

**REGENERATION AND PLANNING
SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM
AGENDA**



Thursday 22 March 2007

at 10.00 am

**at Ow ton Manor Community Centre, Wynyard Road,
Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors R W Cook, S Cook, Gibbon, Laffey, London, A Marshall, J Marshall,
Richardson, Wallace, D Waller and Wright.

Resident Representatives:

Ted Jackson and Iris Ryder

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
3. **MINUTES**
 - 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2007 (to follow)
4. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.
5. **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items.

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 Youth Justice Plan 2007/08 (Scrutiny Support Officer)

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 7.1 Six Monthly Progress Report – Scrutiny Investigation into Partnerships – Action Plan (Head of Community Strategy)
- 7.2 *Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment*
 - (a) Draft Final Report (Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum)

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 14 June commencing at 2.00 pm at Throston Grange Community Centre, Glamorgan Grove, Hartlepool

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM MINUTES

23 February 2007

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Community Room, Central Library, York Road, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Councillors: Shaun Cook, Pauline Laffey, Frances London and Carl Richardson

In accordance with Paragraph 4.2 (ii) of the Council's Procedure Rules
Councillor Sheila Griffin attended as a substitute for Councillor Ann Marshall and Councillor Mary Fleet attended as a substitute for Councillor Dennis Waller

Resident Representative:
Ted Jackson

Officers: Stuart Green, Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Development
Antony Steinberg, Economic Development Manager
Joanne Smithson, Head of Community Strategy
Paul Johnson, Employment Development Officer
Alison Mawson, Head of Community Safety and Prevention
Kerry Trenchard, Strategy and Performance Officer
Jonathan Wistow, Scrutiny Support Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present
Chris Livingstone, Job Centre Plus
Paul Thompson, HVDA

71. Appointment of Chair

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Carl Richardson was appointed as Chair for this meeting only.

72. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors. Rob Cook, Steve Gibbon, Ann Marshall, Steve Wallace, Dennis Waller and Edna Wright.

73. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillor Carl Richardson declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in minute numbered 77.

74. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2007

Confirmed.

75. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

76. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

77. Role of Council Representatives in Decision Making on the Local Strategic Partnership (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

On 10 November 2006 Constitution Working Group, and on 27 November 2006 Constitution Committee considered a preliminary briefing note from the Head of Community Strategy in relation to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), which was attached at Appendix A. During discussions at both the Constitution Working Group and Constitution Committee Members had expressed concern regarding the role of Council representatives on the LSP. Members were concerned that members of the Council's Executive were effectively committing themselves to proposals considered by the LSP before any consideration was given to the proposals in their executive role. It was highlighted, during discussions at Constitution Working Group, that issues associated with the LSP had been the subject of an inquiry by the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum. It was considered that the Working Group, should, therefore, refer the briefing note to Scrutiny Forum and defer consideration of this item until the views of the Forum had been sought. It was reported that the Partnerships Investigation concluded at the end of the 2005/06 municipal year and an action plan for this investigation was considered by the Forum on 29 September 2006.

The Head of Community Strategy referred Members to a preliminary briefing note, attached at Appendix A which gave details in relation to:-

- the role of the Hartlepool partnership
- the White Paper – strong and prosperous communities

- the decision making process
- decisions taken by the Hartlepool Partnership Board
- examples of strategies that the LSP had agreed in the last 12 months
- funding streams delivered by the Partnership
- Local Area Agreement
- decision making routes

The Forum was advised that if the current established decision making routes were reversed, with decisions taken by the Council's Executive in advance of Partnership meetings the dynamics of the Partnership would shift significantly. Practically, the Council would be unable to comply with the conditions set out in the grant determinations unless additional arrangements were put in place to ensure that partners views were sought, recorded and formally fed into the executive decision making process. In addition, the reversal of current practice would change the nature of Partnership meetings with decision making effectively a "fait accompli" or "rubber stamping" exercise and the Partnership's ability to shape and influence decision making would be removed.

The Head of Community Strategy stated that the informal arrangements of decision making by the Partnership, then by Council, had worked well during the Partnership's seven years of operation. It was not evident during that time that Executive Members had felt constrained by decisions taken by the Hartlepool Partnership or that the decision making route had prevented them from effectively discharging their responsibilities.

During discussions some Members, who sat on the Partnership, agreed that they were not aware of an occasion when Elected Members had disagreed with the decisions of the Partnership. However, some Members were concerned that following recent developments, in the Local Government White Paper and through the development of Local Area Agreements, additional powers were moving to the Partnership. Consequently, some Members were concerned that a 'democratic' deficit may emerge, whilst it was argued that Councillors were the most directly accountable representatives in the locality. In addition, some Members shared Constitution Committee's concerns regarding the Partnership's potential to shape and influence decisions prior to a decision being taken by the Council's Executive. In response to concerns expressed in relation to transparency and accountability the Partnership, the Head of Community Strategy advised that all members of the partnership had clear responsibilities which were outlined in the terms of reference and partnership meetings were open to the public. Details of the Partnership Board's election process was also provided.

Decision

That the Scrutiny Support Officer, in consultation with the Acting Chair, prepare a response to the Constitution Committee outlining the concerns of the Forum.

78. Youth Unemployment – Evidence from Job Centre Plus *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the Forum's ongoing investigation into youth unemployment, a representative from Job Centre Plus had been invited to attend the Forum to assist the Forum in understanding the roles and responsibilities of the job centre in tackling youth unemployment.

Christine Livingstone of Job Centre Plus provided a detailed presentation which focused on the following issues:-

- Background to Jobcentre Plus
- Services delivered from Ward Jackson House Jobcentre
- Work-focused interview s/interventions
- Jobcentre Plus support
- New Deal for Young People
- New Deal 18-24 Options
- Sanctions to Benefits
- Other support to Young People
- Adviser Feedback

A Member commented that the lack of incentives and low paid jobs contributed to young people refusing employment and queried what measures were in place to address this. The Job Centre Plus representative advised that it was difficult to find well paid employment for individuals. However, working family tax credit was one incentive that encouraged people to return to work. Job Centre Plus advisers and debt counsellors provided advice and assistance and links with voluntary organisations.

The Forum discussed the types of employment available, numbers in temporary employment and how to encourage young people to retrain. The Economic Development Manager added that opportunities for young people were being developed in the business world and the Bling Project was one example.

Decision

That the information given, be noted and discussions be used to assist the Forum in completing the scrutiny investigation.

79. Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment – Draft Research Report *(Economic Development Manager)*

In November 2006, the authority's Economic Development service commissioned a consultant to explore a number of areas of work in relation to youth unemployment in Hartlepool. The purpose of the research was to assist the development of an additional range of employment and training projects

that would assist in a reduction of youth unemployment and economic inactivity. The consultant's report, attached at Appendix 1, had recently been completed which outlined the underlining issues relating to unemployment amongst young people in Hartlepool and would complement evidence provided by the Learning and Skills Council, Job Centre Plus, Connexions Service and Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency.

The Employment Development Officer advised that there was a lack of apprenticeships and the nature of the labour market had changed. There was a need to focus on vulnerable young people with caring responsibilities, teenage parents and homeless young people. Members were referred to Appendix 1 which gave details of the various options and routes for achieving qualifications, employability skills, basic skills concerns from employers, lack of role models, family approach to employment, impact of mainstream provision, what jobs were available and qualification attainment. The report also identified that more training and vocational tasters should be explored as well as the availability of data to be developed.

A Member asked if the jobs market was different to how it appeared in the local press. Members were advised that a number of businesses did not use the local press to market jobs, many of which were advertised on the internet. Approximately 20% of jobs were not advertised anywhere at all and some people obtained employment by speculative approach.

Members discussed the factors that they felt contributed to youth unemployment which included lack of role models in relation to training and employment limiting their aspirations and young people being paid less than others for carrying out the same job.

80. Youth Unemployment – Evidence from the Community and Voluntary Sector *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the Forum's ongoing investigation into youth unemployment, a representative from Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA) had been invited to attend the Forum to provide evidence in relation to youth unemployment. The Chair welcomed Paul Thompson to the Forum.

The representative gave a brief summary of the work undertaken by the voluntary sector. Over forty voluntary groups operated in the town from young people's theatre groups to various societies and classes. The voluntary sector identified gaps in service not provided by others. Whilst there were a number of organisations who provided assistance for the elderly, there was significantly less provision for young people.

The Forum was advised of details of the types of services provided by voluntary sector organisations in the town which included assistance with interviewing skills and personal development. Some voluntary organisations provided residential training opportunities for young people. Extra confidence building was often all that was required. Examples of the types of voluntary

work undertaken by young people were provided together with the various benefits resulting therefrom.

Members were advised that 35 unemployed young people had accessed the service the previous year, 25 of which felt they moved onto full time employment as a result. It was highlighted that there were a number of people educated to degree level, who experienced difficulties obtaining employment due to lack of life or employment experience or practical skills. HVDA worked in partnership with the job centre to promote volunteering as a stepping stone to employment. Work was also carried out with Benefits to ensure there was no impact on benefits. Celebration events were held in recognition of the work carried out by volunteers in the local community. The Forum was requested to contact HVDA with any comments or queries in relation to the information provided.

PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM OF BUSINESS
COUNCILLOR CARL RICHARDSON VACATED THE CHAIR AND
COUNCILLOR SHAUN COOK TOOK THE CHAIR

81. Corporate Plan 2007/08 – Proposed Objectives and Actions *(Director of Regeneration and Planning Services and Assistant Chief Executive)*

It was reported that at a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 19 January 2006 it was agreed that the Corporate Plan proposals be considered by each of the Scrutiny Forums which related to the Community Strategy themes that fell under their remit. The comments/observations of each Forum would be fed back to the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 19 March 2007 and would be used to formulate the formal Scrutiny response to Cabinet on 16 April 2007.

The Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Development and Strategy and Performance Officer were in attendance to present a report which provided Members with the opportunity to consider the proposed objectives and actions for inclusion in the Corporate Plan 2007/08.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised:-

How many units at the Queens Meadow Innovation Centre were currently occupied? Members were advised that approximately 80% of the units were currently in use which was in excess of the target of the developer, UK Steel Enterprise. Another developer, Rivergreen had recently started the development of 80,000 sq ft of manufacturing floorspace at Queens Meadow and a third developer, Gladman had submitted a planning application for the first phase of their proposed office development.

Was any funding available for environmental improvements in the Dyke House area? The Assistant Director explained that external funds which had been available in parts of Hartlepool in the past for extensive improvements in

housing estates were now not generally available on a significant scale. There may be scope for small scale environmental improvements to be funded via the North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum or alternatively, it might be feasible for Hartlepool Housing to consider such works if they were consistent with their policy priorities.

Was domestic violence increasing? The Head of Community Safety and Prevention stated that it was difficult to determine if domestic violence had increased, although reports had increased over the last few years. However, there was a greater awareness as it was much more acceptable to talk about it. It should be recognised that men were victims of domestic violence as well as women. Victims were encouraged to have an escape room to enable them to remain in their homes and the Community Safety Unit had been requested to examine this arrangement.

Following clarification of the above issues raised, the Forum agreed to support the proposed objectives and actions for inclusion in the 2007/08 Corporate Plan.

Decision

Members supported the proposed objectives and actions for inclusion in the 2007/08 Corporate Plan.

82. Youth Unemployment – Evidence from the Learning and Skills Council (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

As part of the Forum's ongoing investigation into youth unemployment, a representative from the Learning and Skills Council had been invited to attend the Forum to provide evidence in relation to youth unemployment. As apologies had been submitted from the Learning and Skills Council, Members noted the contents of their report which was attached by way of Appendix.

Decision

That the information given, be noted.

83. Youth Unemployment – Evidence from Connections (Scrutiny Support Officer)

The Scrutiny Support Officer advised that as it had not been possible to arrange for a representative from Connexions to attend the Forum, a written submission had been prepared by Connexions, attached at Appendix A to the report.

Decision

That the information given, be noted.

