



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Nottingham City Council & The Department for Work & Pensions

Nottingham Youth Employment Strategy 2022 – 2024

1. Mission

Tackle youth unemployment, ensuring no young person is left behind as the City recovers from the COVID 19 pandemic, addressing youth inequalities, and creating better futures.

2. Vision

The joint Nottingham City Council (NCC) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Youth Employment Strategy will address systemic failures in Nottingham's Youth Employment System, bringing together policy, expertise, and resource to tackle structural inequalities that prevent underrepresented young people (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) aged between 16 and 24 achieving their career potential.

The strategy and detailed delivery plan will:

- *Reduce the current unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds in Nottingham from 2.7% to 1.2% (a full percentage point below the pre-pandemic historic low for Nottingham of 2.2% and 2.3% below the current England average of 3.5%)*
- *Reduce Nottingham's NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) rate for 16 – 17 year olds from 4.3% to the England average of 2.5%*

3. Strategic Context

[The Levelling Up White Paper](#) provides an overarching policy framework outlining Government plans to reduce geographic economic, social and health inequalities. The White Paper sets out twelve '[missions](#)' for levelling up the UK by 2030, underpinned by four strategic objectives (boosting productivity pay, jobs and living standards; spreading opportunity; restoring local pride; and empowering local leadership).

Government have also published a '[Plan for Jobs](#)'; a comprehensive and ambitious plan to help people back into work and develop the skills they need to thrive as the UK emerges from the pandemic.

At a local level, [The Nottingham Economic Recovery Plan](#), led by the [Nottingham Growth Board](#), sets out a bold vision for Nottingham's post Covid economic recovery and renewal, reimagining Nottingham as an inclusive, green, creative, and digitally enabled city. The Plan positions the City well for investment opportunities emerging from the Levelling Up White Paper, including [The UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#), a central pillar of the UK Government's levelling up agenda.

Delivering the Nottingham Youth Employment Strategy will help operationalise the recovery plan, translating ambitions set out in the plan, into local delivery, increasing youth employment, improving skills attainment, and creating better futures for young people.

4. Nottingham's Challenge

Young people, especially those who have recently left education, have been hardest hit by the economic impact of the pandemic.

Young people are more likely to have lost their jobs and experience long-term wage scarring, with the economic slowdown and sectoral disruption meaning there are fewer opportunities for them to find meaningful and sustainable work. Covid-19 has also deepened existing inequalities, particularly for young people with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities).

Whilst the City continues to reduce the number of the NEET young people in the City, the NEET for Nottingham remains 1.8% higher than the England average.

5. Barriers to Employment

The strategy will need to address a range of barriers that prevent young people from gaining meaningful employment including; GCSE and post 16 skills attainment (which for Nottingham are both below the national average), increase uptake of high quality Careers Employability, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) provision, tackle intergenerational unemployment, raise aspirations, help young people overcome health related barriers to employment, provide financial assistance (e.g. travel to work) and simplify employment and skills pathways.

NCC and DWP will work collaboratively with partners to address these barriers with a particular focus on supporting economically inactive young people furthest away from the labour market.

6. Strategic Priorities

The Council and DWP hosted the **Nottingham Youth Employment Summit** in December 2021 which provided a range of stakeholders, including young people with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, young people with disabilities), with an opportunity to co-produce the Strategy. The Council and DWP have continued to engage with young people and wider stakeholders throughout development of the strategy.

