

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday 31 October 2019

Review of Scottish Government funded 'No One Left Behind' Employability Provision

Executive
All
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 note the extensive review and co-production process of early intervention employability provision for young people at risk of not securing a positive destination after leaving school.
 - 1.1.2 note the Review Group's recommendation that Delivery Option 2 (Appendix 5) is developed - to include the key priorities that emerged from co-production - to meet the No One Left Behind (NOLB) objectives for those young people at stage 1 of the strategic skills pipeline.
 - 1.1.3 approve the undertaking of a small grants process to secure this provision to begin in April 2020.
 - 1.1.4 receive a report regarding the recommendations for award of small grants funding at the next Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 20 January 2020.

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Report

Review of Scottish Government funded 'No One Left Behind' Employability Provision

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides information on the recent review and co-production outcomes of current early intervention employability provision for young people at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) – formerly called Activity Agreements.
- 2.2 The report notes emerging themes to be considered when developing a new specification for this service and details the proposed timeline and process for awarding small grants for delivery.
- 2.3 Committee approval is sought to allow the small grants process to be undertaken for a newly specified service, which meets the parameters of NOLB funding and the needs of vulnerable young people who require additional support to secure a positive destination, to begin in April 2020.

3. Background

- 3.1 On [20 January 2016](#) the former Economy Committee approved the award of seven small grants to third sector organisations to deliver Activity Agreement provision across the city. Funding for this is wholly awarded by Scottish Government.
- 3.2 In April 2019, there was a change to the way that Activity Agreement provision was funded across the country. An update advising of the change in funding was included in the Business Bulletin to the Housing and Economy Committee of [6 June 2019](#).
- 3.3 Scottish Government agreed that 2019/20 could be treated as a transition year to allow Local Authorities to review and co-design new provision to meet the needs of the most vulnerable young people and reflect the changes in funding.
- 3.4 The incumbent providers received a one-year extension to continue to deliver the service until March 2020 whilst the provision was evaluated and reviewed.

4. Main report

- 4.1 An Activity Agreement is an early intervention for the city's most vulnerable young people aged 16 – 19 who have left school without a positive destination or who have not been able to sustain a job or complete a college or training course due to multiple barriers. Dedicated staff work with each young person to agree a bespoke package of activity to encourage and support them in taking the next step towards a positive destination.
- 4.2 The service works with up to 160 young people per year and is currently delivered by a core team of three (2.2 FTE) staff employed by the Council entirely funded by Scottish Government, alongside seven third sector Activity Agreement Hubs across the city:

Below lists the annual funding award, organisations, delivery location and outcomes for the last 3 years of the current contracts.

Hub, Delivery Location and Organisation	Annual Cost	Clients	College	Training	Job/ SE
City Centre South Bridge Resource Centre <i>Canongate Youth</i>	£25,000	76	22	20	15
North East Community Renewal - Bingham <i>Community Renewal</i>	£13,750	40	8	3	16
North West West Pilton N/hood Centre <i>West Pilton N/hood Centre</i>	£16,500	63	25	24	25
Leith The Citadel Youth Centre <i>The Citadel</i>	£24,900	63	29	60	22
South Central Slateford Green Com Centre <i>DunedinCanmore Youth Projects</i>	£18,000	73	41	29	14
South East Valley Park Com Centre <i>DunedinCanmore Youth Projects</i>	£18,000	75	23	34	30
South West Gate 55/ WH Library <i>Community Help and Advice</i>	£25,000	81	36	34	27
TOTALS	£141,150	471	184	204	149

It is important to note that the total number of outcomes exceeds the number of young people registered. This is due to the needs of this vulnerable client group who may enter multiple destinations before being able to sustain a positive destination. Young people are encouraged to return to the service for support if things don't work out first time around.