CARL RICHARDSON/SHAUN COOK

CHAIRMAN

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

22 March 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2007-08

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum about proposals for the development of the Youth Justice Plan as part of the Authority's Budget and Policy Framework.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year the Youth Justice Board (YJB) requests Youth Offending Service's (YOS's) to complete an annual plan as required by Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 2.2 At the meeting of this Forum on 15 June 2006 the Youth Justice Plan was identified as a Budget and Policy Framework item that falls under the remit of the Forum. It was indicated that the Forum would need to consider this item during the course of the current Municipal Year.
- 2.3 The Youth Justice Plan requires YOS's to set out how they are going to respond to the requirements of the Youth Justice Performance Management framework, to address areas of under performance and deliver continuous improvement.
- 2.4 The first part of the process in Hartlepool is to provide an Issues Paper, which will be used as the basis for consultation with users and partners and for consideration by Scrutiny. Consequently, the issues paper has been attached at **Appendix 1** and the Head of Community Safety and Prevention will make an additional presentation to the Forum in relation to this matter.
- 2.5 The annual plan will be available for consideration by Cabinet and full Council in April 2007 and needs to be submitted to the YJB by 30th April 2007.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum:-

- (a) considers the contents of this report and the Issues Paper attached at **Appendix 1** and question the Head of Community Safety and Prevention accordingly;
- (b) formulates any comments and observations on this Budget and Policy Framework item to be fed back to Cabinet.

Contact Officer :- Jonathan Wistow – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2007/08

Issues Paper

1. Background

The Annual Youth Justice Plan comprises 5 sections covering:

- 1) Chair of the Management Board's Summary – Provides an overview of how the YOS delivers Youth Services.
- 2) Local Planning Environment – The plan requires an overview of how YOS is engaging the plans and priorities of their local partners, looking separately at interaction with the two main systems that YOS's must operate in, namely Children's Services and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (Community Safety Partnership).
- 3) Drivers of Performance – Governance and Leadership, Performance and Quality Systems, Resources, People and Organisation, Partnership Working.
- 4) Delivery Plan – Forms the bulk of the plan. YJB have identified 16 themes are fundamental to the delivery of the overall aims and objectives of the Youth Justice System.
- 5) Review and Approval – Review of actions and update of Action Plan approval by the relevant partners.

The purpose of this Issues Paper is to review the performance of the Youth Offending Service during April – September 2006 (verified April – December 2006 data will be available in early March 2007) and identify Themes in the Delivery Plan which require attention to improve performance.

2. Delivery

The Youth Justice Board has identified 16 Themes which are fundamental to the delivery of the overall aims and objectives of the Youth Justice System. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are aligned to these Themes, as shown in the Table below :

Theme	KPI
Prevent Offending	Prevention
Intervene Early	Final Warning*
Provide Intense Supervision	ISSP
Reduce Re-offending	Recidivism
Reduce the use of Custody	Use of remands*/custodial sentence*
Ensure swift administration of Justice	PSR*
Enforcement and Enabling Compliance	Breach
Ensure Effective Rigorous Assessment	Asset*
Support Young People Engaging in Education, Training and Employment	ETE*
Support Access to appropriate Accommodation	Accommodation*
Support access to Mental Health Services	CAMHS*
Support access to Substance Misuse Services	Substance Misuse*
Resettlement	RAP
Provide Effective Restorative Justice Services	Restorative Processes*
Support Parenting Interventions	Parenting*
Ensure equal treatment regardless of Race	Race

* These KPIs are measured quarterly. The others are measured annually.

The Performance summary (attached at Appendix 2) for April – September 2006 is shown in a 'traffic-light' grading system used by the Youth Justice Board to judge Hartlepool against its YOS Family group average, North East regional average and National average. The summary also shows performance in the same 6 month period in 2005 and the annual performance for 2005/06.

The overall YOS performance is at Level 4 (out of 5). At 72.7%, this is just below the 75% required for Level 5. In 2005, the overall performance was also Level 4 (73.5%).

3. Issues for Consideration

From the Performance Table it can be seen that the following KPIs are red or amber:

3.1 Final Warnings (amber)

A final warning is administered to a young person who would normally have received a Police reprimand, although some, because of the nature of the offence, may go straight to a final warning. All young people receiving a final warning are assessed using a standard assessment tool ASSET. This KPI measures those young people assessed as requiring an intervention against those who receive the intervention.

The intervention is voluntary with no enforcement other than failing to comply will be mentioned in court if they further offend.

This was identified as a concern for the current (2006/07) Plan.

3.2 Custodial sentences (amber)

This measures the total number of custodial sentences as a percentage of the total number of court disposals (some young people may appear in court on more than one occasion during this six month period).

Long term trend over a number of years has been below the 5% target. The number of young people in Hartlepool receiving custodial sentences as a percentage of the total court disposals is low, so one extra person can increase the percentage significantly.

3.3 Parenting (red)

This KPI measures the number of parents being supported either voluntarily or by parenting (court) order as percentage of number of young people completing their orders.

As can be seen from Appendix 2, the target is 10%, Hartlepool's performance is 4.2%, but during some period last year this KPI was 28%. Much informal work is being undertaken with parents by YOS staff, but this is not reflected in the performance information.

3.4 ETE: Education, training and employment (amber)

This KPI measures the number of young people of both statutory school age and above (i.e. older than 16 years), who are receiving 25 hours or more ETE.

In September 2006, an Education specialist from Children's Services was seconded to the YOS on a part-time basis and a Connexions worker was aligned to the YOS to improve engagement with over 16s. This has improved the provision of education to statutory school age pupils, but those aged 16-18 are still a concern.

3.5 Accommodation

This measures whether the young person is living in suitable accommodation (B&B or 'sofa surfing' with friends are not classed as suitable).

At 94.9%, this is only just below the target of 95%. Access to suitable accommodation has improved since Gainford House was opened in Autumn 2006. It is anticipated that the Housing vulnerable person's panel, which is to be established during 2007/08, for 16-18 year olds and adults, will improve access to accommodation and support requirements. YOS provides support to young offenders who are living in suitable accommodation, via the Resettlement and After-care programme (RAP).

4. Other influences on performance/work of YOS

4.1 YOS Inspection

The results and recommendations from YOS Inspection during October 2006 will be published in early March 2007.

4.2 Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPO) Scheme

Prolific Young Offenders, who may become prolific adult offenders, are provided with intense supervision and support. There are currently fourteen young offenders in this category.

4.3 ASBOs

Some young offenders also commit anti-social behaviour, and YOS is expected to provide additional support to these young people, aiming to stop them breaching the ASBO, thus committing a further criminal offence.

4.4 First time entrants (to the Criminal Justice system)

Despite increasing prevention activity, through Hartlepool Intervention Programme (HIP) a multi-agency panel providing support, and Youth Inclusion Projects (YIP) in Dyke House and Owton Wards for 13-16 year olds, numbers of first time entrants are increasing. There is a conflict nationally between the task set for YOS's to reduce first time entrants and the target set for the Police to increase 'offences brought to justice'.

Hartlepool Performance Summary April – September 2006

	Level / Target	Hartlepool	Family	North East	National	same period last year Apr-Sep 05	Financial Year 2005-06
Overall Summary							
Overall Performance	Level 4	72.7%	68.5%	66.5%	65.7%		
KPI Summary							
Final Warnings	95%	93.3%	96.7%	97.2%	94.8%	N/A	N/A
Use of remand	<30%	21.4%	41.4%	33.6%	45.3%	50.0%	42.9%
Custodial sentences	<5%	5.7%	6.5%	3.3%	6.3%	0.8%	2.1%
Restorative processes	75%	90.9%	80.8%	83.0%	84.8%	90.0%	90.0%
Victim satisfaction	75%	90.9%	96.2%	98.5%	97.1%	100.0%	100.0%
Parenting	10%	4.2%	8.1%	10.9%	13.0%	28.0%	53.9%
Parental satisfaction	75%	100.0%	93.1%	99.2%	97.4%	100.0%	100.0%
Community Asset - Start	95%	100.0%	97.4%	95.6%	95.8%	100.0%	100.0%
Community Asset - End	95%	100.0%	97.3%	95.3%	95.9%	100.0%	100.0%
Custodial Asset - Start	95%	100.0%	98.3%	95.9%	98.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Custodial Asset - Transfer	95%	100.0%	97.4%	95.7%	97.7%	100.0%	100.0%
Custodial Asset - End	95%	100.0%	95.0%	85.5%	96.5%	100.0%	100.0%
PSR	90%	97.6%	90.9%	92.3%	89.3%	93.8%	97.0%
DTO planning	95%	100.0%	84.2%	95.8%	86.2%	100.0%	100.0%
ETE	90%	78.9%	71.0%	72.2%	68.1%	N/A	N/A
Accommodation	95%	94.9%	96.7%	94.3%	93.7%	94.9%	96.7%
CAMHS - Acute	95%	N/A	100.0%	100.0%	93.1%	N/A	100.0%
CAMHS - Non Acute	95%	100.0%	96.0%	96.7%	90.7%	N/A	100.0%
SMU - Assessment	90%	95.5%	93.5%	92.6%	85.9%	83.3%	85.3%
SMU - Intervention	90%	100.0%	98.0%	94.3%	94.7%	100.0%	100.0%

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

22 March 2007



Report of: Head of Community Strategy

Subject: SIXMONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT – SCRUTINY
INVESTIGATION INTO PARTNERSHIPS – ACTION
PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Forum with an update on the progress that has been made in relation to the Partnerships investigation six months after the Forum made its recommendations.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 During the 2005/6 Municipal Year Members of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum conducted an investigation into Partnerships.
- 2.2 On 15 May 2006 the Final Report of the Scrutiny Investigation into Partnerships of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum was submitted to Cabinet for approval. Following Cabinet's decision in relation to the Scrutiny Investigation an Action Plan and progress report from the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holder was considered by the Forum on 29 September 2006.
- 2.3 This report has been produced six months after the Committee's recommendations were considered by the appropriate decision-making body and as such provides an outline of the progress made to date in relation to the recommendations made by the Forum.
- 2.4 An updated Action Plan is attached at **Appendix A** providing details of progress made to date together with the current status of the action.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 Members will recall that the overall aim of the Scrutiny Investigation was:

To assess the governance arrangements surrounding sub-regional and local partnerships on which Hartlepool Borough Council is represented.

4. RESPONSE TO THE PROGRESS MADE TO DATE UPON THE DELIVERY OF THE ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 Good progress has been made in delivering Action Plan with 12 of the 22 actions completed. Of those outstanding, 4 actions are being addressed by Constitution Working Group / Constitution Committee which meets again on 30th March 2007.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That Members note the progress to date in relation to the delivery of the Action Plan, and where felt appropriate seek clarification upon the achievement / none achievement of the delivery timescales / recommendations.

