7.3%	7.0%	6.7%	6.4%	6.6%	6.9%	G	
16-18 year-olds whose activity is not known	4.7%	5.0%	6.3%	5.2%	11.4%	8.0%	5.1%	5.0%	A	

IYPSS Scorecard 12/13 - Q4										
PI	Outturn 2009-10	Out- turn 2010- 11	Out- turn 2011- 12	Outturn Q1	Outturn Q2	Outturn Q3	Outturn Q4	Target 12/13	RAG Q4	Comments
Teenage Pregnancy										
Conceptions per 1,000 teenage girls aged 15- 17 - Rolling quarterly rate	55.1	59.4	51.4	49.9	50.3	49.2	48.8	49.3	G	Data reported 5-quarters in arrears; The number of conceptions in Q4 2011 was 64, a small decrease from 65 in the same period in 2010, but a rise from 58 in Q3 2011.
Targeted Youth Support										
Nos. new cases dealt with by service	n/a	n/a	n/a	85	53	65	32	n/a	N	Of the 235 new cases in 12/13, 75 are identified CiN, 6 are CP, and 4 are LAC
No. cases closed	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	8	39	18	n/a	N	At the end of 12/13, the service had 170 open cases and 70 cases had closed in 12/13.

Appendix B

Youth contract enrolments, re-engagements and sustainments – West Midlands

Enrolments – West Midlands			Re-engagements – West Midlands			Sustainments – West Midlands		
Staffordshire	Entrust	357	Staffordshire	Entrust	191	Staffordshire	Entrust	28
Birmingham	Prospects	201	Walsall	Prospects	77	Walsall	Prospects	21
Wolverhampton	Prospects	185	Birmingham	Prospects	56	Herefordshire	Herefordshire CC	7
Walsall	Prospects	158	Wolverhampton	Prospects	55	Birmingham	Prospects	4
Warwickshire	CSWP	135	Stoke on Trent	Stoke on Trent CC	28	Wolverhampton	Prospects	3
Total Over 15 Areas		1851	Total Over 15 Areas		555	Total Over 15 Areas		65

Appendix C
Teenage Pregnancy Rates 2009-2012

	2009	2010				2011				2012	
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
	Dec	March	June	Sept	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun
Walsall	2009	2010	2010	2010	2010	2011	2011	2011	2011	2012	2012
Rolling quarterly average rate	59.5	57.4	51.1	50.8	51.4	49.7	49.6	49.2	48.5	46.5	46.7
Quarterly rate	49.5	57.3	50.6	45.6	51.2	50.8	50.2	44.3	48.8	40.5	51.9
No. of conceptions	64	72	64	58	65	65	65	58	64	52	67
W. Midlands	44.0	43.4	41.7	40.6	40.4	39.8	39.1	36.8	34.9	35.1	36.5
England	38.2	37.9	37.2	36.3	35.4	34.1	33.5	32.0	30.7	31	29.4

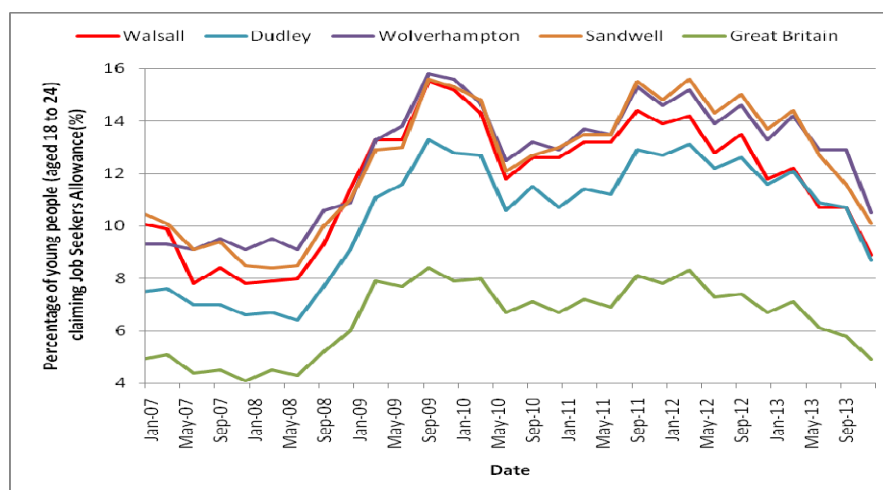
Scrutiny Briefing Note – Apprenticeships – 25th February 2014

1. Overview

The government sees the national Apprenticeship programme as a key mechanism to drive up UK business productivity, generate sustainable economic growth, increase social mobility, decrease youth unemployment and extend social inclusion.¹ The current level of apprenticeship starts in the West Midlands is below.

