

# 14 - 19 Strategic Commissioning Statement 2014-2015

## 1. Purpose of the Strategic Commissioning Statement

- 1.1 Halton Borough Council, under Sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996 (as inserted by the ASCL Act 2009), has a statutory duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training opportunities to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in the borough.
- 1.2 Working with partners, Halton Borough Council will shape provision in the borough by identifying gaps, enabling new provision and developing the market. The purpose of the 14-19 Strategic Commissioning Statement is to provide an overview of the priorities for the borough.
- 1.3 The 14-19 Strategic Commissioning Statement for 2014-2015 builds on the achievements and successes of previous years, achieved by and with partners in the borough. Outcomes of the 2013-2014 14-19 Strategic Commissioning Statement are summarised in Appendix 2. Key achievements are:
  - The number of young people in the borough Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) was at 8.8% in June 2013, this is a decrease from the same time last year when the figure was 9.3% and demonstrates continued success in reducing NEET. The June 2011 percentage NEET was 11.6%.
  - Figures at June 2013 indicate an overall decrease in the percentage of Halton 16-18 year olds Not Known; 3.3% of Halton 16-18 year olds were Not Known in June 2013 compared to 5.5% in June 2012.
  - Between 2008/09 and 2011/12 Halton saw a 13.3% increase in Level 2 by 19 achievement; this was the highest increase within its group of statistical neighbours. Level 3 achievement by age 19 in has increased by 13.1% over the same period.
  - September Guarantee data for 2012/13 shows that 98.4% of the year 11 cohort had an offer of learning made to them upon leaving Secondary School, an increase when compared to the 2010/11 recorded figure of 95.2%.
  - 74% of the Halton 16-18 care leaver cohort were in Education, Employment or Training (EET) at March 2013, which is higher than both the regional (62%) and national average (58%) and an increase from the same period in 2012 (71%). The activities of all but one learner (2%) were known, compared to 8% nationally recorded as 'Not Known' in March 2013.

- At June 2013, 81.5% of the Halton 16-18 Youth Offender cohort were in EET, this is a significant increase when compared to the same period in 2011 (50.0%).
- The number of Halton residents accessing Higher Level Apprenticeships is continuing to grow with 42 participating in 2012/13 compared to 17 in 2010/11.
- The percentage of young people with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities participating in Education, Employment or Training has increased from 74% (2012) to 76.9% (June 2013).

## 2. Halton Borough Council 14 – 19 Priorities

2.1 In order to identify Halton Borough Council's key priorities for 2014-15 a Strategic Analysis of provision and need has been undertaken, Appendix 1 provides a summary of the data and information analysed. Within each priority key focus areas have been identified, informed by the Strategic Analysis and Summary of Outcomes documentation and in consultation with representative groups across the borough. The priorities are:

*Priority 1: Ensure there is sufficient suitable provision in place to meet our statutory duties for vulnerable young people aged 16-25.*

*Priority 2: Put in place an effective strategy to reduce the number of young people at risk of becoming or who are already NEET or their circumstance is not known*

Priority 3: Implement the Halton Participation Strategy (Appendix 3) to support meeting the raising of the participation age to 17 from 2013 and 18 by 2015

*Priority 4: Ensure young people have access to appropriate progression routes*

*Priority 5: Work with partners to support effective implementation of strategies to meet the requirements of the Alternative Provision statutory guidance and the recommendations of the Halton Alternative Provision report Autumn 2013*

2.2 Within each priority area there will be activity to identify opportunities for joint partnership working with other Local Authorities to support effective and efficient implementation of strategies.

## Priority Areas

### **3.1 Priority 1: Ensure there is sufficient suitable provision in place to meet our statutory duties for vulnerable young people aged 16-25**

**3.1.1** There are a number of key focus areas below which will support Halton to prepare for and implement the introduction of the Draft Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice: for 0-25 years. This is the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Bill and associated regulations.

