



<b>Title of paper:</b>	Futures' Role, Successes and Challenges	
<b>Report to:</b>	Children's Partnership	
<b>Date:</b>	24 September 2014	
<b>Relevant Director:</b>		<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Contact Officer(s) and contact details:</b>	John Yarham, Chief Executive, Futures Advice, Skills and Employment	
<b>Other officers who have provided input:</b>	Michelle Wright, Operations Director, Futures Advice, Skills and Employment	
<b>Relevant Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) objectives(s):</b>		
<b>Stronger safeguarding</b> – With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across all agencies and that the Partnership takes a pro-active approach to the elimination of domestic violence.		✓
<b>Healthy living</b> – With a key focus on increasing the proportion of children and young people who have a healthy weight.		
<b>Reducing substance misuse</b> – Partnership work to lessen the impact on children of parental drug and alcohol misuse and to reduce drug and alcohol misuse amongst children and young people.		
<b>Raising attainment</b> – Raising the attainment levels and increasing engagement in employment, education and training.		✓
<b>Improving attendance</b> – Improving rates of attendance at both Primary and Secondary as a key foundation of improving outcomes.		
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):</b>		
<p>Futures exist to reduce the number of young people in Nottingham City who are not in education, training and employment (NEET), undertaking a range of statutory functions on behalf of Nottingham City Council regarding this activity.</p> <p>Despite significant policy and funding change over the last four years regarding this agenda, Futures has continued to be successful in reducing NEET levels for 16-18 year olds, particularly in identifying and supporting young people that would otherwise be lost to the system, officially classified as being 'Not Known'. Nottingham is on track to be the city in the country with the lowest levels of combined NEET and Not Known school leavers, in line with Nottingham City Council's Council Plan target.</p> <p>Historically, Futures and its predecessor bodies (Connexions / Careers Service / Education Business Partnership) also provided more universal support for young people to prepare them for employment, including supporting them to form aspirations and gain work experience. This work has significantly declined over recent years in response to national Government policy and funding levels.</p>		
<b>Recommendations:</b>		
<b>1</b>	To use the Children's Partnership network to explore opportunities for inter-organisational collaboration to further reduce NEET and not known levels of young people in Nottingham City.	
<b>2</b>	To explore; through the Children's Partnership; the opportunity to improve the levels of pre-employment support and advice for all young people in Nottingham City.	

## **1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS**

Futures is a long established, independent, not for profit company that is owned and controlled by Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council on a 50:50 basis. Its primary purpose is to prepare and support young people for employment, through all major transitions.

Since 2010, there have been some considerable changes to the funding and policy context in which Futures operates. Careers advice for young people in schools transferred from local authorities to schools, removing a significant aspect of delivery that had historically been provided by the company. Income from the City and County Councils has reduced by 55% during that time.

Unlike many other areas of the country however, Nottingham City Council has been able to continue to ensure that relatively low numbers of young people are either NEET or Not Known as a result of Futures continuing to operate. This has been a result of the company successfully diversifying its income streams and winning new business that subsidises the 'core' activity of local delivery. Through gaining contracts with central Government for the National Careers Service and by creating new business through its Apprenticeship Training Agency; which directly employs 120 young people that are placed with local companies; Futures has diversified its income streams to the point where local authority funding now accounts for less than 30% of the company's overall £15m turnover.

The primary means of the company delivering its objective to reduce NEET and Not Known levels is through employing advisers who work with a caseload of young people through from Year 10 (age 14/15) in school to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. Advisers provide support and advice to enable the young person to decide their long term aspiration and next step in their career through education and employment. This work is underpinned by several features including: a clear diagnosis of need and process for prioritising support for young people that need most support; a robust database of every 13-19 year old in Nottingham, and all advisers being highly qualified and focused on meeting the needs of young people.

The service that is provided is no longer universal as a result of the funding cuts and policy change already outlined. Whilst retaining a presence in every state funded City secondary school, Futures only provides support for young people that are at risk of becoming NEET, with specialist and dedicated support being offered to young offenders, young people in or leaving care and individuals up to the age of 25 who have learning difficulties and / or disabilities. The service accounts for the destination of every young person in Nottingham at age 16 and fulfils the Council's responsibilities for the 'September Guarantee' of every young person being offered a place in learning as well as the 'Raising of the Participation Age'.

There are two major issues that the Children's Partnership are asked to consider.

The first is how we can utilise the partnership's network to further reduce the numbers of NEET / Not Known young people in Nottingham. In June 2014, 473 (6.5%) 16-18 year olds from Nottingham City were NEET and 173 (2.2%) were Not Known.

The second is how we can provide improved levels of support to all young people to develop their career aspirations and support their career progression. With the responsibility for this activity transferring to schools, a patchwork of differing levels and quality of provision has become established across the country for this activity, which was recognised by OfSTED in their thematic study into such provision.

## **2. RISKS**

The main risks associated with this work are the impacts on young people in Nottingham City if adequate support is not provided, either through lack of delivery or through poor quality support being provided. The risk of young people becoming NEET is the clear link to a range of significant negative connotations for their wellbeing as well as their long term potential. The risk of young people entering some form of education or employment but without significant effective support to guide them in this decision making is that they make incorrect, uninformed choices that lead to either subsequent drop out or a failure to realise their full potential.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not relevant to this report.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not relevant to this report.

## **5. CLIENT GROUP**

This report concerns all young people aged 13-19 and those up to the age of 25 with learning difficulties / disabilities.

## **6. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES**

The young people that are NEET disproportionately display other issues such as youth offending, being in the care system or being young parents. Young people from dual heritage backgrounds are more likely to be NEET or Not Known than any other ethnic group. White young people are the next group that are most likely to be NEET or Not Known.

## **7. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED**

Raising attainment and stronger safeguarding are the objectives of the CYPP that are directly related to this work.

## **8. CONTACT DETAILS**

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