Through co-production, the strategy has been developed in consultation with four key stakeholder groups from across the local youth employment system:

- **Young People** - Employed, unemployed, and inactive young people
- **Employers** - SME's, large employers, anchor institutions and employer representative bodies
- **Delivery Partners** - Organisations that provide employment and skills support locally (e.g. ESF providers)
- **Strategic Partners** – Stakeholders that form part of the wider youth employment ecosystem (e.g. Public sector bodies, NCVS, FE/HE)

Our approach to realising our vision is focused on the delivery of three strategic priorities (or themes):

- i. Ensure Nottingham's youth employment system is integrated and grounded in communities, increasing access to services, removing barriers, and improving the strategic and operational alignment of provision
- ii. Taking a sector approach, work with providers to develop coherent and inclusive skills pathways meeting the local needs of employers and supporting young people to access post 16 skills at all levels
- iii. Develop and deliver a coherent offer for employers, unlocking inclusive recruitment pathways for young people to progress into and sustain high quality employment

7. Delivering the Strategy

The strategy will be taken forward at pace and in partnership with organisations from across the public, private and community voluntary sectors and will support delivery of the City's **Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan** and wider **D2N2 LEP Careers & Young People Strategy**.

Underpinned and measured through a robust **Performance Management Framework & Delivery Plan** (appendix A) our strategic approach to delivery will include:

THEME 1: Ensure Nottingham's youth employment system is integrated and grounded in communities, increasing access to services, removing barriers, and improving the strategic and operational alignment of provision

- Developing a 'One Service' approach will make it simpler for young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) to navigate complex pathways, providing a single point of access, triaging individuals, and referring to the right support at the right time.
- Young people will be engaged through targeted outreach (physical and via digital platforms), ensuring engagement penetrates deep into communities and reaches those furthest away from the labour market. Outreach will provide wrap around holistic support, connecting young people to vital services that address key barriers to employment (e.g. finance, digital exclusion, health, childcare, employability skills).
- Young people will be supported to access to high-quality Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance delivered in partnership with Futures and the National Careers Service.
- The strategy will be delivered alongside the Council's Children's Services and Education Division ensuring it builds on existing activity providing a pathway for vulnerable young people (e.g. care leavers, those on speech, language and communication pathways, alternative provision leavers) to access vital employment support
- Intensive support delivered by specialist services (e.g. Youth Offending Team, Targeted Families Service) will be aligned to address multiple and complex needs.
- Young people will be supported to prepare for the world of work and gain advantages needed to succeed via a network of DWP youth employability coaches unlocking work experience placements, meaningful encounters with employers and high-quality coaching and mentoring.

THEME 2: Taking a sector approach, work with providers to develop coherent and inclusive skills pathways meeting the local needs of employers and supporting young people to access post 16 skills at all levels

- Building on [Nottingham College's Strategic Development Fund Pilot](#), we will work with providers and employers to aggregate and improve skills programmes
- Create industry working groups of providers and employers to design bespoke initiatives that increase the number of young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) accessing training and employment in key sectors of the economy
- Sector based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs) and Traineeships, will connect young people to Apprenticeships and higher skills programmes, supporting development of technical skills needed by employers

THEME 3: Develop and deliver a single coherent offer for employers, unlocking inclusive recruitment pathways for young people to progress into and sustain high quality employment

- The Nottingham Jobs Service, (an innovative trilateral partnership bringing together NCC, DWP and Futures) will deliver brokerage and engagement support for businesses, ensuring young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) benefit from job creation and inclusive recruitment, supporting progressions into employment across growth sectors (e.g. digital, low carbon, health and care) and sectors recovery from the impacts of the pandemic (e.g. hospitality, retail).
- Work with Anchor Institutions to leverage Apprenticeship Levy, unlocking Apprenticeship opportunities within SMEs and more broadly harness the power of industry to address youth unemployment (e.g. ring-fencing jobs, mentoring, work experience)

The Council and DWP are two major conveners within Nottingham's Youth Employment System, bringing together resource and coordinating action. The Council and DWP are also large local employers and have the ability to play a leading role, setting the standard for delivering better outcomes for young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities).