- 4.3 The service is currently delivered by six providers using different models in each area – from one member of staff based in a community centre 2 days per week offering 1-2-1s and an employability session, to an integrated full programme of activities and 1-2-1 provision every day of the week. Extra value is added where providers have secured additional funding or deliver other services which can be

accessed by participants. Each Hub is supported by a member of Council staff to ensure integration with High Schools, Skills Development Scotland and other organisations.

- 4.4 The use of various premises across the city, mainly using Council buildings – South Bridge Resource Centre, West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre, Valley Park Community Centre, Wester Hailes Library and Gate 55 – as well as the Citadel and Slateford Green allows the service to be accessible.
- 4.5 Due to a change in funding stream from ‘Opportunities for All’ to ‘NOLB’ in April 2019, small changes were made to delivery of the service during quarter one of 2019/20 to ensure that reporting requirements were met and the service continued to be delivered to a high standard.
- 4.6 The NOLB strategy encourages the integration and alignment of employability support with housing, criminal justice and health. The funding allocation for this year is aimed at delivering provision for young people at stage 1 of the strategic skills pipeline.
- 4.7 A Review Group was set up in June 2019 to oversee the review and co-production process. This included senior officers from Employability and Talent Development, Communities and Families, Throughcare and Aftercare, Skills Development Scotland, Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations’ Council (EVOC) and Capital City Partnership (CCP).
- 4.8 A programme of co-production sessions with past and current service users, current delivery organisations, referral sources including high schools and the wider Joined-up For Jobs (JUFJ) network was carried out between July and September 2019. This is noted at Appendix 2.
- 4.9 From this process, the following key priorities emerged:
 - 4.9.1 earlier engagement with those at risk of becoming NEET is a priority;
 - 4.9.2 provision should be no more than a short bus journey away from the participant;
 - 4.9.3 initial activity should include 1-2-1, groupwork, access to vocational training, work experience placements and information on full range of opportunities;
 - 4.9.4 additional services such as life skills, budgeting, cooking, employer talks/ visits would also be useful;
 - 4.9.5 a keyworker that young people could trust and rely on was highlighted as one of the most important features;
 - 4.9.6 the core team is central to the delivery process through maintaining relationships with referral sources and for the smooth engagement and transition of young people;
 - 4.9.7 stage 1 provision should be aimed at those aged 16 – 19 but up to age 26 for those with additional barriers;

- 4.9.8 there should be better pathway planning from the outset with a maximum engagement period of 18 months;
- 4.9.9 top five useful activities are: building confidence; help to apply for college, training and jobs; gaining qualifications/certificates; meeting with other professional staff – e.g. Skills Development Scotland (SDS), health, training; and groupwork – especially employability skills; and
- 4.9.10 young people would like to attend more hours or more regularly – increasing from minimum engagement of four hours up to 16 hours per week over a prolonged period.
- 4.10 After considering the above priorities and the spread of referrals over the last three years (Appendix 1), the Review Group discussed and evaluated four potential delivery options (Appendix 5). The Review Group agreed that Delivery Option 2 was the preferred option.
- 4.11 Delivery Option 2 ensures locality-based service with outreach provision, a central location to allow young people to travel out with their locality and a core team to continue to work with the wider employability network and deliver additional benefit to the NOLB strategy.
- 4.12 Reducing the number of delivery Hubs to five allows for each locality to receive a higher level of funding – up to £40,000. This should allow delivery over an increased number of days which was highlighted as a need during co-production.
- 4.13 A specification is under development and will take the above priorities into consideration, will ensure there is no duplication of service and will also build upon the previous seven years of learning and good practice. It will also specify where outreach provision should take place to ensure that the service is accessible to the most vulnerable young people in their own community.
- 4.14 It is intended to carry out a small grants process to award the funding using the method used for the recent Employability Third Party Grants Applications. This will be carried out by a panel consisting of senior officers from Communities and Families, Skills Development Scotland, CCP and EVOC.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If approved by Committee, the specification will be finalised and a small grants process to award the contracts will be carried out during November 2019.
- 5.2 Grant Expiry Letters will be issued to current providers in December 2019 advising that the current funding comes to an end on 31 March 2020.
- 5.3 A report on the outcome of the small grants process will be submitted to the next Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 20 January 2020.
- 5.4 New provision would begin on 1 April 2020.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The current allocation from Scottish Government of £324,000 covers the full cost of the service. Although confirmation has not been received, it is highly likely that this amount will continue to be awarded for at least the next three years to cover the cost of this provision.
- 6.2 Any new grants will be awarded on an annual basis dependent on the award of continued NOLB funding from Scottish Government.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Extensive consultation and co-production has been undertaken with key stakeholders, current providers and service users (Appendix 2) to ensure that best practice is captured and used to inform a new specification.
- 7.2 Continuation of service should not be affected as the process will complete prior to the end of current contracts and current participants will be supported to transfer to the new provision where relevant.
- 7.3 The new specification will continue to deliver provision at stage 1 of the Strategic Skills Pipeline and work with key partners to support the most vulnerable young people in the city, preparing them to access opportunities and progress to opportunities at further stages of the pipeline.