Contact Officer:- Joanne Smithson
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Hartlepool Borough Council

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Report of Partnerships Enquiry, Cabinet, 15th May 2006
- (ii) Partnerships Enquiry Action Plan, Cabinet 29th August 2006

NAME OF FORUM: Regeneration & Planning Services Scrutiny Forum

NAME OF SCRUTINY ENQUIRY: Partnerships Enquiry

DECISION MAKING DATE OF FINAL REPORT: Cabinet on 15 May 2006

DECISION ON ACTION PLAN: Cabinet 29th August 2006

PRESENTATION TO SCRUTINY FORUM: 29th September 2006

RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE	PROGRESS March 07	STATUS
(a)	That the Council seeks to strengthen the feedback mechanisms (to the Local Authority) for its representatives on the Regional Assembly and	The Constitution Working Group should consider establishing feedback mechanisms from its representatives on Partnerships to Council.	Tony Brown Constitution Working Group	December 2006	Outline arrangements being discussed for inclusion in introductory paragraphs of Part 7 of constitution of requirements of reps	Good progress made
	(Direct link with recommendation (s)) that substitute arrangements for those representatives should be clarified.	Contact the Regional Assembly and clarify substitute arrangements.	Angela Hunter Democratic Services	September 2006	Substitutes nominated for executive	Complete
(b)	That the Council seeks clarification from the RDA around the selection process for representatives on this body.	The Mayor to write to the RDA to request this information	Paul Walker	September 2006	Agreed appointment procedure - information available on CLG website	Complete
(c)	That the Council produces further information about the LAA process for a wider audience, and that this should incorporate summary sheets and diagrams.	Produced a LAA information sheet	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services Support from Corporate Strategy	October 2006	LAA guide prepared	Complete

RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE	PROGRESS	STATUS
(d)	That Scrutiny continues to be involved in the LAA process, and that in the next round of negotiations all Scrutiny Fora are involved at the formative stage.	None – note for negotiation of new LAA in 2008 for implementation in 2009/10	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	-	-	-
(e)	That increased levels of community and voluntary sector representation be examined on the Lifelong Learning Partnership and the Children and Young People Partnership, including the Executive.	Review Community and Voluntary Sector representation on the Children's Trust Review community and voluntary sector representation on new Partnership structures for Lifelong Learning	Adrienne Simcock Children's Services Support from Peter Scott, Regeneration & Planning Services and Adult & Community Services.	April 2007	New arrangements for interim Skills Partnership and Children's Trust have representation from the Community Network	Complete
(f)	That the levels of voluntary sector representation be increased on the Tees Valley Partnership and also direct Local Strategic Partnership representation on the TVP. In addition, the Town's MP and Mayor should be invited to support the strengthening of the representation on the TVP.	Mayor to write to the Tees Valley Partnership requesting update on voluntary sector representation in new proposed structures. MP to write to the Tees Valley Partnership requesting update on voluntary sector representation in new proposed structures	Paul Walker Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	September 2006 September 2006	Revised governance arrangements for Tees Valley Unltd do indicate a place for the voluntary sector. Revised governance arrangements for Tees Valley Unltd do not indicate a place for Local Strategic Partnerships	Complete
(g)	That an appropriate measure be put in place for the election of voluntary representatives on the Tees Valley Partnership through the Voluntary Sector Forum.	Head of Adult & Community Services to write to enquire as to current arrangements	Nicola Bailey Adult & Community Services	September 2006	Mechanisms for elections now revised – recommendation no longer required.	Complete
(h)	That the need for infrastructure organisation offering support to the wider VCS be recognised by the Council and be appropriately funded.	Continue to support the NE Centre of Excellence funded Building Links Programme. Review the funding of infrastructure organisations by the Community Pool as part of COMPACT re-launch	Nicola Bailey Adult & Community Services Geoff Thompson Regeneration & Planning Services	March 2007	Scrutiny inquiry into voluntary sector funding progressing	Enquiry on track

RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE	PROGRESS	STATUS
(i)	That discussions are held with the Mayor, the MP and Council to support the issue of voluntary representation on the thematic partnerships.	Hold meeting to discuss the issue of voluntary representation on the thematic partnerships	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	Schedule meeting for October 2006	Issue discussed at Chairs meeting. New Partnership Governance Standard outlines importance of Community & voluntary sector representation on the theme partnerships.	Complete
(j)	That Scrutiny's involvement in the on-going review of the Community Strategy be strengthened across all Scrutiny Fora.	Scrutiny Co-ordinating committee to review 1 st draft and final draft of the Community Strategy	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	September 2006 February 2007	1 st draft of Community Strategy to be considered by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 15 th September Arrangements made for further review in Sept 07	Complete
(k)	That Elected Member involvement in Thematic and other partnerships be recommended.	To be considered following publication of the Local Government White Paper and revised guidance on the role of LSPs due in Autumn	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	Unable to be set	Governance Paper discussed at December Partnership Board. This set out White Paper position on elected member representation on Theme Partnerships	Complete
(l)	That roles and responsibilities for ALL members of Theme Partnerships be encouraged as part of good practice.	Prepare a Hartlepool Partnership good governance guide that incorporates this recommendation	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	October 2006	Governance Standard produced and meetings have taken place will all Theme Partnership lead Officers	Complete
(m)	That an annual review of both the levels of community representation and the compact be reviewed as part of the Best Value Performance Review.	Collate information on the level of community representation on Theme Partnerships annually	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	April 2007	No progress to date.	Outstanding
		Initiate a re-launch of the COMPACT as set out in the Strengthening Communities Best Value Review Strategic Improvement Plan	Geoff Thompson Regeneration & Planning Services	October 2006	Strengthening Communities Best Value Review Strategic Improvement Plan considered by Cabinet 25 th September.	Update on progress taken to March meeting

RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE	PROGRESS	STATUS
(n)	That the Council emphasises the importance of continued partnership working, and supports co-terminus arrangements between the Council, Police and PCT.	No further actions proposed	-	-	-	-
(o)	The level of officer time committed to partnerships be examined in order to ensure it is tailored to the appropriate requirements.	CMT review officer time committed to partnerships	Chief Executive / CMT	March 2007	Tees Valley review of partnership / working groups progressing but not yet concluded	To be reviewed again by CMT
(p)	That the attendance records of all Members i.e. Councillors on partnerships be produced as a public document.	Constitution Working Group examine the feasibility of this recommendation	Tony Brown Constitution Working Group / Democratic Services	April 2007	Has been discussed by Constitution Working Group	Another meeting on 30 th March
(q)	That in relation to communication and information dissemination an internal and external communication protocol should be developed. In this respect the Forum welcomed the development of a 'Tool Kit' for resident's use as part of the review of the Community Strategy.	No further actions proposed as Hartlepool Partnership Communications Strategy agreed and Community Strategy Toolkit produced	-	-	-	-
(r)	That a section be included in the State of the Borough Debate to feedback the work and success of the Hartlepool Partnership and the Theme Partnerships.	The Mayor to include a section on the work and success of the Hartlepool Partnership and the Theme Partnerships in his State of the Borough presentation.	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	Autumn 2006	Initial discussions on format taken place, however event did not take place.	Outstanding
(s)	That where possible Councillors attending events across the town take the opportunity to feedback the work and success of the partnerships they are involved in.	No further actions in addition to action identified at recommendation (a)	Tony Brown Constitution Working Group	December 2006	Has been discussed by Constitution Working Group	Another meeting on 30 th March
(t)	That informal (quarterly) meetings are arranged to enable elected representatives sitting on Partnerships to feedback on their involvement in these partnerships to other Elected Members and resident representatives.	Constitution Working Group examine the feasibility of this recommendation	Tony Brown Constitution Working Group	December 2006	Has been discussed by Constitution Working Group	Another meeting on 30 th March

RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DELIVERY TIMESCALE	PROGRESS	STATUS
(u)	That the development of a 'map' outlining how the Council's departments, political structures, LSP and Theme Partnerships are aligned be explored.	Ensure recommendations are included in conclusions of Governance Review	Peter Scott Regeneration & Planning Services	December 2006	Report on Governance arrangements taken to Cabinet 5 th Feb 07	Complete
(v)	Members recommend that a summary of this report be produced as a guide to partnership working. In addition, the guide should be produced in an accessible format for circulation to a wider audience, with the PR office.	Produce a guide to partnership working.	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services with input from Scrutiny Support and Public Relations	April 2007	No progress to date	Outstanding
(w)	That the Cabinet produce an Action-Plan in response to these recommendations detailing both timescales for action if approved and responsible officers. In addition the Forum recommends that Cabinet report back to the Forum within 3-6 months of receipt.	Action Plan to Scrutiny Forum on 29 September Update on Plan implementation to be presented in March 07	Joanne Smithson Regeneration & Planning Services	Action Plan to Scrutiny Forum on 29 September 2006 Update on Plan implementation to be presented in March 2007	Action Plan agreed by cabinet 29 August.	Complete

REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

22 March 2007



Report of: Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum

Subject: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT – DRAFT FINAL
REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the draft findings of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into Youth Unemployment.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 16 June 2006 Members considered potential work programme items for the 2006/07 municipal year. During this meeting Members of this Forum selected the 'Youth Unemployment' topic as its second main Scrutiny investigations for the current municipal year. Youth Unemployment is one of the key economic targets included in the Hartlepool Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and Best Value Performance Plan.
- 2.2 Members selected the topic from an appendix attached to the 'Determining the Work Programme' report submitted at the Forum's meeting on 16 June 2006. This appendix contained a list of the Authority's Performance Indicators of relevance to the remit of this Forum. Under the Corporate Plan Objective JE9, "To support young people to gain suitable employment," Members identified the *Local Area Agreement (LAA) target 2.5* which focuses on the youth unemployment rate in Hartlepool, as an issue they wished to investigate. The outturn figure for this issue in 2005/06 was 36% (Nov 05) against a 2006/07 target of 31% and a 2008/09 LAA target of 30%. The target is measured by the proportion of Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) Claimants who are aged 18-24 years old, where the overall claimant count is 100%.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 To gain an understanding of the issues around Youth Unemployment and to suggest areas for improvement.

4. TERM S OF REFERENCE

4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the review were agreed by the Forum:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of why the level of Youth Unemployment has risen as a percentage of the overall unemployment level;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some responsibility for tackling Youth Unemployment;
- (c) To examine the role of the Authority as a non-statutory service provider in relation to Youth Unemployment, and in particular its role in Economic Development;
- (d) To gain the views of young people who are unemployed in relation to this issue; and
- (e) To identify suggested areas for improvement in relation to the Youth Unemployment rate.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM

5.1 Membership of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2006/7 Municipal Year:-

Councillors R W Cook, S Cook, Gibbon, Laffey, London, A Marshall, J Marshall, Richardson, Wallace, D Waller and Wright.

Resident Representatives:

Ted Jackson and Iris Ryder

6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

6.1 Over the course of the investigation Members have considered evidence from a wide variety of sources, including:

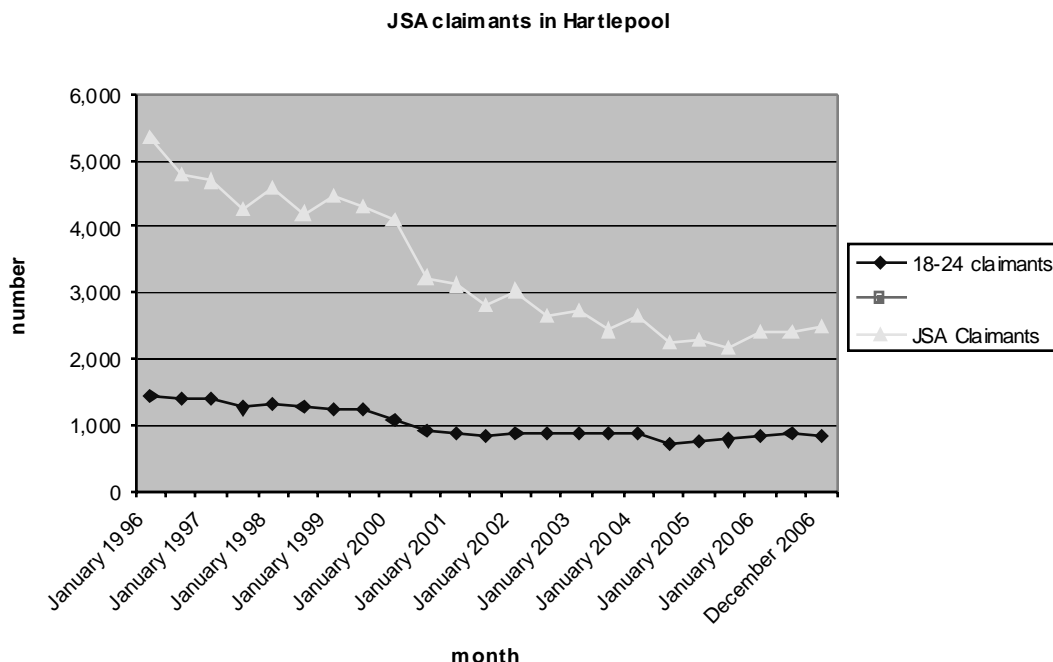
- (a) Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) Officers;
- (b) Representative from Job Centre Plus;
- (c) Representative from Connexions (submitted written evidence);
- (d) Representative from the Learning and Skills Council (submitted written evidence);

- (e) Representative from Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) – potentially seek involvement of HVDA as ‘umbrella’ organisation.
 - (f) Focus Group with unemployed young people – fed into the Forum through *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base* report on 23 February 2007; and
- 6.2 In addition the Economic Development Service commissioned a report on, *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base*. The research took place between November 2006 and January 2007. The first stage of the research involved a review of the existing data using NOMIS (who produce official labour market statistics) and Joint Strategy Unit (JSU) reports, comparing the data where possible, to the rest of Tees Valley and the UK; focusing on indicators in relation to claimant count, economic activity and inactivity, worklessness, the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) group and destinations of school leavers. This data was supplemented by qualitative anecdotal information from semi structured interviews with individuals and focus groups as well as responses to questionnaires. Consultation took place with 18 representatives from the public, private and voluntary sector as well as interviews and focus groups with 10 young people.
- 6.3 The findings from the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base* report have been used extensively in the production of this draft final report.