The Council and DWP will work to build youth employment support and job opportunities into range of activities, including but not limited to:

- Supporting Council-owned companies such as Futures and Nottingham City Transport to recruit and train young people
- Identify opportunities through procurement and supply chains to embed youth employment support and job creation
- Provide high quality work experience and internship placements for local young people

The strategy will build on existing good practice and work already underway to tackle youth unemployment, ranging from the Council's NEET prevention Service, the DWP Youth Offer, a Citywide portfolio of European Social Fund youth employment support, the Careers & Enterprise Company and the wider Nottingham Jobs offer.

8. Governance

The Nottingham Employment Task Force is a joint Council and DWP led strategic body set up at the outset of the pandemic and with representation including the Community Voluntary Sector, Skills Providers. The Employment Task Force will provide oversight and accountability, monitoring performance. Periodic updates will be provided to the Nottingham Growth Board, ensuring strategic alignment with delivery of the Nottingham Recovery & Renewal Plan.

The Council and DWP will work with young people through a range of forums (e.g. DWP Listening Circles, Nottingham Youth Parliament) to regularly review accessibility and effectiveness of our actions creating a feedback loop for young people to shape the provision landscape through coproduction.

9. Stakeholder Engagement

Throughout the development of the Strategy we have built in strong links with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to ensure our plans for Nottingham are truly shaped and owned by all our local partners across the City.

Stakeholders will engage with this work primarily through the City's Employment Task Force, however, 'task and finish' groups will convene locally, providing further opportunities for partners to engage with and support our work.

10. Next Steps

The **Performance Management Framework & Delivery Plan** (appendix A) set out a series of SMART objectives, outlining required inputs, actions, outcomes, and impact, including demonstrating how success will be measured.

The delivery plan will be taken forward in partnership with stakeholders across the City with identified leads for key thematic activity.

In readiness for the conclusion of EU funded provision and introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Funding, we will:

- Map the current youth employment system identifying duplication, best practice, and gaps, setting out key strategic priorities underpinned by a robust evidence base
- Through co-production with young people and delivery partners, we will embed youth employment interventions into the Nottingham UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan to ensure interventions respond to local need.

Performance Management Framework & Delivery Plan & 2022 – 2024

Key performance indicators

Indicator	Target	Jun 22	Sep 22	Dec 22	Mar 23	Jun 23	Sep 23	Dec 23
18 – 24 Unemployment Rate	1.2%							
Number of 18 – 24 Unemployed	951							
NEET Rate	2.5%							

Delivery Plan

THEME 1: ENSURE NOTTINGHAM’S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM IS INTEGRATED AND GROUNDED IN COMMUNITIES, INCREASING ACCESS TO SERVICES, REMOVING BARRIERS, AND IMPROVING THE STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL ALIGNMENT OF PROVISION

	<u>Inputs</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Priority Action</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>KPI</u>	<u>Delivery Lead</u>
1.	<p>Employment & Skills Partnerships (ESAPs)</p> <p>Nottingham Jobs</p> <p>ESF Providers</p> <p>DWP</p> <p>Specialist Youth Services (e.g. Futures, VRU)</p>	<p>Coordination of the Offer & Referral Pathways – ESAPs to facilitate operational alignment of youth employment provision active in their geography</p>	<p>Develop multi agency partnerships within and outside of the youth employment system e.g. (health, Criminal Justice System) to develop a coherent offer for unemployed and inactive young people, with clearly defined referral pathways</p>	<p>Better route-ways created for young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities), ensuring providers work together to reduce duplication and deliver added value wrap around employment support</p>	<p>Increased strategic and operational alignment of provision, improving engagement of young people, providers, and employers, generating better outcomes for young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities)</p>	<p>Strategic action plans in place for all ESAPs</p>	<p>ESAPs</p> <p>DWP</p>
2.	<p>ESAPs</p> <p>Nottingham Jobs</p> <p>European Social Fund (ESF) Providers</p> <p>DWP</p> <p>Specialist Youth Services (e.g. Futures, Violence Reduction Unit)</p>	<p>Engaging Young People & Removing Barriers – ESAPs to develop/deliver targeted youth engagement plans, focusing on removing barriers to employment for unemployed and economically inactive young people</p>	<p>Work with key youth services (NEET Prevention, Nottm Jobs, DWP, Engage Nottingham) to identify and engage unemployed and economically inactive young people within communities</p> <p>Work with the Council’s Children and Education Services to ensure young people, particularly vulnerable young people (e.g. care leavers) receive vital employment support</p> <p>Deliver an integrated youth employment offer (Nottm Jobs, ESF, DWPs Youth Offer, Equip to Succeed, Specialist Youth Services, VRU) virtually and physically within community hubs supporting young people to remove barriers to employment</p>	<p>Young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) connected to E&S provision (e.g. SWAPs, CEIAG, Traineeships, Jobs Brokerage)</p> <p>Young people with multiple and complex needs (e.g. experience of the criminal justice system, financial, disabilities) access intensive support delivered by specialist services (e.g. Youth Offending Team, Targeted Families Service) will be aligned to address multiple and complex needs.</p>	<p>Young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities), remove barriers to work and progress into employment, education, and training</p>	<p>Local youth engagement plans in place across all ESAPs</p>	<p>ESAPs</p> <p>DWP</p>