8. Background reading/external references

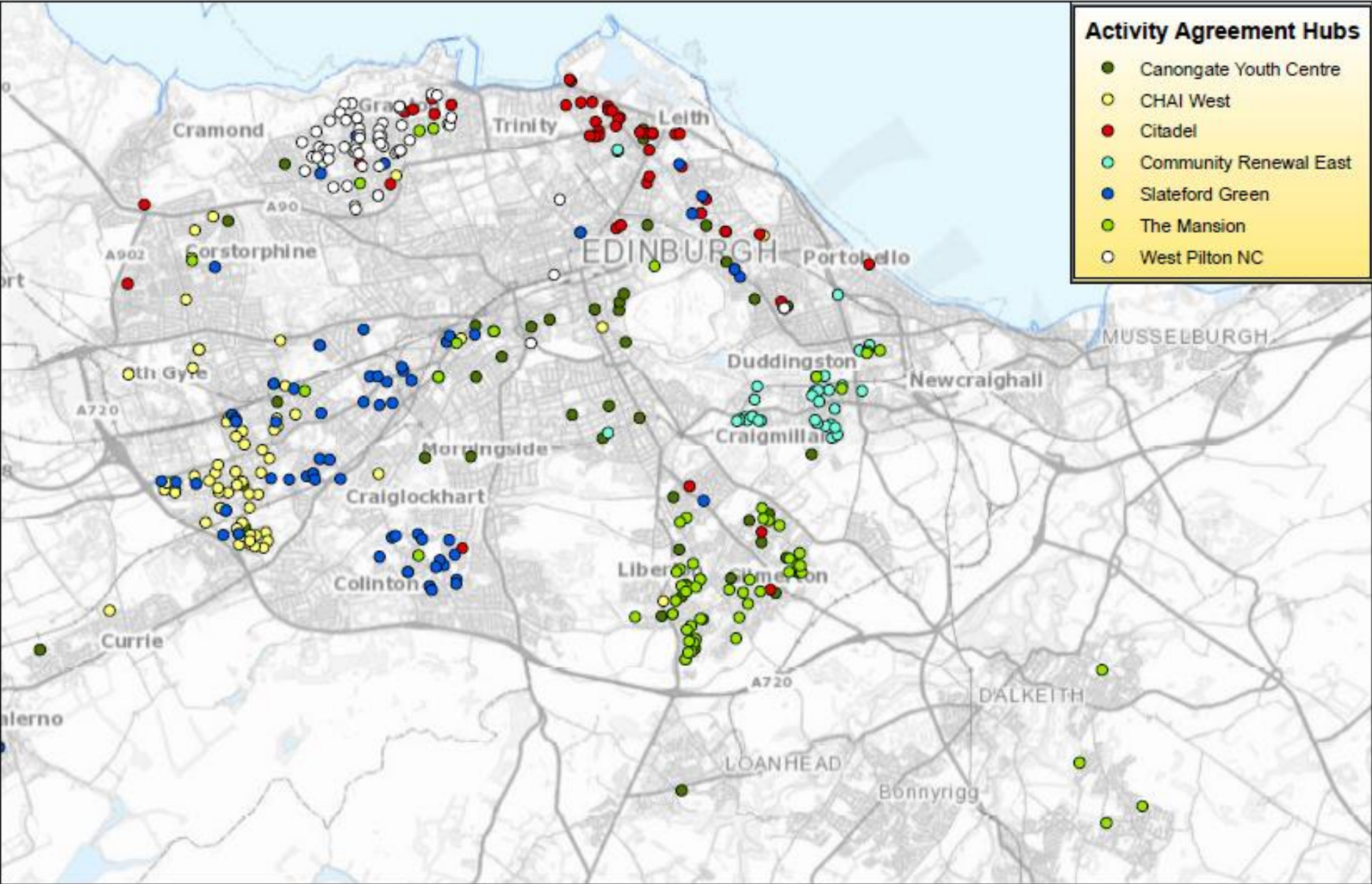
- 8.1 This report is in relation to Scottish Governments' [No One Left Behind plan](#) for delivering more effective and joined-up employability support.
- 8.2 [Employability Third Party Grants Fund](#) report from Housing and Economy Committee on Thursday 24 January 2019 includes a sample procurement specification and scoring and selection criteria that would be used to deliver this process.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Map of referrals to AA provision from April 2016 – March 2019.
- 9.2 Appendix 2 - List of completed co-production sessions carried out.
- 9.3 Appendix 3 - Summary feedback from referral sources including Skills Development Scotland, high schools and third sector employability and training organisations.
- 9.4 Appendix 4 - Summary of feedback from former and current participants.
- 9.5 Appendix 5 - Alternative delivery models.