FINDINGS

7. Causes of the Level of Youth Unemployment Increasing as a Percentage of the Overall Unemployment Level

- 7.1 As can be seen from the chart (below), overall unemployment (as measured in terms of claimant count JSA) has declined from a high of 5357 in 1996 to just over 2500 in January 2004 with 18-24 claimants reducing from a high of over 1400 to fewer than 800. However, during this period, the rate of 18-24 claimants measured as a proportion of overall JSA claimants fluctuated between 27% and reaching a high of 35% in the same period. Consequently, the overall number of Hartlepool residents claiming JSA has declined at a greater rate than that of the 18-24 year old age group. Recently there has been a steady increase in the overall numbers of young people claiming JSA, from under 700 in January 2005 to nearly 900 by September 2006, although during the last two months this figure has reduced by 10% to 805 in November 2006.



7.2 In 2001 the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) produced a report providing a snapshot of the local economy in 2000 and found some defining characteristics:

- (a) Slack labour market;
- (b) Low wage levels;
- (c) Lowered expectations of work and attainment; and
- (d) High availability and provision of training.

7.3 At this time unemployment was at 10.9% (February 2000). Over the last six years unemployment has reduced to 4.5% (September 2006) but the characteristics of the labour market remain similar.

7.4 The table below identifies the percentage of young people in the 16-18 cohort 'in learning'; 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET); 'in employment'; and those 'not known'.

	Hartlepool	Tees Valley	England
16-18 Cohort Profile	2950	21209	1125658
% In learning	70.2	71.2	75.2
% NEET	11.7	12.4	8.6
% In employment	17.2	15.5	17.9
% Not known	4.00	4.8	5.4

Source: Connexions Tees Valley

In Learning

7.5 Hartlepool compares well with Tees Valley and England in terms of the number of young people in learning with 70.2% of this cohort in learning in

Hartlepool compared to 71.2% in Tees Valley and 75.2% in England. Of those in learning, 58.2% are in education – slightly lower than Tees Valley (59.4%) and lower than England at 65.6%. 3.3% of those in learning are in employment with training – consistent with Tees Valley but significantly lower than in England (6.4%). 8.7% of those in learning in Hartlepool are on government supported schemes. Both Hartlepool and Tees Valley are significantly higher than England at 3.2%. Data on qualifications from the JSU shows that Hartlepool has higher rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2 than Tees Valley, the region or nationally, but lower rates of those achieving trade apprenticeships.

In Employment

- 7.6 The number of young people in employment in Hartlepool compares well with England and is higher than in the Tees Valley. However, data indicates that a significant proportion of this employment is part time (65%) (NOMIS Jan-March 2006). During the consultation process for the production of, *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base*, concerns were expressed that education and training were not linked closely enough to the labour market and employers, and that the curriculum and training programmes do not prepare young people for the labour market.

NEET

- 7.7 The NEET figures for Hartlepool are higher than England but lower than the Tees Valley at 11.7%. The NEET group can be broken down into those available for work and those not available for work. In relation to Hartlepool, those NEETs available for work make up 7.9% of the overall 11.7% with those not available for work making up 3.6%. This is significantly higher than Tees Valley at 2.8% and almost three times the rate for England at 1.3%.
- 7.8 Consultation for the, *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base*, report with agencies and organisations revealed a number of factors that lead young people to becoming NEET:
- (a) Disengaging from learning at school;
 - (b) Low skills and qualifications;
 - (c) Low aspirations – linked to generational unemployment;
 - (d) Lack of confidence to access support networks when things go wrong;
and
 - (e) Wider social issues e.g. homelessness, dependency issues, mental health issues, teenage pregnancy, caring responsibilities, young people in care.
- 7.9 Analysis of vulnerable young people reveals that Hartlepool has the highest percentage of teenage parents of all local authority areas in England. Furthermore, the data indicates that only 50% of 19 year old care leavers in the town are in education, employment or training (EET), therefore,

correspondingly 50% are NEET or not known. This trend is replicated in Tees Valley (with the exception of Redcar and Cleveland) and England.

Not Knowns

- 7.10 Hartlepool has a lower number of 'not knowns' than Tees Valley but is higher than England. Hartlepool in particular has made a significant improvement in reducing the numbers of not knowns at 16 – a reduction of 83% since June 2005 and has also made an impact on the 17 and 18 year olds, however, 18 year olds still make up 70% of those not known.
- 7.11 Discussions with Connexions in the consultation for the, *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base*, report highlighted that destinations of those aged 17 and 18 are much harder to trace at 18 as many sign on and 'shift' contact from Connexions, as a young people's service, to Job Centre Plus. The two agencies have started to share data to enable closer tracking of young people aged 17-18. The higher numbers of not known at 17 and 18 can in part be explained by the difficulty in tracking them, however, this would also be consistent with a significant number of 17 and 18 year olds dropping out of training programmes as highlighted in the previous sections.

Employment and Worklessness

- 7.12 The following table shows a profile of young people in the town in relation to employment and worklessness (May 2006). Due to how data is collected and collated it is not possible to analyse the data consistently across age groups and categories, however, the data in the table below provides an indication of the numbers in each category.

Indicator	16-17 years	16-19 years	18-24 years	20-24 years	Total
Unemployment (JSA Claimants)			820		820
Employment		2300		3700	6000
Income Support	50		730		780
Incapacity Benefit	30		410		440
Workless/Not known (remainder of population)					2560
Total					10,600
Ward with highest unemployment	Stranton				

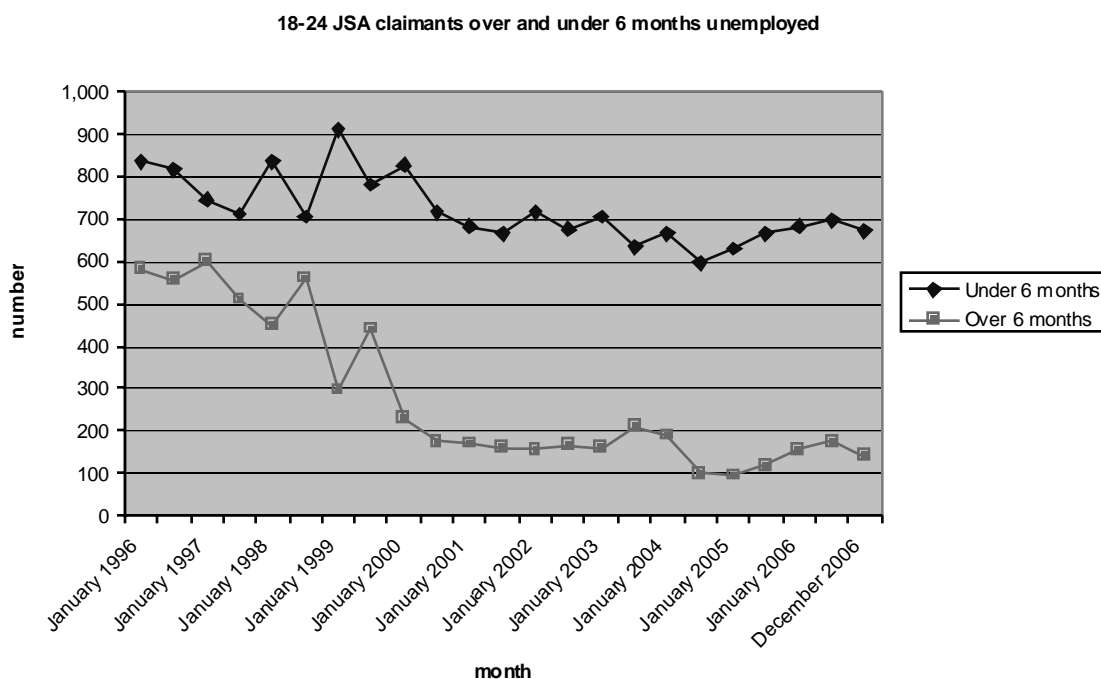
- 7.13 67% of the 16-24 age groups are in employment, with almost 8% unemployed. 7% of the cohort is claiming income support and 4% are claiming Incapacity Benefit. When this data is compared with the corresponding rates for the 25-retirement age group, (3.7% unemployed, 14%

Incapacity benefit, 10% income support), the rates of unemployment and income support would seem high – however, this concurs with the data indicating that youth unemployment has reduced at a slower rate than overall unemployment but it would also be anticipated that the high incidence of teenage pregnancy amongst this age group would impact on the income support rate.

- 7.14 Furthermore, whilst the incapacity benefit rate for this group does not appear overly high in relation to the older age group – there are 440 young people on incapacity benefit. It is highlighted in the, *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base*, report that this figure does give cause for concern given the Government's green paper - *A New Deal for Welfare Empowering People to Work* (January 2006) which stated that, "after two years on Incapacity Benefit, a person is more likely to die or retire than to find a new job". Furthermore, the report questions whether this means that 4% of the 16-24 age groups could potentially be looking at long term benefit dependency?

Claimant count and duration of unemployment

- 7.15 A closer look at the data reveals that the rate of unemployment is affected according to how long a young person has been unemployed. The following chart shows that those young people who have been unemployed for over 6 months have seen a significantly greater reduction in the numbers unemployed over the period than for those unemployed under 6 months.



- 7.16 Those unemployed over 6 months are eligible for New Deal and it is this group that have seen a downward trend of 84% from its peak of 600 in January 1997 to its lowest point of 95 in January 2005. However, the numbers in this group have also started to increase steadily from this point, increasing to 175 in July 2006, although this figure has since come down to 140 in December 2006.
- 7.17 Those unemployed for less than 6 months have not seen the corresponding reduction in numbers. This group has seen a 35% reduction from its peak of 910 in January 1999 to its lowest point of 595 in July 2004. It would appear that the lower rate of reduction amongst this group is keeping the overall 18-24 rate at the 'high' identified in the baseline data. This trend is repeated across Tees Valley. Redcar and Cleveland have the lowest reduction in this claimant group of 33%. Further exploration of the factors impacting on the under 6 month unemployed group is required.

'Churn'

- 7.18 The term 'Churn' is used to explain the number of young people moving on and off the unemployment claimant count. The table below shows the 'on' and the 'off flow' for unemployed young people across the Tees Valley, the region and nationally for those aged under 25 years.

	On flow		Off Flow		On flow under 25 years		Off Flow under 25 years	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Darlington	495	29.4	520	30.9	210	42.7	220	42.7
Hartlepool	585	24.4	590	24.7	280	48.2	245	41.6
Middlesbrough	945	23.5	1010	25.2	430	45.7	445	44.0
Redcar & Cleveland	835	27.3	860	28.2	415	49.7	400	46.7
Stockton	1130	29.1	1030	26.6	480	42.4	435	42.1
Tees Valley	3985	26.6	4015	26.6	1815	45.6	1750	43.5
North East	14060	28.2	14190	28.5	6375	45.3	6080	42.8
Great Britain	242735	26.0	233610	25.1	103445	42.6	90995	39.0

Source: JSU July 2006

- 7.19 Hartlepool has slightly lower numbers of those signing on and off the register than in Tees Valley, the North East or nationally. However, amongst those aged under 25 years, Hartlepool has a higher percentage (48%) signing on than that of the sub region, the region or nationally. For those signing off the register, Hartlepool's rate is lower than Tees Valley and the region but higher than the national rate. This indicates significant churn amongst this age group.

7.20 The table below provides the reasons why young people sign off the register.

Reason for leaving claimant count – 18-24 year olds	January 2006	April 2006	July 2006	October 2006
Found work	40	80	60	70
Increases work to 16+ hours/week	0	5	5	5
Gone abroad	0	0	10	0
Claimed Income Support	15	5	10	5
Claimed Sickness Benefit	-	-	-	-
Claimed Incapacity Benefit	5	5	15	20
Claimed another benefit	0	0	0	0
Gone to full-time education	0	0	0	15
Gone onto approved training	0	5	5	5
Transfer to Govt-supported training	15	45	20	40
Retirement age reached	0	0	0	0
Automatic credits payable	0	0	0	0
Claims back-to-work bonus	0	0	0	0
Gone to prison	0	0	0	0
Attending court	0	0	0	0
New claim review	0	0	0	0
Defective claim	0	0	5	0
Ceased claiming	0	0	0	5
Deceased	0	0	0	0
Not known	15	10	25	25
Failed to sign	90	120	90	110
Total	180	285	245	300

- These figures are missing. Data rounded to nearest 5.