			Deliver on-going DWP listening and mentoring circles improving awareness of barriers to employment and increase access to services				
3.	Futures (National Careers Service) DWP Youth Employability Coaches Careers & Enterprise Company Nottinghamshire South Careers Hub	CEIAG – All unemployed and economically inactive young people offered high quality CEIAG, coaching and mentoring	Futures, working with wider system partners to identify young people and deliver CEIAG through Futures National Careers Service offer Establish robust referral routes between NCS and employment support services designed to progress young people into employment	Young People, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities), supported to access high quality CEIAG, coaching and mentoring support, raising aspirations, and understanding of the labour market	Young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) make better informed career choices based on robust labour market intelligence, and are prepared to enter the world of work	Coordinated CEIAG offer in place across the City	Futures DWP
4.	Nottinghamshire South Careers Hub Futures Careers & Enterprise Company	Preparing for the World of Work – Develop and deliver an annual Citywide Work Experience programme for young people	Deliver the Nottingham ‘What Next? WEX Programme’ annually taking a multi-agency approach to connecting young people to employers, careers inspiration and labour market information	Provide meaningful encounters with employers and create bridges into jobs, including traineeships and Apprenticeships	Young People, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) are better prepared for the world of work	Annual Work Experience programme delivered	Nottinghamshire South Careers Hub

THEME 2: TAKING A SECTOR APPROACH, WORK WITH PROVIDERS TO DEVELOP COHERENT AND INCLUSIVE SKILLS PATHWAYS MEETING THE LOCAL NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS AND SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACCESS POST 16 SKILLS AT ALL LEVELS

	<u>Inputs</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Priority Actions</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>KPI</u>	<u>Delivery Lead</u>
1.	Nottingham Jobs Employers Skills Access Hub Skills Providers Strategic Development Fund Pilot D2N2 LEP	Aggregating Sector Skills Pathways – Aggregate skills pathways to meet needs of local employers	For key sectors (e.g. Construction, Health & Care etc), bring together industry working groups to aggregate local skills pathways setting out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>sector skills required</i> • <i>where YP can access training (e.g. Nottm College, Futures etc)</i> • <i>skills route-ways into employment including apprenticeships and traineeships</i> • <i>support available to help young people to navigate this process such as ESF provision, SWAPs etc.</i> 	Simplification of skills and career pathways Navigation support in place for young people ensuring skills pathways are accessible Sector initiatives developed between groups of providers and employers Increased number of SWAPs, Skills Bootcamps, and other targeted skills-recruitment activities	Increased number of young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) entering the skills system	Sector skills pathways and support in place for identified key sectors	Nottingham Jobs Skills Access Hub

