

Draft minutes of panel meeting held on 7th December 2010

Item 1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Schmitz

Item 2. Urgent Business

None

Item 3. Declarations of interest

None

Item 4. Feedback from visits

The Panel has visited three projects which are funding via the Haringey Guarantee programme and provided their feedback and views on the projects.

Families into work

Visited by: Cllr Basu, Cllr Browne & Cllr Strang

The Panel felt that Families into Work is an impressive project which has engaged over 140 families, above their target number of 100 families.

The project works intensively with families furthest away from employment and assists them in overcoming a range of barriers back into work. The panel were impressed with the holistic approach of the project and the way in which it works around the family to consider aspirations rather than just trying to fit a person to a job role.

The panel also noted that the families being worked with have a huge range of barriers, including knowledge, experience, skills, understanding of the job market, lack of role models, child care, education etc. The panel noted the high level of dedication and enthusiasm of the staff and were impressed with the wide ranging, complicated and labour intensive support provided to each family whilst being able to build strong and trusting relationships with those being supported over a long period.

There is a challenge is encouraging people to work outside of their immediate area, with the idea of travelling even across the borough alien to some families. There are also challenges such as travel costs and gang/post-code culture for younger people.

The panel feels that excursions for young people, such as taking them into central London, where they have often never been, is beneficial in beginning to break down these barriers.

There is a need to engage with Spurs and encourage them to see themselves as a local employer and at the same time try and break down the concept of not travelling to work. The panel were concerned that the jobs created by the Spurs regeneration would not necessarily go to local residents as there are people who are willing to travel to find work, as has been the case in Tower Hamlets with the Docklands regeneration.

The panel feels that the model used by Families into Work could benefit a number of other areas in the borough and feels that the project is an example of good practice which should be shared widely. The panel noted that this is a unique project nationally and feels that the positive outcomes of the project should be disseminated widely nationally as best practice.

The panel noted the lack of certainty for the future of the project with concern. The panel were also greatly concerned about the gap in funding from March 2011 to September 2011 should the project secure funding under the forthcoming Work Programme.

Northumberland Park Community School

Visited by: Cllr Schmitz and Cllr Solomon

The Northumberland Park Community School project works with 40 students per year who are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). The panel noted that as well as supporting this number of students annually the staff are also supporting the 40 students from the preceding year as well as having an 'open door policy' for other students who have been supported.

The panel were again impressed with the dedication and persistence of the staff who offer systematic mentoring in a very personalised way to the students on the project. The staff had gained the trust of the young people and in turn the young people had begun engaging in education and training. The panel was also interested to note that the young people each spoke of having to break away from their circle of friends in order to achieve this.

The panel were also impressed with the turn around of the young people who were at the visit. The young people had gone from either not attending school or being extremely disruptive at school to getting qualifications and started college courses. It was also noted from the young people that the support they had received had a positive impact on their home lives.

The panel noted with concern the uncertain funding, both long term and in the shorter term for the project.

Positive Employment

Visited by: Cllr Basu

Positive Employment is a job brokerage organisation which receives referrals from the Haringey Guarantee, Job Centre Plus and word of mouth.

As well as helping people to find work Positive Employment also walks people through the process into sustained work. For example, interview techniques, what to ask, coaching, follow up phone calls, provision of references etc, they also call people when a job becomes available.

The panel was again impressed with the dedication of the staff and the high level of support provided to people who use the facilities.

The panel noted with concern the uncertain funding of the project.

Item 5. Working for Health – Leo Atkins

The Panel received a presentation on the links between employment and health and the Healthy Communities Programme currently running in Haringey.

Please see attached presentation.

Points to note:

It is important to ensure that the wider determinants of health are considered, including employment and the positive link between with health. This link is there nationally but not necessarily locally. For example, NHS Haringey often focuses on the clinical aspects and not the wider determinants.

Employment has a positive impact on people's wellbeing, for example social interaction and engagement.

Concern over the fact that prevention is the first area to suffer in times of budgetary constraint. This is not cost effective and will mean that further down the line more money is needed at the acute end.

Any discrimination around employment opportunities tends to be weighted towards people with mental health needs and employers perception of these mental health needs.

Ongoing support is key in getting people back into sustained work.

The Healthy Communities programme relies almost exclusively on funding from the Haringey Guarantee.

The Employment and Health Network was launched in July 2010.

Most sick notes are written at the end of GP consultations as there is little time for any further exploration or discussion. GPs do not always know what services there are available to enable them to refer to services appropriately. This is particularly the case in relation to employment support services.

Discussion around motivators for employment, for example financial advantages.

Discussion around whether the Council is providing conflicting views on the advantages between work and health, for example in encouraging people to work from home where there is very little social interaction with colleagues.

There is work to be done in light of government changes to work with GPs and ensure that all agencies are working to the same outcomes, e.g. holistic views of wellbeing and the wider determinants of health.

Approximately 75% of those on Incapacity Benefit in Haringey have been on this benefit for 2 years or more. Statistically, people who have been on Incapacity Benefit for 2 years or more are more likely to die than to work.

Work Capability Assessments are more focused on what people could do in a work context as opposed to what they are unable to do. These assessments are done by Government appointed Doctors. This contract has been given to Atos by the Department for Work and Pensions.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/healthcare-professional/guidance/atos-healthcare/>

The Healthy Communities Programme did have a Health Employment Advice Service in the Laurels, this came to an end due to issues at the health centre. However, there are now Health Trainers at the centre.

The Haringey Health Employment Advisers come from a range of background, e.g. Reed and the Strategic Health Authority. The personal support and trusting relationship built between the Advisers and clients helps in incentivising people on this programme.

Item 6. Community Link Forum

Deferred

Item 7. Meganexus

Meganexus is a web based software system used by the Haringey Guarantee and also by the North London Pledge.

License cost is £10,000 per annum.

Information collected on service users is transferred onto Meganexus. This ensures a central record is held.

Levels of accessibility are customisable for different providers and Officers.

Is used for performance management and also for monitoring service users progress into sustained employment.

Referrals between projects can also be done via the software.

Providers only get paid once they have input all of the relevant data and this has then been verified by GLE.

Discussion around whether we are fully utilising the capabilities of the system.

Direction of travel under the Work Programme is likely to be more of a move towards increased use of the system, for example allowing service users to log onto the system to view their details, store papers e.g. CVs.

We need to ensure that with any expansion in use data security issues are considered.

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