#### **3.1.2 Key focus areas:**

- i. In setting out the Local Offer of all services available to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities work with institutions to support the breadth of provision to meet the needs of vulnerable learners.
- ii. Contribute to the development of the 0-25 co-ordinated assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plans.
- iii. Plan for the introduction of a mediation and appeals process for educational institutions where there has not previously been a statutory duty.
- iv. Ensure the 0-25 High Needs Assessment Process meets the new regulations for approval of Independent Educational Institutions and Special Post 16 Institutions.
- v. Negotiate joint commissioning for planning and delivering services across education, health and care provision to deliver positive outcomes for children and young people with SEN.
- vi. Manage the transitional arrangements from Learning Difficulty Assessments to Education Health and Care Plans to ensure Halton Borough Council is meeting its statutory duties.
- vii. Implement the Reformed Funding System for 2014-15 for High Needs Students; continuing on from the significant reforms of 2013-14.
- viii. Chair the Transition Sub Group to lead on the 'Preparing for Adulthood' strand of the SEN Reforms to enable young people to have access to a clear pathway through education and into adulthood, including finding paid employment, living independently and participating in their community.
- ix. Support education providers in their statutory duty to provide Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to vulnerable young people.
- x. Work with colleagues in Social Care to develop locally blended packages of support which include day services and education for young adults with complex needs, as a viable option to out of borough specialist placements, to enable young people to remain in their local community.

- xi. Continue to ensure a smooth transition for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities from education pre 16 to post 16 and from Children's to Adult Services.
- xii. Continue to reduce the number of Council identified vulnerable young people (for example young people known to Youth Offending Team (YOT), teenage mothers, young people with learning difficulties and /or disabilities and young people with emotional, health and wellbeing issues) who are NEET or where their activity is not known (hereafter referred to as Not Known).
- xiii. Work with the new Young People's Tracking Service to ensure timely data is available to monitor the NEET, Not Known and Re-engagement provision cohorts (including Council identified vulnerable young people and those identified in the Inspiring Families initiative) to enable and support all partners engaging with young people to share data.
- xiv. Manage the interrogation and interpretation of data from the Young People's Tracking Service to target intervention for young people who are not in education or training or pre 16 who are at risk of becoming NEET (including council identified vulnerable young people).
- xv. Continue to use the NEET Vulnerable Young People's Case Conferencing to refer, track and monitor young people who are NEET and those in year 11 who are at risk of becoming NEET to support them into appropriate services and learning.
- xvi. Monitor and evaluate the programmes and support that have been developed and implemented to specifically reduce vulnerable young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.
- xvii. Collect the views of young people on the impact of interventions and provision they experience in order to inform future commissioned services by working with the Participation Group of the Children's Trust.

### 3.1.3 Why

- From 1 September 2014 the provisions in the Children and Families Bill, its associated regulations and Code of Practice will be in force. Halton Borough Council must ensure that the statutory requirements are planned for and adhered to. Subject to any transitional arrangements made, from that date the SEN Code of Practice (2001) and the Section 139A Learning Difficulty Assessments Statutory Guidance (2013) will cease.
- From 1 September 2014 transitional arrangements will be in place to support the changeover from the current system to the new system. These arrangements will set out the elements of the SEN Code of Practice (2001) and Section 139A

Learning Difficulty Assessments Statutory Guidance (2013) which will remain in force during the transition period.

- Halton Borough Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient suitable education and training to meet the reasonable needs of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and young people subject to a youth detention.
- Halton Borough Council has prime responsibility for planning and funding provision for high needs students from 0-25 years resident in the borough, wherever they study.
- The Government have stated that Local Authorities have a crucial role in securing provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and are expected to look strategically at provision from pre to post 16 and improve transition for young people.
- A gap has been identified within social care in provision for young adults with complex needs whose needs could potentially be met by developing local meaningful activities and employment through day services as a viable alternative to out of borough specialist college placements.
- Whilst a lot of progress has been made, there are still vulnerable young people who do not participate in education and training or go on to achieve their full potential.
- By interrogating the data and evaluating interventions and programmes for vulnerable NEET young people and those at risk of becoming NEET, it will ensure that we can identify who they are and commissioning services and provision to meet their needs.
- The NEET Vulnerable Young People's Case Conferencing has proved successfully in reducing both the number of vulnerable NEET young people and the number of young people at risk of making the transition from year 11 into post 16 education.
- Having young people participating in assessing the impact of interventions and provision for young people will help to ensure that commissioned services meet the needs of young people.

### 3.1.4 Impact

- Halton will be well prepared to meet its legal duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Bill and associated regulations for children and young people with Special Educational Needs.
- Comprehensive systems will be in place to manage the school funding reforms for high needs students in Halton.