2.	ESAP Skills Providers Nottingham Jobs Skills Access Hub	Embedding Skills Pathways into Communities & Increasing Attainment – Develop clear referral pathways, supporting young people to upskill/reskill	Embed skills pathways into communities, ensuring services that interface with young people (e.g. Engage, DWP, NCS) are connected to skills providers and have clear referral pathways in place for young people	Increased number of young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) referred on to and completing skills training	Increased number of young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) gaining skills qualifications Skills growth in key sectors	Skills attainment for 16 – 24 year olds in line with national average	ESAP Nottingham Jobs Skills Access Hub
3.	Skills Access Hub Skills Providers	Apprenticeships & Traineeships – Improve and increase access to Traineeship and Apprenticeship Pathways	Deliver a series of SWAPs and other targeted recruitment activities connecting young people to Apprenticeships & Traineeships	Increased number of young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) referred on to and completing Traineeships and Apprenticeships	Increased number of young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) gaining Traineeship and Apprenticeship qualifications	Apprenticeship attainment for 16 – 24 year olds in line with national average	DWP Skills Access Hub Skills Providers
4.	Nottingham Jobs Skills Providers	Promoting Skills – Raising the profile of the skills offer locally	Deliver bespoke sector skills campaigns promoting training opportunities linked to jobs in key sectors	Increased awareness of skills opportunities amongst job seekers, employers and practitioners	Increased uptake of skills by young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) and employers	Skills attainment for 16 – 24 year olds in line with national average	Nottingham Jobs Hub

THEME 3: DEVELOP AND DELIVER A SINGLE COHERENT OFFER FOR EMPLOYERS, UNLOCKING INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROGRESS INTO AND SUSTAIN HIGH QUALITY EMPLOYMENT

	<u>Inputs</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Priority Actions</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Impact</u>	<u>KPI</u>	<u>Delivery Lead</u>
1.	Nottingham Jobs Skills Access Hub	The Employer Offer - Develop and promote a single offer to Employers simplifying the provision landscape	Nottingham Jobs Partnership and Skills Access Hub to develop and promote a single coherent offer for employers bringing together thematic support for businesses (e.g. Recruitment Skills, Apprenticeship Levy)	Simplified single for employers adopting single points of contacts, project agnostic language and clear realistic 'asks'	Increased levels employer engagement in skills and employment provision creating greater opportunities for young people	Single offer to employers in place	Nottingham Jobs DWP Skills Access Hub
2.	Nottingham Jobs DWP	Supporting Young People into Employment - Job Creation, Candidate Matching and Recruitment Support for Employers	Nottingham Jobs and DWP to work with local businesses to create and fill local job opportunities for young people, ring fencing jobs for young people where possible Deliver a series of SWAPs connecting young people to jobs Deliver 'Kickstart+' connecting young people to employment opportunities as placements end preventing unemployment Nottingham Jobs and DWP to work with employers to secure guaranteed interviews for 16-24 year olds	Increase the number of accessible jobs available to young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) Increase number of young people, particularly those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) progressing into employment	Reduced youth unemployment, particularly for those with protected characteristics (e.g. BAME, those with disabilities) and the number of hard to fill vacancies	Unemployment for 16 – 24 year olds falls reduced in line with national average	Nottingham Jobs DWP Skills Access Hub

			Nottingham Jobs and DWP case loading teams to deliver a matching service, developing candidate pools and connecting young people to jobs and supporting employers to fill vacant roles				
3.	Nottingham Jobs DWP	Inclusive Recruitment – Developing inclusive recruitment pathways for young people	Through the Nottingham Jobs Service and DWP, support employers to adopt the principles of inclusive recruitment through workshops, listening circles and SWAPs	Increase availability of accessible jobs for young people in the City	Reduced youth unemployment, particularly for young people with complex and multiple needs (e.g. health, experience of criminal justice system)	Unemployment for 16 – 24 year olds falls reduced in line with national average	Nottingham Jobs DWP Skills Access Hub