APPENDIX 1

Distribution of Activity Agreement Engagements - April 2016 to March 2019



0 1,625 3,250 6,500 Metres

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APPENDIX 2

CO-PRODUCTION PLAN

Activity	Dates	
Desk Research	June/July	completed
Review previous end of year information from each of the Hubs as well as reported stats. Also research good practice across Scotland and beyond.		
Workshops with current service users	July – August	completed
Sessions to be held in each of the Hubs over the summer break. Session designed and facilitated by AA team and were interactive.		
Meeting and Workshop with current providers	21 August 2019	completed
Current providers invited along to a session to discuss timeline and co-production process. Workshop will focus on Stop, Keep, Change.		
Discussion & Survey with Skills Development Scotland	August	completed
Attended SDS weekly team meeting to brief on purpose and scope of co-production. Survey Monkey questionnaire circulated.		
JUFJ employability network	August	completed
Promoted Survey Monkey questionnaire through JUFJ website and noticeboard.		
Survey to previous participants	August	completed
Survey Monkey emailed to all previous participants. Attempted to pull together focus group but very low response.		
CCP Third Sector Providers session	3 September 2019	completed
Met with providers who received employability third party grants. Survey Monkey questionnaire circulated.		
Workshop with looked after/ care exp young people	29 Aug/ 5 Sep 2019	completed
Attended TCAC Job Club – 1-2-1 or small groups.		
Workshop with Care Experienced Employability Providers Network	20 August 2019	completed
Members of the CEEP forum who meet quarterly.		
Discussion with Review Group	4 September 2019	completed
Initial review of feedback from previous sessions and discussion around emerging themes.		
Discussion with 16+ deputes	10 September 2019	completed
Attended 16+ Deputes meeting to brief on purpose and scope of co-production and produce a 'wish list'. Survey Monkey questionnaire circulated.		