- Halton will have met its statutory duties for the transition from Learning Difficulty Assessments to Education Health and Care Plans.
- Robust data systems will be in place to ensure a greater understanding of the needs of the Borough's most vulnerable young people.
- Halton will have sufficient provision, post 16, to meet the reasonable needs of young people in the borough, including those with the most complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Vulnerable young people will have a full range of post 16 options including meaningful activities and employment.
- Vulnerable young people will have a smooth transition from pre to post 16 and go on to participate and achieve.
- Increase in the number of vulnerable young people engaged in education, employment and training.
- Young people will be fully participating in the borough's decisions around provision and support to meet their needs.
- Support the implementation of Halton's Participation Strategy.

## **3.2 Priority 2: Put in place an effective strategy to reduce the number of young people at risk of becoming or who are already NEET or their activity is Not Known**

### **3.2.1 Key focus areas:**

- i. Explore the issues behind and reduce the movement of young people in and out of NEET (churn) and continue to reduce the length of stay of young people in NEET.
- ii. Continue to reduce the number of Council identified vulnerable young people (for example young people known to Youth Offending Team (YOT); teenage mothers, young people with learning difficulties and /or disabilities and young people with emotional, health and wellbeing issues) who are NEET or where their activity is Not Known.
- iii. Review, in partnership with education establishments and providers, the progression routes available to young people in the borough, with a particular focus on progression routes available to young people within the NEET cohort and access to provision throughout the year.
- iv. Investigate with Local Authority colleagues the potential to bring forward the transfer of basic level information from Primary schools to Secondary schools to support the process of identifying those who may potentially be at risk of becoming NEET.
- v. Continue to provide Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) information to secondary schools and evaluate the impact pre-16 interventions, alternative and engagement provision is having on NEET.
- vi. Monitor and evaluate the programmes and support that have been developed and implemented to specifically reduce those who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET (including Council identified vulnerable young people).
- vii. Collect the views of young people on the impact of interventions and provision they experience in order to inform future commissioned services by working with the Participation Group of the Children's Trust.
- viii. Continue to implement the Local Authority's statutory duty to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training through the 'September Guarantee'.
- ix. Ensure that appropriate referral routes, together with the processes to track young people starting and leaving provision and their progression, are in place by working with education establishments and providers.
- x. Work with the new Young People's Tracking service to ensure timely data is available to monitor the NEET, Not Known and Re-engagement Provision cohorts (including Council identified vulnerable young people and those identified in the Inspiring Families initiative) to enable and support all partners engaging with young people to share data.
- xi. Manage the interrogation and interpretation of data from the Young People's Tracking Service to target intervention for young people who are not in education or



training, or pre-16 who are at risk of becoming NEET (including Council identified vulnerable young people).

- xii. Continue to develop approaches to identifying the activity of young people whose activity is Not Known.

### 3.2.2 Why

- The NEET cohort itself is not a static cohort. National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) data indicates that between April 2012 and March 2013 a total of 509 16-18 year olds joined the NEET cohort with 516 young people who are NEET leaving the group. Analysis of the NEET Leaver destinations indicates that 40% of NEET Leavers when to employment.
- The length of stay in NEET for young people has reduced, however analysis of the Halton 16-18 NEET cohort indicates that, on average, learners within the cohort are not engaged for 23 weeks, a decrease from 26 weeks last year. There is high variance in length of time in NEET depending upon the age of the learner:
  - a) 16 year olds are NEET for an average of 15 weeks, a decrease from 16 weeks in 2012
  - b) 17 year olds are NEET for an average of 21 weeks, a decrease from 25 weeks in 2012
  - c) 18 year olds are NEET for an average of 27 weeks, a decrease from 32 weeks in 2012
- Non-participation in employment or training between the ages of 16 and 18 is a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, depression, involvement in crime and poor health, mental health and early mortality.
- Figures from June 2013 indicate an overall decrease in the percentage of Halton 16-18 year olds in NEET. The proportion of 16-18 year olds in NEET is currently at the lowest level seen since 2007. However, the June 2012 figure still identifies 378 young people aged 16-18, with 301 of these being identified as 'Active' i.e. they are available to the education, employment or training market some of which are vulnerable. 23 of these young people have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Processes were introduced in 2012 to bring those in year 11 vulnerable to becoming NEET to the Vulnerable Young People's Case Conference group. Work will continue to develop this further and ensure that appropriate support is implemented to help young people into learning post-16.
- Further consideration of the progression routes available to young people, in particular the NEET cohort, will support understanding of potential barriers to progression and the impact access to provision throughout the year, or the lack of this, has on the NEET cohort.