Local Education Authority	2009/10 Full Year	2010/11 Full Year	2011/12 Full Year	2012/13 Year to Date August to April
Dudley	2,050	3,450	3,350	2,590
Sandwell	2,050	3,640	3,820	2,740
Walsall	1,680	2,740	3,250	2,140
Wolverhampton	1,560	2,530	2,940	1,770
Black Country Total	7,340	12,360	13,360	9,240
West Midlands Total	31,720	54,290	60,470	44,230

Walsall has a higher than national average rate of unemployed young people. The current unemployment rate for 18 – 24 years old in Walsall is 8.9% compared to the national average of 4.9% (see chart below). The number of 16 – 18 year old young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) is also higher than the national average. The Walsall NEET rate is 6% compared to the national average of 5.3% and statistical neighbour rate of 6.2%.



2. Walsall Council's Role

The key roles performed by the Council to drive up Apprenticeships are outlined as:

- Employing apprentices in some service areas (including Children's Services)
- Encouraging businesses from key growth sectors to employ apprentices
- Preparing and informing young people about apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships
- Working with partner organisations to facilitate the delivery of quality apprenticeships
- Ensuring apprenticeships are responding to the needs of the local labour market

¹ Skills for Sustainable Growth, 2010. Dept for Business Innovation and Skill.

Walsall Council has a decentralised approach to apprenticeship recruitment, in that each Directorate and service area is responsible for making available apprenticeship opportunities, as and when required, as part of the recruitment options. Service areas which have been highly successful in taking on apprentices include Sports and Leisure, Health, Adult Social Care, Integrated Young People's Support Services (IYPSS) and ICT. Other areas have recruited apprentices in smaller numbers.

3. Walsall Council's Regeneration Role

Regeneration takes on a key role and responsibility for delivering the Council's priority pledge of 'Supporting business to thrive and supporting local people into work' and is responsible for job creation including driving up apprenticeships in local business.

The Walsall Works programme was designed to help achieve this and has been allocated £2.2m Council funded programme to increase the number of apprenticeships in local Walsall businesses.

Young people were a key contributor to the design of the programme and it responds to some of the barriers they face when trying to secure opportunities. These include:

- Insufficient knowledge about apprenticeships
- Lack of suitable local vacancies
- Not having the appropriate academic entry requirements
- Low or no Maths and English qualifications
- Inexperience and anxiety regarding the application processes

4. Walsall Works

The Walsall Works programme does this by:

- Offering an incentive to local employers to create apprenticeships for local young people.
- Increasing the awareness of apprenticeships among local employers
- Promoting apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship to young people through established partner organisations, Prospects and the Jobcentre plus.
- Preparing and assisting young people through the application and selection process
- Utilising existing IYPSS provision (ie Youth Contract) to develop support and progression pathways and in particular for those young people who have lower academic qualifications.
- Supporting those young people with low qualifications to prepare for apprenticeships through participation in a pre-apprenticeship programme.
- Utilising the existing resources of training providers to promote their apprenticeships offer within Walsall through publicising success stories and sharing good practice.
- Encouraging employers to offer an enhanced apprenticeship offer with the emphasis on sustainable employment and progression in key sectors

A Walsall Work Management Group chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration oversees the strategic direction of the work with children's services represented by the Head of IYPSS.

5. Young People

The Walsall Works is designed to support young people through existing networks i.e. schools, IYPSS teams, youth groups, training providers, colleges and other partners. Through these networks we deliver information to young people about apprenticeships, the academic requirements, the available vacancies and the application process. There is also a very active social media presence on Twitter and on Facebook.

The programme is in regular contact with young people using a range of communication methods in order to encourage and support them to participate in events, information sessions, recruitment sessions, as well as signposting to provision and employment. We also facilitate 'Promoting Opportunities' workshops to support them to navigate the process of applying for apprenticeships.

Walsall Works liaises closely with IYPSS / Prospects and their Information Advice and Guidance Careers Advisers to ensure information and messages regarding the apprenticeship offer are communicated into Secondary schools as part of post 16+ offer.

Walsall Works also attends schools themselves as well as youth clubs and other key events to promote the programme and is a key exhibitor at the Real Apprentice Event which hosts hundreds of young people as a mechanism to raise awareness and cascade information regarding Apprenticeships.