Source: NOMIS

7.21 A snap shot of 'flow off' the register in 2006 taken at quarterly intervals shows that by far the most common reason for leaving the claimant count is failure to sign amongst this age group – accounting for between 37-50%, with finding work second (22-28%), and transfer to government supported training programme next (8-16%) with not known accounting for between 3-10%. Those signing off JSA to claim another benefit (incapacity and income support) account for 3.5-11%. It is not clear from the data how many of those transferring to Government supported training are young people on New Deal transferring to the options period.

7.22 The data also indicates a slightly greater churn amongst those young people unemployed under 6 months. It has not been possible to analyse the data further but consultation suggests a number of reasons for the slower reduction in the rate of those under 6 months unemployed and the significant churn on and off the register:

- (a) Avoidance of New Deal – 'the threat effect'. Young people are signing off the register before they are eligible for New Deal to take up employment or training, transfer to another benefit or fail to sign – only to sign on at a later date.

- (b) This creates the potential for churn between those claimants unemployed for over 6 months and those unemployed for under 6 months. If a young person who is eligible for New Deal signs off or fails to sign for 13 weeks, they break their eligibility for New Deal and return to under the 6 months unemployed category. Given that failure to sign is the most common reason for claimants in this age group signing off the register, there is a significant possibility that this kind of churn is taking place. Without further in depth analysis – the extent of this is not possible to gauge. Those who complete the gateway, options and follow through parts of New Deal return to JSA and have to complete another 26 weeks on JSA before they are eligible again for New Deal however, they are still counted in the 6+ unemployed category. To reduce this incidence of 'churn' amongst the 25+ claimants on New Deal, the eligibility criteria was amended – claimants would be eligible for New Deal if they had claimed JSA for 18 months over a 21 month period.
- (c) Young people dropping out of training and signing on. Discussions with young people and agencies indicate a number of possible reasons for this:
- 1) Young people completing the first year of their training who are then unable to secure a placement to complete their second year of training. These young people then join the claimant count when they are eighteen years old.
 - 2) Young people leaving school and start training but have no clear direction or progression route in mind. They later drop out as this was not the appropriate progression route for them.
 - 3) Young people leave school and embark on NVQ level 2 training. The progression routes available at this stage include level 3 training and university or employment. For those not 'academically' able to progress to a level 3 or University, the links to the labour market after completing their level 2 are not always visible or achievable. This may also link in with the high number of those at 18 who are 'not known' to Connexions.

7.23 Furthermore, the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report* identifies a number of barriers to young people accessing and progressing in the local labour market:

- (a) Employability skills** – it was felt that many young people lack key employability and life skills. From discussions with employers and training providers it is possible to see their role developing into one of 'parent', providing 'life skills' support to young people e.g. help with managing money, personal hygiene, getting to work/training on time, taking responsibility for their actions.

- (b) **Basic skills-** concern was expressed that despite significant funding to support the improvement of basic skills, this was still a major barrier to young people accessing and progressing in training or the labour market. Changes to the New Deal programme in Hartlepool have seen the introduction of basic skills support in the gateway period to assist with job search and progression to training.
- (c) **Generational unemployment** - it was felt that young people lack role models in relation to training and employment and that this was limiting their aspirations. 7 out of 10 of the young people interviewed stated their parents and other family members were not working – a significant number of parents had caring responsibilities either for other siblings or relatives. The issue was also raised that worklessness was increasingly concentrated in families and communities where a culture of worklessness and benefit dependency was the 'norm' and an accepted way of life. Since 1996 the number of families on benefits with children under 15 in the town has increased overall. However, single parent families have significantly decreased. This could be an indication that New Deal for Lone Parents is having an impact on lone parent's families.
- (d) **Structural issues** - Benefit dependency was felt to impact on the group identified above, particularly in relation to a young person's status (e.g. in learning, unemployed working) and its impact on the family's benefits. It was also felt to be an issue where young people were claiming incapacity benefit, where minimum wage jobs are not that attractive in comparison.
- (e) **Macroeconomic issues** – there was felt to be a lack of jobs resulting in a significant number of young people taking up training.
- (f) **Recruitment and training of young people** – Employers were not always clear about "how to go about" recruiting young people under the age of 18. Where recruitment and retention of young people had been successful this was attributed to:
- Good local networks – local businesses embedded in local communities
 - Employer had employed the young person straight from school and invested significant training and support. One employer felt that when young people leave education/training at 18-20 they were less inclined to "learn a trade and more difficult to mould".
 - Employer assumes the 'parent role' providing significant social and emotional support to young people.

Impact of mainstream provision

- 7.24 The *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report* argues that it is possible to conclude that mainstream support is impacting positively on young people aged 16-18 in Hartlepool because the majority of young people in this cohort are engaged in Education, employment or training

(EET) - 87%, and the NEET group and the 'not know n' have both seen reductions in Hartlepool.

7.25 However, the data and qualitative information highlights a number of areas for further consideration:

- (a) There are vulnerable groups within the NEET group who require targeted and intensive support – in particular teenage parents and young carers.
- (b) Young people appear to be dropping out of training and potentially contributing to the significant number of 'not know n' aged 17 and 18 in Hartlepool.
- (c) Young people still seem unsure about progression routes and the need for more targeted vocational Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) linked to the local labour market as identified.
- (d) There was a general consensus that training and education was not adequately preparing young people for the labour market. Whilst Hartlepool has high rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2, how far is this training improving their employability and assisting them to get jobs?
- (e) Young people are 'turned off' by traditional learning styles, particularly if they have basic skills issues.
- (f) The young people interviewed and feedback from agencies identified a very clear lack of aspiration and inspiration with some of the provision available

8. Roles and Responsibilities of the Various Stakeholders in Hartlepool who have some Responsibility for Tackling Youth Unemployment

8.1 Over the course of this Scrutiny Investigation each of the major stakeholders that exercise some responsibility for this issue have been invited to attend the Forum to provide evidence. These bodies are:

- (a) Job Centre Plus;
- (b) The Learning and Skills Council;
- (c) Connexions; and
- (d) The Community and Voluntary Sector.

Jobcentre Plus

8.2 Jobcentre Plus is a government agency supporting people of a working age from welfare into work, and helping employers to fill their vacancies. They are part of the Department of Work and Pensions and play a major role in supporting the Department's aim to, 'promote opportunity and independence for all through modern, customer-focused services.' Initially a new claim for JSA has a work focused interview. If the claimant has been claiming Hardship for longer than 6 months they will immediately be available for New Deal. At 13 weeks of unemployment about 70% of claimants have got employment at this stage. At 6 months unemployment they move onto New Deal for Young people.

- 8.3 At a macro level youth unemployment was identified as a key economic issue by the current Government and in 1998 and the New Deal for Young People was introduced to provide a series of cohesive and integrated interventions that aimed to improve the skills and employability of young people.
- 8.4 The New Deal is delivered by Jobcentre Plus, an executive agency of the Department of Work and Pensions and elements of the programme are sub-contracted to external public, private and voluntary sector organisations that provide training, work placements and personal development support. Each person is provided with a Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisor who is responsible for supporting the claimant through the New Deal journey to the point whereby employment is secured. The New Deal is a mandatory programme, and JSA claimants are expected to participate in programmes that will meet the objectives of individual job seeker agreements. Benefit entitlement can be affected if the young person fails to adhere to the requirements of the programme in relation to attendance and timekeeping.
- 8.5 During the evidence gathering session with the representative from Jobcentre Plus Members focused on the need to make jobs and employment attractive to young people. The issue of low wages for potentially unrewarding jobs was discussed and it was felt that employment needed to be sufficiently attractive for some young people to move them away from benefits.

Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

- 8.6 Representatives of the LSC were unable to attend the Forum's evidence gathering session with external partners. However, they were eager to be involved in the process and submitted written evidence to the Forum instead. This sub-section draws on the written information provided by LSC.
- 8.7 The LSC plan and invest in high quality education and training for young people and adults that will build a skilled and competitive workforce. They help employers to get the training and skills they need for their business. The LSC are transforming the further education sector to meet the needs of employers and the local community. They are committed to improving learning opportunities for everyone.
- 8.8 The LSC is working towards the following regional priorities as detailed in the Tees Valley Learning and Skills Council Annual Plan 2006 – 07:
- (a) Increase employer demand for, and investment in, skills.
 - (b) Raise individual aspirations and demand for learning and provide individuals with opportunities throughout life to achieve their aspirations and embrace change.
 - (c) Enable those excluded from the Labour market to access learning and sustainable employment.
 - (d) Ensure all individuals have the foundations for employability – the attainment of Skills for Life and a first level 2 qualification.

- (e) Increase the achievement of intermediate and higher level skills to support growth, innovation and productivity.
 - (f) Enable colleges and learning providers to be more responsive to employers' and learners' needs.
- 8.9 Following a joint mapping exercise by the LSC and Hartlepool LA it was found that there was no significant gaps in provision in this age band with the exception of level 3 in Accounting and Horticulture. However, NEET remains stubbornly high despite working in collaboration with Connexions on a number of projects. A review of the young people classified as NEET has highlighted that young people from vulnerable groups form a higher than expected percentage of the NEET group. Local Area Agreements have identified these groups and projects have been introduced to target these vulnerable groups. Specific actions that will be taken, across the Tees Valley, to reduce the NEET group will include:
- (a) Via the European Social Fund provision of programmes of support for 500 13-17 year olds at risk of joining the NEET;
 - (b) Provide 300 additional places on pre E2E programmes; and
 - (c) Deliver a programme of education business link activity to include 8,200 work experience places, 100 professional days for teachers and 250 employers engaged in work related activity.
- 8.10 The LSC collaborates with the following organisations in relation to this issue: Jobcentre Plus; Connexions; the Local Authority; Schools; Colleges; Work-based Learning Providers; Sector Skills Councils; and Local employers.

Connexions

- 8.11 Representatives of Connexions were unable to attend the Forum's evidence gathering session with external partners. However, they were eager to be involved in the process and submitted written evidence to the Forum instead. This sub-section draws on the written information provided by Connexions.
- 8.12 Connexions is a relatively recent statutory service, created under the Learning & Skills Act 2000 in order to, *"encourage, enable or assist, directly or indirectly, young people's effective participation in learning"* (Section 114).
- 8.13 The Connexions service also totally subsumed the responsibilities and budgets of the previous Careers Service, created under the still extant 1973 Employment & Training Act in order to *"assist young persons undergoing relevant education to decide what employments, having regard to their capabilities, will be suitable for and available to them when they cease undergoing such education; and what training or education is, or will be required, by and available to them, in order to fit them for those employments."* (Section 8 as amended by Trade Union Reform & Employment Rights Act 1993).
- 8.14 Since 2002 Connexions partnerships have had a responsibility to report the current known destinations of all 16-19 year olds who have completed

compulsory education. Throughout its brief history, all 47 Connexions Partnerships have been set targets by DfES, via its annual planning guidance, to reduce the levels of youth unemployment amongst those aged 16-18 in particular. Initially all partnerships were asked to reduce youth unemployment by one tenth (10%) between November 2002 and November 2004, and subsequently by varying levels (depending on previous baselines) between November 2004 – November 2006.

