

Walsall Works



Walsall Council

The Challenge

- 27,000 residents are claiming out of work benefits
- 10,000 are on Jobseekers Allowance
- 3530 young people are unemployed Jobseekers
- Youth unemployment increased by 15% between Sept 2010 and 2011 (compared to 10% of all Jobseekers)
- 1330 young people have claimed for 6 mths+
- 8.4% (588) of all 16-18 year olds are NEET (not in Education, Employment or Training (BC 6.2% and 7.4% nationally)
- ? of these would be competent in the labour market given the right support and opportunity



The Response

- Cabinet members are committed to growing our economy, together with reducing unemployment
- Creating new jobs for local people is at the heart of their commitment
- Together with supporting the sustainability and growth of existing employers
- Cabinet has committed £2 million to support a Walsall Works Job Creation programme
- Initially this will support employers to create jobs, and young people (aged 16 – 24) to get them.



Understanding Customer Needs

- If we are to truly meet the two key customers needs, our Young People and the employers of Walsall we need to Gain Knowledge.
- We are achieving this by talking directly to both young people and employers.
- Collecting data and information available to us
- Talking to key funding and delivery partners
- Working with the Working Smarter / Vanguard teams to begin to understand further their needs, starting with the employers.
- We now set out some of what we have found / gathered so far.....



What do Young People Say...?

“I am looking for something more hands on and not in classroom where you end up doing loads of reading” Rhiane, 19 years old from Pelsall

“Apprenticeships are hands on and more practical, I am looking for a apprenticeship in music and production” Luke, 16 years old from Aldridge

“I’ve been looking for work since I left school and it’s not been easy. Employers are looking for experience and apprenticeships give you that”. Josh, 17 years old from Aldridge, has just started an apprenticeship in media

“I am doing a apprenticeship in graphics and want to get into gaming, its good and I would recommend it to others” Aaron, 16 years old from Walsall

“My apprenticeship is really good, I get paid for it and get more freedom than school” Ryan, 16 years old from Beechdale



What do Young People Say (2)...?

“Any work is work at the moment, can’t be picky”. Jarrad, 16 years old from Walsall

“I aint working at the moment and I ain’t found anything. I want a job, need a job. I don’t like sitting at home all day. I would be interested in a apprenticeship but not really much out there” Jason, 19 years old from Walsall

“I would do anything at the moment, any job. I’ve applied for jobs, people say they will contact you back but don’t” Nikee, 21 years old from Beechdale

“Im 24 years old, ive been on short term contracts for years now dipping in and out of JSA benefits. I just want an employer to give a break. An apprenticeship programme would be ideal” Damien, 24 years old from Willenhall

Young People say ‘They wanted to improve their education but college was too much like school and it reminded them of why they failed in the first place’... ‘Parents don’t have money to support me through college’ ‘I didn’t even have bus fare to get to college’



What do our Employers Say...?

“Recruit for attitude then train for skills”

“Young people don’t need formal skills we can teach them those but do need Interpersonal skills: drive, motivation, presentation, enthusiasm etc”

“In interviews – young people need to turn up on time, be smartly dressed, and take the opportunity seriously”

“Attitude is generally more important to employers than formal qualifications”

“Some employers receive 80-90 apprentice applications for posts – they look at hobbies, activities at school – things that demonstrate drive (football team at school, paper round etc). Interviewers are encouraged to question these. Young people often don’t realise this is relevant experience.

Employer Focus Group, Thursday 16 September 2010, Beverley Hotel, Walsall



What do our Employers Say (2)...?

- Private sector employers (at all levels) say that recruitment has stalled
- Financial constraints are a KEY issue for all
- Traditionally businesses do not employ young apprentices due to mix of fear, a lack of understanding and a perception of 'red tape'
- Employers want young people who meet the right entry levels, have employability skills, good attitude and are job ready
- Given the right conditions employers will recruit.



What do our Key Partners say..!

“We are delighted to be working in partnership with Walsall Council on this initiative which is very much in line with central Government agenda of supporting young people into sustainable employment, whilst also and importantly assisting small Businesses by providing a skilled workforce for the future” *National Apprentice Service*