APPENDIX 3

Survey Monkey Summary Feedback from Providers, Referral Sources and High Schools – August 2019

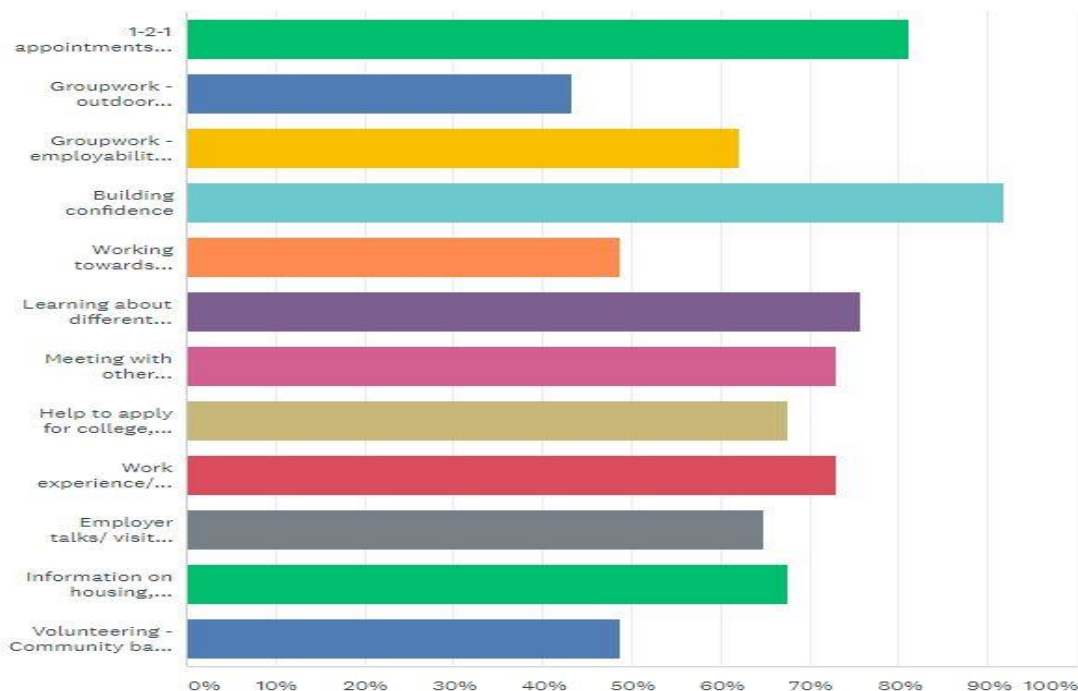
Of the 40 who completed the survey, 77% had referred a young people to an AA over the last 3 years.

Over 70% of respondents were happy with the level of feedback they received about progress of any young person they received. Others

What did they expect a young person to get from taking part?

- Motivation, learning a routine, activities and work tasters, college visits, volunteering, job search skills; Meaningful learning or employment experience; Support to identify pathways and overcome issues; someone to guide and support; 1:1 support; to get on track and prepared for employability course; provide structure and build relationships with staff to form trust and positive adult attachments; think about the future with increased knowledge of opportunities; 1-2-1 and group work; transferable skills, routine and interpersonal skills; meeting new peers and exploring next steps; support to move into a positive destination; some financial support to help them take part; progression.

What activities are most relevant for this client group?