- 8.15 These targets were the forerunners of the current national DfES PSA target 12 to reduce Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs) by 2 percentage points from 8% to 6% over the period 2004 to 2010. With the demise of subregional Connexions services, these targets have now manifested themselves, with an annual trajectory, as part of local authorities' Local Area Agreement targets.
- 8.16 During discussions at the informal meeting of this Forum on 8 March 2007 it was recognised that Connexions is being brought under the remit of the Local Authority. Consequently, Members suggested that the Authority (and Economic Development and Children's Services, in particular) seek to work closely with Connexions to support young people to achieve economic well-being.
- 8.17 The key elements of provision by Jobcentre Plus, Learning and Skills Council and Connexions Tees Valley (this sub regional service will be disaggregated in April 2007) have been included in the table below. Delivery of programmes can be via a range of contractors from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Provider	Provision	Key Elements
Job Centre Plus	<p>Support for people of working age</p> <p>Under 6 months unemployed –</p> <p>Over 6 months unemployed</p> <p>New Deal for Young People 18-24 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory programme • Must have been claiming JSA for 6 months to be eligible for the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active help from personal advisers to find work to meet individual needs • Jobseeker Direct is a job vacancy phone service • All young people assigned Personal Adviser • Assistance to draw up action plan • 'Gateway' for up to 4 months – regular meetings with Personal Adviser and then move into full time help/package of support • Option period: during this time the young person receives a training allowance equivalent to JSA and may also receive a £15.38 top up • Options include: work experience, placements with employer or voluntary organisation, courses to develop skills employers want, help applying for jobs. • At end of option period if not found

		employment or moved into training they young person returns to JSA or 'follow through' period.
Learning and Skills Council	<p>Improving the skills of young people and adults to ensure a workforce of world-class standard.</p> <p>Apprenticeships -</p> <p>Entry to Employment (E2E)</p> <p>Further Education</p> <p>1st level 2 Entitlement</p> <p>Adult & Community Learning</p> <p>Skills for Life – National LSC</p> <p>Train to Gain - for businesses,</p>	<p>A work-based learning programme that allows employers to train existing staff and new young people. The programme involves key skills qualification as well as technical certificate eg BTEC, City and Guilds. Lasts between 1-4 yrs.</p> <p>Programme aimed at young people aged 16 – 18 who are not involved in employment, education or training; aims to prepare the learner for employment in the apprenticeship programme through work placements and/or training.</p> <p>Courses can be full or part time, academic or vocational. Providers fall broadly into five categories: agriculture and horticulture colleges; art, design and performing arts colleges; general FE and tertiary colleges; sixth form colleges; and specialist designated institutions.</p> <p>Priority given to those learners who have not already achieved this standard.</p> <p>Support a diverse range of community-based and outreach learning opportunities.</p> <p>Initiative for improving literacy, numeracy and language (ESOL) skills.</p> <p>Skills Brokers match any training needs identified with training providers ensure that training is delivered to meet business needs.</p>
Connexions Tees Valley	Offers a family of services Valley including impartial and accessible information, advice and guidance for 13-19 year olds	<p>Service delivered by teams of Personal Advisers located at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools and colleges • community locations • youth facilities • one stop shops in high street locations <p>As well as the Connexions Tees Valley website.</p> <p>Support offered includes:</p> <p>Support learning, removing barriers to progression, raising aspirations and creating opportunities to enter education,</p>

		employment or training.
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The Community and Voluntary Sector

- 8.18 A representative of HVDA, who manages Millennium Volunteers, provided verbal evidence to Forum. It was argued that the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) can identify needs and fill in gaps not provided by statutory providers. In the CVS in the town only two organisations offer support specifically for young people, these are Brougham Annex and OFCA. However other CVS organisations provide support on an ad hoc basis. For example, the West View Project takes young people away on confidence building weekends.
- 8.19 Through volunteering young people can gain skills and confidence. Volunteering can be an important stepping stone into work. Indeed, through Millennium Volunteers (MV) many young people move on to get jobs. Of the 35 young people who were unemployed and volunteered through MV last year 25 felt they had gained employment through volunteering.
- 9. The Role of the Authority as a Non-statutory Service Provider in relation to Youth Unemployment, and in particular its Role in Economic Development**
- 9.1 HBC is a non-statutory service provider for this issue. However, the Authority does exercise a role in monitoring and co-ordinating the LAA target and in its role as a 'Community Leader' and 'Place Shaper' in the locality. Consequently, it is HBC's intention to develop an additional range of employment and training projects that will assist in a reduction of youth unemployment and economic inactivity. To this end the Council have commissioned research to provide an evidence base that will support the development of these additional initiatives. As has been indicated earlier in this paper much of this evidence base has been used to inform the findings of this report (particularly section 7).
- 9.2 Locally HBC's Economic Development Service has worked closely with a number of agencies contracted by Job Centre Plus to deliver elements of the New Deal. This includes Nacro Tees Valley who are responsible for delivering the Environmental Task Force. This offers New Deal participants training, work experience and personal development, using environmental projects as the basis for improving employability. HBC developed a funding scheme to provide this as a waged option, so that young people are employed directly by the Council and the Neighbourhood Services Department has provided significant work activities to develop individual skills. In addition the Economic Development Service have used a variety of area based funding schemes to develop employment schemes that add value to mainstream New Deal provision and also support those people who are not eligible due to their benefit entitlement.

9.3 In this respect HBC, through Hartlepool Working Solutions, offers a range of employment related activities that facilitate a joined up approach to service delivery in the NRS area. Hartlepool Working Solutions has seven separate elements:

- 1) Targeted Training;
- 2) Womens Opportunities;
- 3) Jobs Build;
- 4) Work Route (ILM);
- 5) Enhancing Employability;
- 6) Progression to Work; and
- 7) Work Smart.

Each element complements each other and aims to:

- (a) Provide support for residents furthest removed from the labour market by offering a cocktail of interventions, which help to overcome multiple barriers to employment.
- (b) Employment focused training, which meets the needs of the local labour market.
- (c) Intermediary activities, which offer NRS residents with paid employment through HBC and acts as a transition to unsupported employment.
- (d) Incentives to improve the match between the needs of employers and the aspirations of residents.
- (e) Focused activities to support lone parents wishing to return to the labour market or become self-employed.
- (f) Build links with employers to improve job brokerage and enhance agency activities in the town through the sharing of best practice.
- (g) Ensure that residents have access to effective information, advice and guidance in order that they can make informed decisions regarding the opportunities open to them.

9.4 In 2005-06 Hartlepool Working Solutions supported 157 residents into employment.

9.5 During discussions Members expressed a desire to see more apprenticeships developed for young people. In addition, Members agreed that generational unemployment is a key issue that needs to be targeted.

10. Views of Young People who are Affected by this Issue

- 10.1 Given the time constraints for this investigation, it was agreed during the initial scoping exercise for this investigation that the views of young people would be sought through a focus group and fed back into the Forum. This was achieved through a couple of sessions with young people at the end of January and the beginning of February 2007. The views of the young people were fed back into the Forum through the, *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base* at its meeting on 23 February 2007 and are reproduced here.
- 10.2 The young people consulted with ranged from 17-21 years of age. Five young people were on E2e programmes, two were on New Deal and had just been accepted on HBC Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) project, one was in employment, and two were on placement with a voluntary sector organisation. Young people's perception of the training they had undertaken or were currently undertaking raised a number of issues:

- (a) It was evident that all the young people were unclear about what they wanted to do when they left school. This appears to result in:

Training as a stop gap – it was evident that most of these young people had taken up training because they did not know what else to do or because “their mates were going on the course”. 6 out of 10 of the young people who had been on training all commented that they were unsure what they wanted to do when they left school and that the training course “was better than doing nothing”. One young person was very clear that once they turned eighteen they would leave the course and “they would get a job or sign on”.

Dropping out – many of the young people had started courses, usually straight from leaving school at 16 and had then ‘dropped out’ and then went onto start another programme at a different provider. Two of the young people interviewed said that they did not think they would complete the programme.

- (b) The young people were keen to start the job related aspects of the programmes and were not keen on the classroom elements of the training.
- (c) All the young people interviewed had had contact with a Connexions Personal Adviser with Personal Advisers referring young people to training provision.
- (d) One young person who had undertaken a diploma course at a college, but dropped out after two years, felt that there was not enough vocational support and was unclear as to the available progression routes had he completed the course.
- (e) Young people were keen to have more tasters of programmes to help them identify which course is ‘for them’.

- (f) 7 out of 10 of the young people interviewed stated their parents and other family members were not working – a significant number of parents had caring responsibilities either for other siblings or relatives.
- (g) The young people interviewed felt there were not enough jobs advertised for young people. Job adverts tended to ask for people with experience.

11. Suggested Areas for Improvement

- 11.1 The Terms of Reference for this investigation identified the need to suggest areas for improvement as part of the Forum's remit in relation to this issue. This report has provided a summary of the evidence gathered by the Forum over a relatively short period of time. The information provided in this report suggests that this issue is broad and fairly complex. Indeed, the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report*, concluded that further consultation with young people, agencies and organisations is needed and highlighted some of the key areas that require further exploration. It argues that from discussions with young people, agencies and organisations it is possible to identify a number of areas where additional resources could be targeted:

1. Links to the local labour market. Training and employment support must be closely linked to current and future opportunities in the local labour market. Employers are central to this and need to be:

- (a) Involved in the design and delivery of programmes.
- (b) Enabled and supported to provide work experience and placements to young people. The brokerage of placements is crucial to ensure young people complete their programmes.
- (c) Enabled and supported to provide more w aged apprenticeships.
- (d) Involved as earlier as possible. Employer involvement needs to start in schools with clearly identified progression routes with training.

Specialised Diploma Lines will be available from 2008 onwards to learners aged 14-19 within applied settings and contexts. They are designed to meet skills needs of employers and on this basis should assist in bridging the gap between learning and the labour market.

2. Sustained support for those with multiple barriers. Mentoring was seen as an initiative that could provide sustained support to this target group.

3. More Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) provision – in linking points 2 and 3 together, ILM type activity can provide intensive support clearly linked to the labour market, engaging local employers and leading to real jobs. This provision would need to be available across the age range 16-24.

4. More training and vocational tasters. This would provide more opportunities for young people to gain a real insight into different courses and

areas of work before making decisions as to which training/vocational route they would like to go down.

5. Information, advice and guidance. Additional support is needed for those that drop out of training or are in danger of dropping out of training. Once a progression route had been identified additional support is needed to ensure that young person does not become NEET. More focused and clearly linked to progression routes to the local labour market

6. More intensive and focused support for those young people unemployed under 6 months. To ensure they identify an appropriate progression route and that their engagement and retention in that provision/opportunity is supported to prevent them returning to the claimant count.

7. Funding. Funding needs to be more flexible to respond to the needs of those hardest to reach. More provision needs to include flexible grants to support young people to overcome barriers to accessing and staying in training and employment.

11.2 More specifically the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report* made a number of recommendations that included:

(a) A number of data issues need to be addressed, including:

- 1) More in depth analysis of 18-24 claimant count and flow ; and
- 2) Data on the delivery and outcomes of New Deal for Young People in Hartlepool.

(b) Systems for recording, collating and sharing data between agencies need to be developed and implemented in order to gain as full an understanding of these claimant group.

11.3 In addition a number of further potential projects areas have been suggested through the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report*. These include:

Extending ILM type activities across the age range to provide intensive support that can effectively address issues of basic skills, employability and wider social issues. Consideration needs to be given to extending current provision to 12 months and introducing increments as incentives. Particularly with the 'hard to reach' groups a significant amount of resources and multi-agency working is required to remove more fundamental barriers eg care, financial/benefit, health, housing, aspirations

Support for those young people unemployed under 6 months to ensure they identify an appropriate progression route and that their engagement and retention in that provision/opportunity is supported to prevent them returning to the claimant count.

Support for young vulnerable young people – ensure existing and new provision can be targeted to the needs of vulnerable young people as identified in this report: young people leaving care, teenage parents, young carers and those with other 'family issues', homeless young people, young people with mental health issues, dependency issues and learning difficulties and disabilities. This also touches on the need for **support for those young people on incapacity benefit**. A greater understanding of this group and the support they require to move into training or employment is needed.

More training and vocational tasters to provide young people with the opportunity to gain a real insight into different courses and areas of work

Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) must be focused and clearly linked to progression routes in the local labour market and provide targeted support for those that drop out of training or are in danger of dropping out of training.

Explore the potential for social enterprise activities to support young people in training and employment opportunities.

Impact of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) needs to be monitored in terms of how far it assists young people to engage and stay engaged in learning.