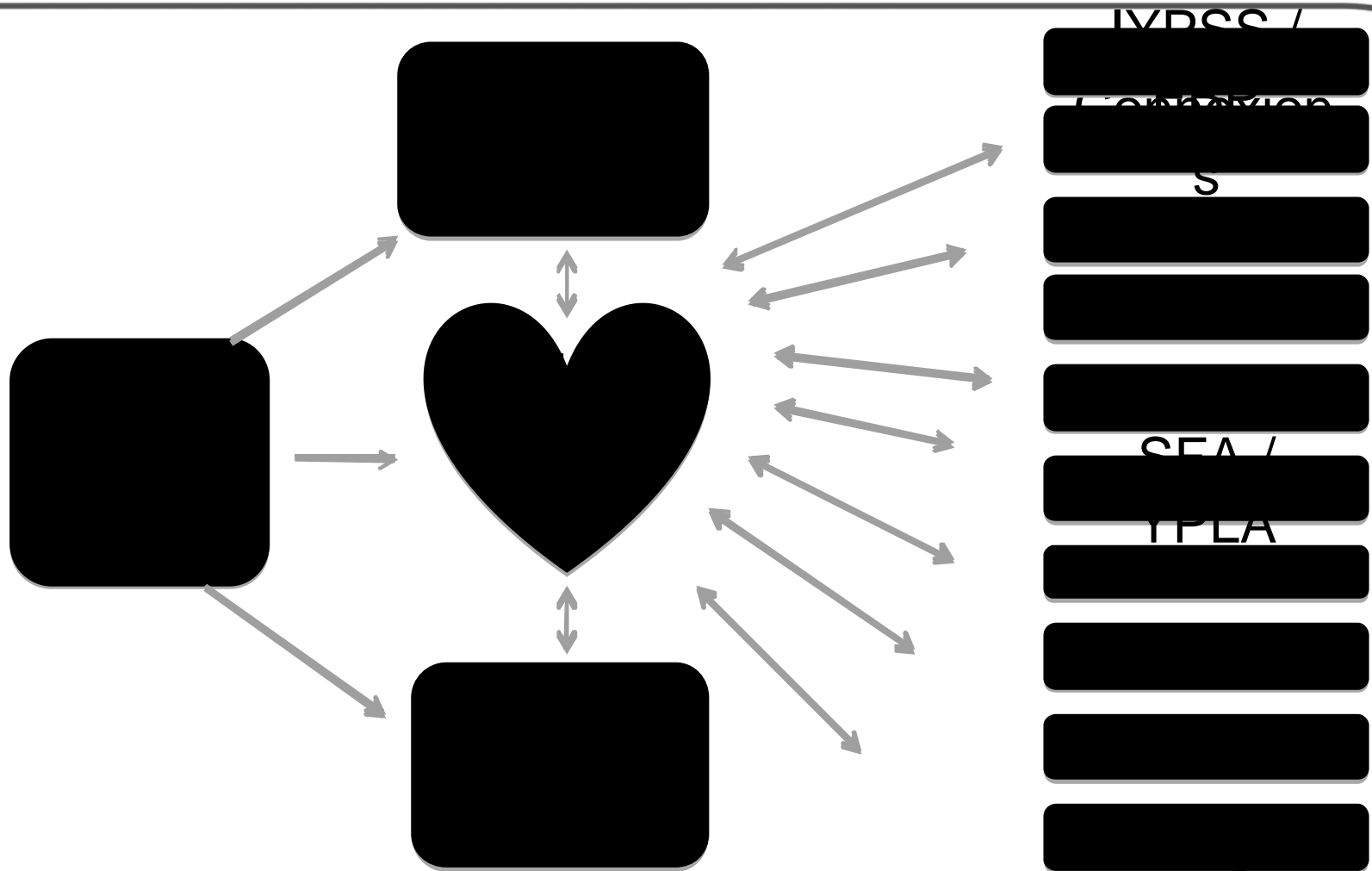
“Jobcentreplus fully support Walsall Council in the development of a new scheme that complements the new Youth Contract that will encourage employers to help us collectively tackle the issue of youth unemployment in the borough” *Jobcentreplus*

“Investing in a subsidised, targeted apprenticeship scheme will support our young people into skilled work. It will increase choice within the local job market, provide attractive opportunities and reduce the number of NEET young people in Walsall”
Alan Michell, Head of Services (IYPSS), Childrens Services, Walsall Council

“It is a really fantastic innovation to break down barriers for companies to engage young adults to be able to be supported to and access employed status apprentice training” *Maria Gilling, Principal, Walsall Adult & Community College*



Placing Young People at the Heart of things



A 'Deal' with Employers

- **Complementing the national Youth Contract**
 - This is restricted money available to some eligible sectors / young people
 - A wage subsidy of £2275 for upto to 6 months for those on Work Prg
 - Incentive payments of £1500 for small businesses
- **We could offer**
 - A wage subsidy of £3000 per person (or a top up to £3000)
 - A start up payment on 4 weeks placement
 - A mid point payment to reward six months of apprenticeship
 - A final payment on confirmation of sustainable employment
- **We could also offer**
 - Access to a range of specialist training providers with delivery frameworks that meet employer needs
 - Celebrations and Free Marketing on our Employers successes
 - Terminate grant and clawback on failure of completion



Employers Deal with the Apprentice

- To commit to employing the Apprentice for the duration of the programme
- To offer on successful completion, sustainable employment
- To support the development of the young person, by providing quality work experience and allowing / supporting off site education and training
- To share the employment costs of the apprentice, by meeting the balance above the £3000 wage subsidy
- To support / meet if required (19+) training costs for prentices, above those available through the SFA (Skills Funding Agency).



A 'Deal' with Young People

- Break the cycle of unemployment
- Positive pathway
- A route to sustainable employment
- A salary in line with minimum wage
- Pre-entry to our NEETs (focus on our most vulnerable ie young offenders, those leaving care, young mums, learning difficulties)
- A new Walsall Young Persons Allowance for those on pre-start programmes
- Subsidy payments for vulnerable families who may suffer a financial loss due to loss of benefits



Outcomes

- A pre-apprenticeship programme to support those with particular needs so they can take up places
- Apprentices with the skills and attitude and abilities that local employers are looking for
- 550 new jobs created within local employers
- 550 young people placed into sustainable jobs
- Reduced youth unemployment / child poverty levels
- Your £2million matched against SFA (Strategic Funding Authority) to deliver a £4million (Estimated) Programme.
- Raised ambitions and aspirations.
- Employers recognising the value of employing Apprentices.



Strategic Regeneration
Mark Lavender
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Walsall Council