For young people who do not have the required academic qualifications we have developed pre-apprenticeship programmes with Walsall Adult and Community College, Walsall College and Performance through People across ten business sector areas. Significant support is provided by IYPSS to ensure young people access this provision: for example, a skilled Personal Adviser is seconded to the WACC to support and retain the most vulnerable including Care Leavers. To date 263 young people have participated in this course of study.

6. Measuring Impact

Over 1,800 young people have registered with Walsall Works and nearly 1,000 of these have achieved an outcome such as entry onto traineeships or pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, employment or have returned to full or part time education.

Outcomes Achieved	Actual
PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS (WALSALL WORKS)	263
APPRENTICESHIP (WALSALL WORKS)	320
PRE-APPRENTICESHIP (NON-WW)	13
APPRENTICESHIP (NON-WW)	86
STUDY PART TIME	4
STUDY FULL TIME	71
EMPLOYMENT / JOB	159
REFERRAL TO SPECIALIST SUPPORT	2
DROPPED OFF DUE TO AGE	70
TOTAL YOUNG PEOPLE	988

Walsall Works has created 320 apprenticeships within almost 200 businesses, encouraging many small to medium sized Walsall employers to take on an apprentice for the first time.

We have also supported 263 young people who do not meet the entry requirements of a full apprenticeship to start a pre-apprenticeship course of study.

The pre-apprenticeship model includes the key components of functional Maths & English, Employability Skills, Sector Focussed Level 1 Qualification, 4 weeks Work Placement and intensive support with progression onto work, learning or full apprenticeship.

101 vulnerable young people have been referred to the Walsall Works programmes. These have been deemed vulnerable because of their background and personal circumstances ie looked after children, NEET, young offenders, young people with language learning difficulty and young parents.

Following referral to and support from the Walsall Works programme, of the cohort of 101 we are aware of the current known outcomes of 44 of these people; 5 Started a Apprenticeship, 22 Started a Pre-Apprenticeship, 5 were supported into Part-time or Full-time Learning, 5 were no longer interested in Walsall Works and 3 had Moved out the Area.

Analysis of three of these young people outlined the following case studies

Young Person 1 (White Female Looked after Child) – was referred from the Transitional Leaving Care Team and started a pre-apprenticeship in Health & Social Care with WACC and is now employed as a Apprentice Re-Abblement Officer at Walsall Council undertaking a NVQ Level 2 in H&SC and is hoping to progress in a career within the Social Work area.

Young Person 2 – (Male Ex Young Offender) – was referred from IYPSS / Prospects and encouraged to start a pre-apprenticeship in Construction which he completed and he was then supported into a Construction Apprenticeship with a local flooring company.

Young Person 3 - (White Male NEET) – enrolled onto the pre-apprenticeship Construction Academy at WACC and he made it known to staff that he did not find learning easy so staff were put in place to offer practical support and mentoring which enabled him to progress onto a placement at Frank F Harrison. This renewed his enthusiasm and he was successfully interviewed with WATES Living Space and secured a 6 month paid work placement.

7. Future Plans

Walsall Council has championed apprenticeships through the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which has led to a number of initiatives, namely the BC Skills Factory and BC City Deal, which have been developed to drive up apprenticeship starts in the Black Country in the High Value Manufacturing (HVM) sector. Support for apprenticeships is also a key component of the support that will be made available through the new EU Programme 2015-2020 and in particular the European Social Fund (ESF) element of this.

The Richard Review led by government makes further recommendations, set out below:

- Apprenticeships will be increasingly employer led
- The value of apprenticeships will be increased
- There will be an increased emphasis on English and Maths Skills

These recommendations are welcome as Walsall and Black Country suffer from some of the largest skills gaps in the country and there are continuing issues around basic literacy and numeracy skills among younger people.

There is a danger that some of the young people that are most vulnerable of falling into longer term unemployment will struggle to gain access to vocational training. There will be an increasing importance in improving participation in learning by these groups

8. Recommendations

An enhanced offer of support is required to ensure Walsall takes advantage of the changes:

- Development of new traineeships provision that responds to employment growth
- Tailored pastoral support in school and college for those who are low-attaining
- Support with the application process on the National Apprenticeship Service website
- Schools and Careers Service to play an important role in emphasising the importance of obtaining GCSE's Maths and English and the importance of functional literacy numeracy
- Walsall schools will be made aware of the upcoming changes to apprenticeships so that young people in school are advised about the continued importance of
- Employers to be made aware of the planned changes so that they buy into the updated scheme and are supported to create apprenticeships.

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Regeneration Employment & Skills Manager

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