- 11.4 In addition, in their written submission to the Forum on 23 February 2007 Connexions argued that:

There are no panacea solutions for what is a complex problem. As well as continuing to work on simplifying progression routes from foundation & intermediate level qualifications, areas to consider include making the rewards for participation in work based training as comparatively attractive to young people as they were prior to the introduction of the Educational Maintenance allowance. More support for organizations to employ young people through the work based learning programme and pay employed status rates of around £80 per week direct to the young person may reinvigorate participation. The proportion of young people in real jobs remains low. Whether this is more a reflection of the overall lack of buoyancy in the local labour market, as opposed to a potential relative lack of employability skills vis a vis other age cohorts needs to be more thoroughly investigated as this could shape potential solutions.

- 11.5 During the informal meeting of this Forum on 8 March 2007 Members indicated that they felt careers guidance and training for young people under 16 years of age is crucial to determining young people's attitude to employment. It was felt that the attitudes of young people to employment before they reached 16 years of age is key. Consequently, it was suggested further research should be conducted into the impact of the provision of key stakeholders on careers guidance and training and that these services should be fully integrated within schools.

12. CONCLUSIONS

12.1 Over the course of the Scrutiny Investigation the following conclusions have been presented to / discussed by the Forum:-

- (a) The overall rate of unemployment over the last ten years has fallen faster than it has done for the 18-24 ('youth') cohort.
- (b) Hartlepool has high levels of under 25's moving both on and off the unemployment claimant count. This is in contrast to the town's overall number of people moving both on and off the unemployment claimant count. Consequently, there are relatively high levels of 'churn' in terms of youth unemployment.
- (c) Through its consultation process with agencies and organisations the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report* identified that a significant amount of work and resources had been targeted at supporting the NEET group in Hartlepool and that headway had been made in working with this group. The report argues that the focus for resources should now be directed towards those vulnerable young people within the NEET group: young people leaving care, teenage parents, young carers and those with other 'family issues', homeless young people, young people with mental health issues, dependency issues and learning difficulties and disabilities.
- (d) It was also felt that many NEET and vulnerable young people often have low aspirations, self esteem and motivation, and that further work is needed to address wider issues of social deprivation and generational worklessness. Many of the young people interviewed had eventually embarked on a particular training route because their Dad, Mum, brother, friend etc. had worked in this field. However, the majority of their parents and siblings were currently not working.
- (e) There is a general consensus that training and education is not adequately preparing young people for the labour market. Whilst Hartlepool has high rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2, how far is this training improving their employability and assisting them to get jobs?
- (f) Young people face particular barriers in relation to their engagement and retention in training and employment, which include; lack of employability skills, lack of basic skills, and structural barriers, including benefit dependency and a lack of jobs in the local labour market
- (g) Over the last 10 years Hartlepool has seen a reduction in the number of 18-24 year old claimants. But there is insufficient data available to ascertain the impact of New Deal on this reduction or to analyse the destinations of these young people. Within this cohort there is significant 'churn' on and off the claimant register which would be consistent with

feed back from young people, agencies and organisations that young people are dropping out of provision or avoiding New Deal, however, without further data and analysis this cannot be confirmed.

- (h) The young people interviewed and feedback from agencies identified a very clear lack of aspiration and inspiration in relation to some of the provision available. However, there was a general consensus that mainstream provision had the potential to make a difference to young peoples' training and employment opportunities and to their lives in general, but it was felt that this was down to how individual providers delivered the programmes and that due to the sometimes fragmented nature of provision the support to ensure their learning and experience gained from various programmes of support was translated into positive outcomes, was often lacking.
- (i) That the identification of Youth Unemployment as a local 'problem' through a Local Area Agreement (LAA) target represents a positive step towards improving this issue through the enhanced performance management and monitoring and local actions that the introduction of a LAA target can bring about.
- (j) That the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report*, which has been attached at **Appendix A** (and has informed much of the findings of this report) identifies a number of data issues that need addressing and a number of potential project areas, which could help to maintain the momentum generated for this issue through the introduction of the LAA target.
- (k) A number of issues were raised were by the young people, agencies and organisations consulted with in the production of the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report*, which could contribute to the Forum's conclusions. Including:-
 - 1) Concern was expressed that young people are dropping out of training, in particular this was felt to be an issue in relation to young people part completing programmes due to being unable to secure a placement.
 - 2) It was felt that academic routeways were not suitable for all and that more vocational routes incorporating different (individual) learning styles were needed to assist with keeping young people engaged in education and training.
 - 3) There needs to be "a stronger bridge between training and labour market" and in particular it was felt that there needed to be more input and support from employers for apprenticeships.
 - 4) Introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was seen as having both a positive and negative impact. Whilst it was recognised the EMA may help some young people to take up training it was also suggested that it may not necessarily help those young people wanting to progress along the work based learning route and its introduction had resulted in a reduction in numbers of young people on E2e and

apprenticeships, and the 'means test' element of the application was deterring some families from applying.

- 5) The key to engaging and retaining young people in learning is identifying a 'spark' of interest – something that interests and inspires them.
- 6) Mainstream funding can be too output driven and not always flexible enough to support the hardest reach young people. Additional funding streams (e.g. ESF, Co financing) have been targeted at the NEET and hard to reach groups to assist with engaging and retaining them in learning. However, as these short term funding streams come to an end – concern was expressed that Hartlepool may see an increase in these figures without sustained targeting of additional resources.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 During the evidence gathering sessions in this Investigation thus far Members have heard / received evidence from a variety of sources. However, there has not been the opportunity to make any recommendations in relation to Youth Unemployment, in the Forum so far. However, at the informal meeting of the Forum on 8 March 2007 Members suggested a number of recommendations for incorporation into the Draft Final Report that are included below:

- (a) That the data issues and potential project areas identified in the *Youth Unemployment in Hartlepool: Developing an evidence base report*, which has been attached at **Appendix A**, are supported as a means to maintain the momentum generated for this issue through the introduction of the LAA target.
- (b) That, given that Connexions is being brought under the remit of the Local Authority, the Authority (and Economic Development and Children's Services, in particular) seek to work closely with Connexions to support young people to achieve economic well-being.
- (c) That further research should be conducted into the impact of the provision of key stakeholders on careers guidance and training for under 16's and that these services should be fully integrated within schools.

13.2 That Members may wish to suggest additional recommendations for incorporation into the Final Report on Youth Unemployment.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Report entitled 'Determining the Work Programme' (Scrutiny Support Officer) presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 16 June 2006.
- (b) Report entitled 'Youth Unemployment – Scoping Report' (Scrutiny Support Officer) presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 18 January 2007.
- (c) Report entitled 'Youth Unemployment – Evidence from Connexions – Covering Report' (SSO) presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 23 February 2007
- (d) Report entitled 'Youth Unemployment – Evidence from the Learning and Skills Council – Covering Report' (SSO) presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 23 February 2007
- (e) Report entitled 'Youth Unemployment – Evidence from Job Centre Plus – Covering Report' (SSO) presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 23 February 2007
- (f) Report entitled 'Youth Unemployment – Evidence from the Community and Voluntary Sector – Covering Report' (SSO) presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 23 February 2007
- (g) Report entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into Youth Unemployment – Draft Research Report' (Economic Development Manager) presented to the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on 23 February 2007.
- (h) Minutes of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum from the 16 June 2006 and 18 January 2007.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN HARTLEPOOL
Developing an evidence base

FEBRUARY 2007

Tracy Elwin - Research and Consultancy

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1. Introduction

It is Hartlepool Borough Council's intention to develop an additional range of employment and training projects that will assist in a reduction of youth unemployment and economic inactivity. To this end the Council have commissioned research to provide an evidence base that will support the development of these additional initiatives.

1.1 The Brief

The research brief outlines a number of key areas for further exploration.

- What is the real scale of the NEET problem in Hartlepool and what are the factors that lead to 16 and 17 year olds becoming classified as NEET?
- What has been the impact of mainstream publicly funded employment and training programmes targeted at 16-24 year olds?
- Where are the gaps in mainstream provision?
- What are the perceptions of employers and young people?

It was also the intention that this work should build upon the research undertaken by CLES into unemployment in Hartlepool in 2001. This research brief posed a number of questions:

- Why had the unemployment rate for Hartlepool remained at the 10-11%?
- Why had success across a range of initiatives not translated into lower unemployment levels?
- What are the key groups or segments within the total group of unemployed and how are they fairing within the overall statistics?
- Churn in the labour market - what does it say about the structure of the labour market?

The report concluded that the vast part of what was going on in the labour market ***“is a direct result of macro economic drivers and policies. Other problems are institutionalised or cultural and will not be easy to resolve”***.

The report highlighted in particular that:

- Unemployment rates had remained high due to macro economic pressures – Hartlepool's slack labour market meant that active labour market projects had had less impact. Employment opportunities were not impacting on those on JSA but were being taken up by those who were economically inactive and had a greater incentive to work.
- There was evidence of significant churn in the labour market – with many people coming on and off training courses and initiatives
- Barriers to employment for the 16-24 age group included:

- A lack of work experience and qualifications
- The inter relationship between work and parents' benefits (where the young person was living at home)
- Unrealistic expectations of work and wages
- These young people were often in a non working peer group.

This report aims to build on and update the findings of this research focussing on the 16-24 age group. Given the huge body of data and the breadth of provision available to this target group it has not been possible to provide an in depth analysis in the available timeframe. However, this research has begun the process of 'unpicking the headline data' on youth unemployment and undertaken some initial consultation with young people and key stakeholders. From this initial research it has been possible to build up a picture of youth unemployment in Hartlepool and to identify a number of key areas that require further and more detailed exploration and analysis.

1.2 Methodology

The research took place between November 2006 and January 2007. The first stage of the research involved a review of the existing data using NOMIS and JSU reports, comparing the data where possible, to the rest of Tees Valley and the UK; focusing on indicators in relation to claimant count, economic activity and inactivity, worklessness, the NEET group and destinations of school leavers.

This data has then been supplemented by qualitative anecdotal information from semi structured interviews with individuals and focus groups as well as responses to questionnaires. To date consultation has taken place with 18 representatives from the public, private and voluntary sector as well as interviews and focus groups with 10 young people. The young people ranged from 17-21 years of age. Five young people were on E2e programmes, two were on New Deal and had just been accepted on Hartlepool Borough Council's ILM project, one was in employment, and two were on placement with a voluntary sector organisation.

2. Background

Over the last 10 years Hartlepool has benefited from significant investment in the regeneration of the town, both physically and in its people.

- City Challenge
- Single Regeneration Budget
- New Deal for Communities
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- European Social Fund Objective 2 &3 and ERDF

Improving the employability of the town's residents has been a key priority for these regeneration initiatives.

2.1 Mainstream provision

Within the timeframe available it has only been possible to apply a 'light touch' approach to assessing mainstream provision and undertaking a gap analysis.

On this basis the mainstream programmes available to this target group include those funded by Job Centre Plus, Learning and Skills Council and Connexions Tees Valley (this sub regional service will be disaggregated in April 2007). Delivery of programmes can be via a range of contractors from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Provider	Provision	Key Elements
Job Centre Plus	<p>Support for people of working age</p> <p>Under 6 months unemployed –</p> <p>Over 6 months unemployed: New Deal for Young People 18-24 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory programme • Must have been claiming JSA for 6 months to be eligible for the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active help from personal advisers to find work to meet individual needs • Jobseeker Direct is a job vacancy phone service • All young people assigned Personal Adviser • Assistance to draw up action plan • 'Gateway' for up to 4 months – regular meetings with Personal Adviser and then move into full time help/package of support • Option period during this time the young person receives a training allowance equivalent to JSA and may also receive a £15.38 top up. • Options include: work experience, placements with employer or voluntary organisation, courses to develop skills employers want, help applying for jobs. • At end of option period if not found employment or moved into training the young person returns to JSA for 'follow through' period.
Learning and Skills Council	<p>Improving the skills of young people and adults to ensure a workforce of world-class standard.</p> <p>Apprenticeships -</p>	<p>A work-based learning programme that allows employers to train existing staff and new young people. The programme involves key skills</p>

	<p>Entry to Employment (E2E)</p> <p>Further Education</p> <p>1st level 2 Entitlement</p> <p>Adult & Community Learning</p> <p>Skills for Life – National LSC</p> <p>Train to Gain - for businesses,</p>	<p>qualification as well as technical certificate eg BTEC, City and Guilds. Lasts between 1-4 yrs.</p> <p>Programme aimed at young people aged 16– 18 who are not involved in employment, education or training; aims to prepare the learner for employment in the apprenticeship programme through work placements and/or training.</p> <p>Courses can be full or part time, academic or vocational. Providers fall broadly into five categories: agriculture and horticulture colleges; art, design and performing arts colleges; general FE and tertiary colleges; sixth form colleges; and specialist designated institutions.</p> <p>Priority given to those learners who have not already achieved this standard</p> <p>Support a diverse range of community-based and outreach learning opportunities.</p> <p>Initiative for improving literacy, numeracy and language (ESOL) skills.</p> <p>Skills Brokers match any training needs identified with training providers ensure that training is delivered to meet business needs.</p>
Connexions Tees Valley	Offers a family of services Valley including impartial and accessible information, advice and guidance for 13-19 year olds	<p>Service delivered by teams of Personal Advisers located at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools and colleges • community locations • youth facilities • one stop shops in high street locations <p>As well as the Connexions Tees Valley website.</p> <p>Support offered includes: Support learning, removing barriers to progression, raising aspirations and creating opportunities to enter education, employment or training.</p>

The above agencies supplement their mainstream provision with a range of additional projects and initiatives funded from Europe as well as area based

regeneration programmes. This enables the targeting of additional resources to identified needs. However, these funding streams are fixed term but they enable pilot provision to be delivered and any subsequent good practice to be mainstreamed.