- RONI information, enhanced by information from primary schools about young people, is highly valued in supporting schools to identify targeted intervention as a preventative measure.
- To ensure practice is influenced by lessons learnt and young people's personal experience of services.
- Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide all 16 and 17 year olds with an offer of a suitable place in education or training by September each year. Although for 2013 the numbers of young people offered a place in learning is the highest it has ever been the challenge is to ensure that all offers are converted into starts followed by achievement.
- Local Authorities are legally responsible for making arrangements to identify those not participating; the new Young People Tracking Service will manage this work from April 2014 and provide the information and data required to plan and implement interventions.

### **3.2.3 Impact**

- A reduction in the NEET length of stay and NEET churn.
- A reduction in the percentage of young people not in education or Not Known.
- Schools will continue to receive annual Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) information to inform intervention strategies.
- Increase in the numbers of schools measuring the impact of interventions to reduce the numbers of young people from year 7 at risk of becoming NEET.
- Further intervention and future commissioning of services will be informed by experiences to date of current provision and the feedback of young people.
- An increase in the number of young people offered a place in education or employment with training through the September Guarantee process.
- The new Young People Tracking Service will manage data and information on the participation activity of young people in Halton, with this data and information being provided from a number of sources including education establishments and providers.
- Further methods of identifying the activity of young people will have been identified.

### **3.3 Priority 3: Implement the Halton Participation Strategy (Appendix 3) to support meeting the raising of the participation age to 17 from 2013 and 18 by 2015**

**3.3.1** The requirement of Raising the Participation Age is for young people to stay in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 years old from 2013 and from 2015 they will be required to stay in education or training until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**3.3.2** In addition to the key focus areas identified below Priorities 1 and 2 will support the work in meeting the requirements of raising the participation age (RPA) in continuing to reduce the number of 16 and 17 year olds not in education or training.

#### **3.3.3 Key focus areas:**

- i. Introduce and promote the Halton Participation Strategy from April 2014, including continued reinforcement of the requirements of the Raising the Participation Age regulations.
- ii. Support education providers in their statutory responsibility to provide information, advice and guidance to young people by giving access to online resources, including guidance in integrating these resources into the curriculum. This will include the promotion of Mersey Interactive to ensure all Halton young people have access to appropriate independent information, advice and guidance reflecting the local economy, city region sector areas and self-employment/enterprise.
- iii. Education Business Partnership team to introduce the role of Participation Ambassadors to young people and to recruit employers to offer mentoring to young people, which forms part of the Halton Participation Strategy.
- iv. Manage the implementation of the new Young People Tracking Service, including transfer of data and information from the current system.
- v. Implement and evaluate the trial of using Professional Coaching staff to work with young people who are not in education or training.
- vi. Continue partnership work with Liverpool City Region authorities to implement new services to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education and training.
- vii. Research the characteristics of employers who recruit young people as employees without offering training opportunities, supported by the Employment, Learning and Skills Division.
- viii. Develop a system to ensure young people have the opportunity to provide feedback about the services they experience within the work of the Participation Strategy in a way that does inform practice.

### 3.3.4 Why

- The Education and Skills Act 2008 increases the minimum age at which young people in England can leave learning, requiring them to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015.
- An audit of communicating the message to young people in relation to Raising of the Participation Age identified that whilst there is understanding of the regulations this could be further enhanced with resources to convey key messages.
- Year 11 learners from September 2013 are the first cohort of learners required to continue in education or training until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- The Halton Participation Strategy has been developed to support the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training.
- The statutory duty for the delivery of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) for young people of statutory school age is now placed with schools.
- Mersey Interactive has been funded and developed by the Liverpool City Region as a tool to support the access young people and parents have to careers and education information.
- Participation Ambassadors, Mentoring and Professional Coaching forms part of the Halton Participation Strategy.
- In summer 2013 Local Authorities became legally responsible for making arrangements to identify those not participating; the new Young People Tracking Service will manage this work from April 2014.
- To support dialogue and activity to achieve effective and efficient implementation of strategies.
- In July 2013 5.9% of 16-18 year olds were in employment without training, a 0.2% decrease from the 2012 position but higher than the regional (5.4%) and National (4.8% averages). Since September 2013 employment without training does not meet the requirements of the Raising of the Participation Age regulations.
- To ensure practice is influenced by young people's personal experience of services.

