

Council: Tuesday, 10 September 2013

Non Executive Business Item: Councillor Andrew Harper

Platforms Programme

Council notes that the Platforms Programme launched in June 2012 has come to the end of its First Phase. Council welcomes the positive outcomes it has achieved for many of Barnet's 16-24 year olds formerly not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Over the course of the last fourteen months, more than 350 young people have been engaged with 220 actively participating in a range of schemes, which have provided among other things: apprenticeships; internships; voluntary sector jobs; Princes Trust placements; employment and enterprise support; and support for young people with learning difficulties.

In addition, the programme has helped 70 local businesses add capacity to their staff by incentivising the creation of work placements.

Council welcomes the fact that over this period the percentage of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance has fallen from 4.3% to 3.2%, contributing significantly to the reduction in overall number of JSA claimants. Council further welcomes that the proportion of young people classed as NEET is down at 3.2%, well below the London average (4.5%) and national average (5.6%).

Council is pleased that many young people have reported positive experiences of the programme and that some participants have moved on to longer-term placements or permanent employment. However, as the job market remains challenging for young people – despite the economic uplift – Council recognises that there is more work to do.

Council therefore calls on the Cabinet to continue to work with the Council's partners to identify the most successful strands of the Platforms Programme and utilise any under-spend from the First Phase to maximise outcomes in the Second Phase.

Under Council Procedure Rule, Section 1, Standing Order 23.5: if my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.