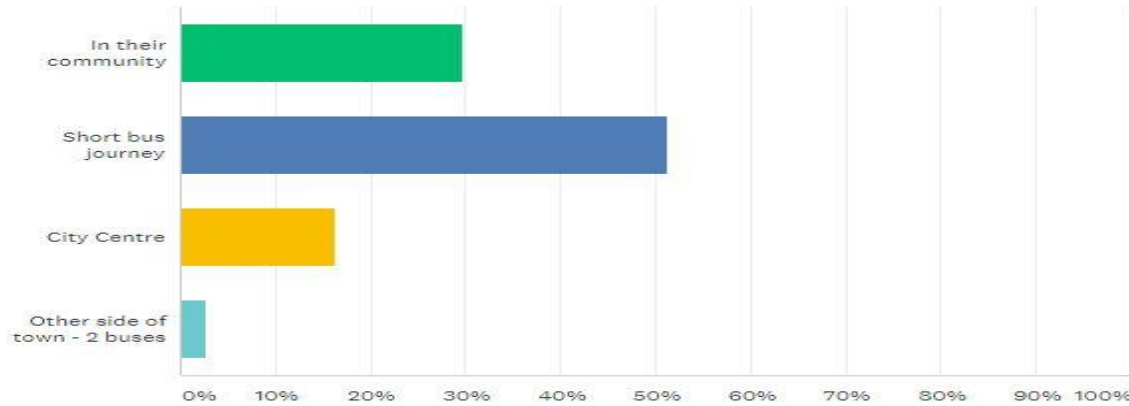


What other activities would a young person at stage 1 of the pipeline benefit from?

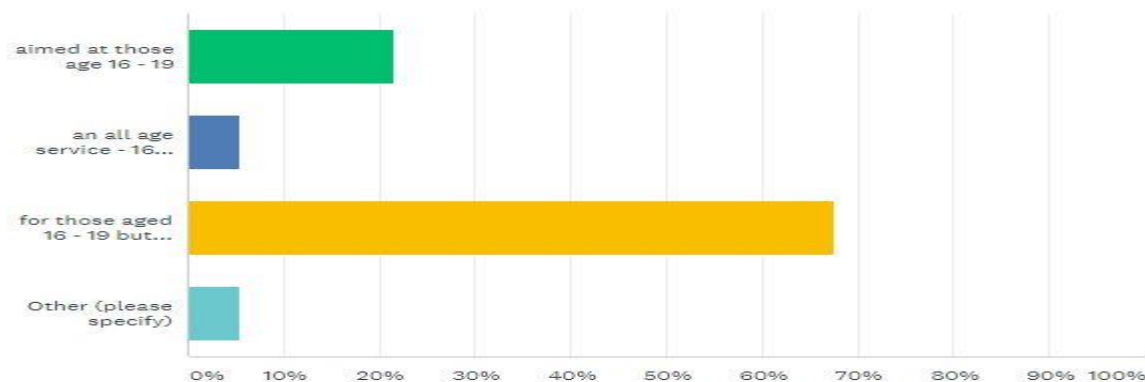
- CV preparation - and not just some staple bland CV that most end up with; a mentor who was at risk of being NEET and has been successful; not just learn about life skills but support to develop these; employability rights; support to address other barriers such as anxiety in new situations, risk taking behaviour and how this might affect work; college tasters; fun, active sports based activities;

youth work provision; contact in school early enough to create a bond; expectations in the workplace – language, use of phones and good manners; work shadowing; problem solve and stick to routines; help dealing with mental health problems and dealing with the health problems of other family members; longer term support – not a quick fix.

How far should a young person travel to engage in this provision?



Should future activity be aimed at...



What should we stop, keep or change?

- Earlier engagement – especially with non-attenders; named AA coach is great; improved joint working with referrers; valuable resource but understaffed to meet the ever increasing need; should be able to achieve at least a level 3 or 4 in core skills; more parent contact – to support yp’s choices and inform about financial impact on household; Keep locality intervention; groupwork can be an issue for some; keep well established relationships within localities; more flexible service for care experienced and incentives for those over 18 not able to access EMA; more to be available; would not send stage 1 young person to all age provision; more flexibility of Hub choice; keep the person at the centre; more money!; more standardisation of service; defined outcomes within defined timelines; Keep AA as an option – there are few choices where they can create a bespoke programme like this; more monitoring of progress, a clear schedule so that yp isn’t just drifting along.

APPENDIX 4

Summary Feedback from Young People – former and current participants

Approximately 60 young people participated in a variety of sessions across all seven Hubs and the Throughcare and Aftercare Job Club Drop In over the summer break.