### 3.3.5 Impact

- Council services and agencies will understand the roll of services within the Halton Participation Strategy to encourage, enable and assist young people to participation in education or training.
- Young people will be familiar with and using Mersey Interactive to gather information on careers and education.
- A cohort of young people will have been recruited to work as Participation Ambassadors to encourage their peers to participate in education or training.
- A cohort of employers will have been recruited to offer their support as mentors to young people.
- The new Young People Tracking Service will manage data and information on the participation activity of young people in Halton.
- An evaluation of the use of Professional Coaching staff to support young people who are not in education or training to participate will have taken place.
- Liverpool City Region local authorities will work together where common strategies allow efficiencies to be made.
- Information will be available to analyse and develop further understanding of the choice by young people to enter employment without training and for employers to recruit without offering training opportunities.
- It will be possible to demonstrate young people's views have been gathered and acted upon.

### **3.4 Priority 4: Ensure young people have access to appropriate progression routes**

**3.4.1** In addition to the key focus areas identified below Priority 2 will support the work in ensuring young people have access to appropriate progression routes, in particular young people not engaged in education or training and Priority 1 will support through developing a local offer for vulnerable young people.

#### **3.4.2 Key focus areas:**

- i. Promote effective sharing of information on employment sectors and routes to self-employment/enterprise to inform Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance and provision.
- ii. Encourage the continued promotion of Apprenticeships as a progression route through the 11-19 Partnership's work.
- iii. Provide support through the Work Based Learning group to providers to plan how they prepare young people to progress into Apprenticeships and succeed.
- iv. Continue joint planning and sharing information with the Employment, Learning and Skills Division to increase Apprenticeship provision within local economy (for example the Mersey Gateway) and Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy transformational areas.

#### **3.4.3 Why**

- The statutory duty for the delivery of CEIAG for young people is now placed with education establishments and providers.
- The Government are committed to ensuring 1 in 5 young people undertake an apprenticeship by 2020.
- Cumulative part-year figures at Q3 2012/13 (Aug 2012 – April 2013) show a further decline in 16-18 apprenticeship starts when compared to the same period last year (283 starts in 2012/13 compared to 316 starts at same point in 2011/12). The decline has also been seen regionally and nationally at both Intermediate and Advanced levels.
- Final year data for 2011/12 indicates the proportion of 16-18 year old LDD residents starting an apprenticeship has decreased slightly from 7.2% 2010/11 to 6.6% in 2011/12.

### 3.4.4 Impact

- Information on high recruitment areas and growth areas will be reflected within Mersey Interactive and shared with education establishments and providers.
- Traineeships and Study Programmes will be progression routes to Apprenticeships, preparing young people to successfully apply and succeed.
- An increase in the number of Apprenticeship starts will be seen.

### **3.5 Priority 5: Work with partners to support effective implementation of strategies to meet the requirements of the Alternative Provision statutory guidance and the recommendations of the Halton Alternative Provision report autumn 2013**

#### **3.5.1 Key focus areas:**

- i. Support the implementation of the Alternative Provision service by working with the Alternative Provision Strategic Group, and any task groups identified with responsibility for delivery of alternative provision.
- ii. Influence the content of and support the promotion of a menu of provision available in Halton.
- iii. Support the Strategic Group in implementing a robust quality assurance framework and intervention strategies.
- iv. Support the Strategic Group in carrying out a review of the implementation of the Alternative Provision service that includes obtaining feedback from the young people who have accessed the service.

#### **3.5.2 Why**

- In fulfilling the Local Authority's statutory duty to arrange suitable full time education for excluded learners Alternative Provision is commissioned, in addition, exclusion prevention measures within the borough include referring learners to Alternative Provision.
- To ensure Local Authority services are aware of the Alternative Provision service and that suitably challenging provision forms part of the service.
- To ensure Alternative Provision offers a high quality educational experience to young people in Halton.
- To ensure the experience of the service from the perspective of young people is captured and acted upon as appropriate.

#### **3.5.3 Impact**

- Alternative Provision referral pathways within the borough will be clear and educational establishments and local authority teams will clearly understand the Alternative Provision service.



- Any element of the Alternative Provision service less than good quality will be identified and intervention put in place within a short timeframe.
- Young people will have the opportunity to influence any revisions or amendments to the service as necessary.