Q1: What would you be doing if you weren't taking part in an Activity Agreement?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In bed/ sleeping• Watching stuff on my laptop• Playing games all day and all night	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At home doing nothing• Babysitting/ walking dog

Q2: What have you found to be the MOST useful form of support from AA?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting out of the house/ having a routine• 1-2-1 support/ appointments• Group work with others in same situation• EMA payment• Help to apply for college• Info and advice about other options• Meeting new people/ seeing friends• Thinking about the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning new skills – CSCS, gym activities• Looking for jobs• Building my confidence• Being able to talk about my problems• Having someone I can trust • NB Give It A Go was mentioned by a few as a positive alternative to school which made the transition to an AA very easy.

Q3: What have you found to be the LEAST useful form of support from AA?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Haven't found anything LEAST useful.• Sessions on more often• Just sitting talking as prefer to be out and about	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not getting a job• Some group stuff I don't like

Q4: What other support could we provide that would help you to move into college, training or job?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life skills support- travelling independently/cooking• Gym sessions would be great• More time in the week on an AA• What an employer expects from an employee• To be able to go back for more help when things don't work out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More job searching and interview stuff• More info on finding other opportunities• Having someone to text or call when you need help• Inspiration from role models

Q5: How far/ where would you be willing to travel to in order to take part in activities?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nowhere - don't travel independently• In the beginning would need picked up• Local only• Local area would be best but I would give a short bus ride a go	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 buses• Would need a lift from Grandad to go locally or further• As far as I need to – travel doesn't bother me.

APPENDIX 5

Delivery Options

OPTIONS	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
Description	Current Delivery Model – Seven Hubs with core support	Locality and Central Hubs with core support
Option Outline	Core team of 2.7FTE CEC staff and small grants to third party organisations ranging from £13,750 - £25,000 for 7 local delivery hubs with small fund for specialist training, equipment, travel costs etc	Contract five delivery hubs - one in each of the localities plus one city centre – with continued support from core team and access to small fund for sundries – specialist training, equipment, travel costs etc
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No disruption to service • Build on current good relationships • Usually one part-time dedicated staff member • Integration with other third-party grants providers • Choice of Hub for young people • Cross locality service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardised basic delivery • Minimal disruption to service • Build on established relationships across localities • Additional capacity - possibility of full time / two part-time staff members to co-ordinate and deliver • More funding allows extended delivery days • Integration with other third-party grants providers • Choice of Hub for young people • Aligned with localities model • Agreement to use CEC premises for delivery
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current delivery is usually over 2 days • Restricted delivery due to small amounts of funding • Ad hoc delivery – postcode lottery • Hubs work in isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on outreach to ensure accessibility in all areas
Timeline	If approved at committee, on target to complete small grants process and deliver by April 2020	If approved at committee, on target to complete small grants process and deliver by April 2020

OPTIONS	OPTION 3	OPTION 4
Description	Local Authority Team with no funded hubs	Four locality Hubs with no core support
Option Outline	Recruit additional 3 FTE staff to centrally based local authority team to case manage all referrals	Award funding for delivery of locality-based service to four individual suppliers
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Hub overhead costs – use of CEC premises • Better integration with LA funded provision • Centrally managed team able to react to changes in strategy • Possible staff from redeployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardised basic delivery • Increased funding = increased delivery in locality • Minimal disruption to delivery
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major disruption to service • Staff time spent travelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Local Authority oversight and integration

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less integrated with locally based provision • Reduction in time spent with young people • Young people required to travel to activities out with their locality • Less direct access to local provision • Staff would require retraining/ upskilling • Reliance on other provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major impact on relationships and integration with schools/ SDS/ training providers • A need to secure use of partner premises to develop outreach coverage • Less able to react to changes in strategy
Timeline	Unlikely that sign off and recruitment of more staff would be completed for April 2020, leading to a reduction in service or short-term extensions made to current contracts.	Potentially have to go through a full open procurement process which would probably not be completed by April 2020. This would lead to extensions being made to current contracts.