Hartlepool Borough Council provision

Hartlepool Working Solutions offers a range of employment related activities that facilitates a joined up approach to service delivery in the NRS area. Hartlepool Working Solutions has seven separate elements:

- Targeted Training
- Womens Opportunities
- Jobs Build
- Work Route (ILM)
- Enhancing Employability
- Progression to Work
- Work Smart

Each element complements each other and aims to:

- Provide support for residents furthest removed from the labour market by offering a cocktail of interventions, which help to overcome multiple barriers to employment.
- Employment focused training, which meets the needs of the local labour market.
- Intermediary activities, which offer NRS residents with paid employment through Hartlepool Borough Council and acts as a transition to unsupported employment.
- Incentives to improve the match between the needs of employers and the aspirations of residents.
- Focused activities to support lone parents wishing to return to the labour market or become self-employed.
- Build links with employers to improve job brokerage and enhance agency activities in the town through the sharing of best practice.
- Ensure that residents have access to effective information, advice and guidance in order that they can make informed decisions regarding the opportunities open to them.

In 2005-06 Hartlepool Working Solutions supported 157 residents into employment.

2.2 Population

The table below shows the population of Hartlepool by age group. The cohort this report focuses on, the 16-24 age group, represent 10,600 of the overall population in Hartlepool in mid 2006 making up 12% of the overall population.

	Total Population	Population by Age Group:						
		0-4	5-15	16-24	25-44	45-ret*	Ret*-74	75 plus
Darlington	99,800	6,100	13,400	10,900	26,400	23,200	11,700	8,000
Hartlepool	89,600	5,200	13,000	10,600	23,400	20,400	10,600	6,500
Middlesbrough	137,300	8,200	19,800	18,000	37,600	29,700	14,600	9,600
Redcar & Cleveland	137,200	7,200	18,600	15,600	34,100	32,600	18,000	11,200
Stockton-on-Tees	187,100	10,500	26,400	22,000	51,600	43,700	20,500	12,500
Tees Valley	651,000	37,100	91,100	77,100	173,100	149,600	75,400	47,700
North East	2,529,000	132,700	334,000	305,500	662,400	592,200	302,000	200,200
England & Wales	53,463,000	3,070,000	7,131,000	6,219,000	15,128,000	11,813,000	5,942,000	4,160,000

Notes : * "Ret" - Retirement age is 60 for Women, 65 for Men. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source : TVJSU

2.3 Economic Profile of Hartlepool

This section provides a snapshot of the local economy for the year ended December 2005 (Economic Profile for Districts in the Tees Valley - October 2006 Edition, JSU).

- 71.7% of the working age population are economically active. Hartlepool has the lowest rate of economic activity across Tees Valley and is significantly lower than the rate for the region – 75.2% and nationally 78.4%. Since 1999 Hartlepool is the only area in the Tees Valley that has seen an overall reduction in the rate of economic activity.
- 67.2% of the working age population are in employment – 49.6% in full time and 17.7% in part time employment. Hartlepool has a lower rate than Tees Valley (only Middlesbrough is lower than Hartlepool at 66.4%), the region and nationally.
- 6.4% of the working population are in self employment – this is the second highest rate in Tees Valley. Hartlepool has seen a significant

increase in this rate since 1999 – almost 3% - the highest increase in Tees Valley. This rate compares favourably with Tees Valley and the region at 6% and 6.3% respectively but is still lower than the national rate at 9%.

- 16.1% of the working age population have an NVQ4 or above (the lowest in Tees Valley). This is significantly lower than the regional rate of 21.3% and the national rate of 26.5%. 20.2% have no qualifications (the second highest in Tees Valley) compared to 18.8% for Tees Valley, 15.6% for the region and 14.3% nationally.
- Unemployment has been steadily decreasing since 1997 – from 8% to a low of 3.8% in 2005. The rate is now increasing and had reached 4.5% in September 2006. This rate is higher than Tees Valley at 3.8%, the region at 3.2% and nationally at 2.6%.
- Worklessness can be used as an alternative view of unemployment by measuring the total percentage of people of working age without work. Hartlepool's workless rate in September 2006 was 34.8% - the second highest in Tees Valley – higher than both Tees Valley at 33% and Great Britain at 25.5%.
- Hartlepool's average weekly earnings (full time and resident based) at £373 are lower than Tees Valley, the north East and Great Britain.
- The job density figure for Hartlepool (devised as an indicator of job demand whilst vacancy data was temporarily unavailable) was 0.64 in 2004. The national average was 0.8 – indicating Hartlepool has more people than jobs and therefore has a slack labour market.

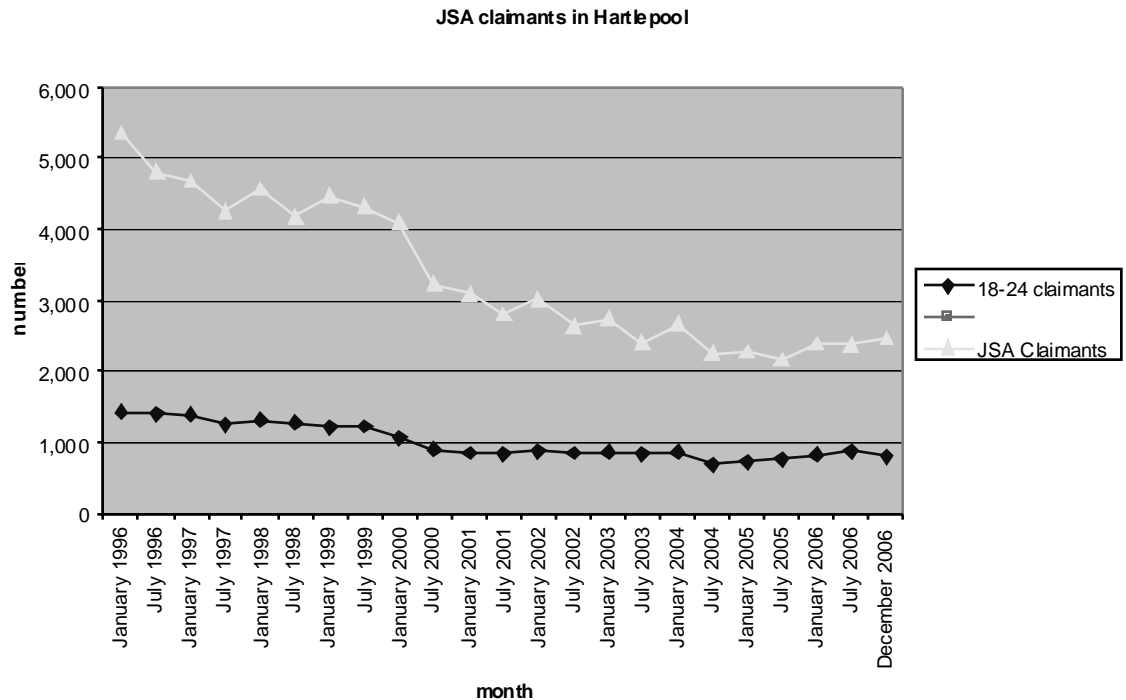
The CLES report provided a snapshot of the local economy in 2000 and found some similar characteristics:

- Slack labour market
- Low wage levels
- Lowered expectations of work and attainment
- High availability and provision of training

At this time unemployment was at 10.9% (February 2000). Over the last six years unemployment has reduced to 4.5% (September 2006) but the characteristics of the labour market remain similar.

2.4 Unemployment and worklessness

Youth unemployment is one of the key economic targets included in the Hartlepool Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and Best Value Performance Plan. The long term target established in 2002 is to reduce the overall rate to 29% in 2012 from a baseline of 30.7%



As can be seen from the chart, overall unemployment (as measured in terms of claimant count JSA) has declined from a high of 5357 in 1996 to just over 2500 in January 2004 with 18-24 claimants reducing from a high of over 1400 to fewer than 800. However, during this period, the rate of 18-24 claimants measured as a proportion of overall JSA claimants fluctuated between 27% and reaching a high of 35% in the same period. The overall number of Hartlepool residents claiming JSA has declined at a greater rate than that of the 18-24 year old age group.

This research seeks to understand what is the real scale of youth unemployment in Hartlepool and provide an evidence base that will support the development of additional targeted employment and training projects that will lead to a reduction in youth unemployment. This report will address a number of key issues as laid out in the research brief:

- Research into the factors that lead to 16 and 17 year olds becoming classified as NEET and identify the real scale of the problem
- Assess the impact of mainstream publicly funded employment and training programmes targeted at 16-24 year olds
- Undertake a gap analysis of mainstream interventions
- Ascertain employers and young peoples perceptions of the issues

3. Findings

In order to gain a better understanding of the factors that may have impacted on the youth unemployment rate in Hartlepool the following data has been analysed:

- Population trends of the target group.
- Key indicators for the 16-18 cohorts – to gain in sight into the real scale of worklessness amongst this group: young people in learning and work, the NEET group and those whose destination is “not known”.
- Issues of unemployment and worklessness
- Claimant count and duration of unemployment.

Feedback from consultations with young people, agencies and organisations and stakeholders has also been used to add value to the data and to explore barriers to young people taking up training and employment.

3.1 Population trends

The overall population of the town in this period has declined; however, there has been a 15% increase in those aged 15-24 compared to only a 7% increase in those aged 25-59. With the main increase in those young people aged 15-19.

Whilst an increase in the population in this age group may account for some of the rate rise in 18-24 year old JSA claimants, analysis of data and qualitative information in relation to the 16-24 target group highlights some further issues.

3.2 Key Issues – 16-18 cohort

	Hartlepool	Tees Valley	England
16-18 Cohort Profile	2950	21209	1125658
% In learning	70.2	71.2	75.2
% NEET	11.7	12.4	8.6
% In employment	17.2	15.5	17.9
% Not known	4.00%	4.8	5.4

Source: Connexions Tees Valley

(i) Young People in learning

Hartlepool compares well with Tees Valley and England in terms of the number of young people in learning with 70.2% of this cohort in learning in Hartlepool compared to 71.2% in Tees Valley and 75.2% in England. Of those in learning, 58.2% are in education – slightly lower than Tees Valley (59.4%) and lower than England at 65.6%.

3.3% of those in learning are in employment with training – consistent with Tees Valley but significantly lower than in England – 6.4%. 8.7 of those in learning in Hartlepool are on government supported schemes. Both Hartlepool and Tees Valley are significantly higher than England at 3.2%.

Data on qualifications from the JSUs show s that Hartlepool has higher rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2 than Tees Valley, the region or nationally, but lower rates of those achieving trade apprenticeships.

Qualifications of working age population – 2005 Annual Population Survey

	Percentage people of working age with at least the following qualification level -						
	NVQ4 and above	NVQ3	Trade apprenticeships	NVQ2	NVQ1	Other qualifications	With no qualifications
Darlington	25.5	14.0	4.9	16.3	13.6	5.0	20.8
Hartlepool	16.1	17.0	6.7	19.1	15.7	5.3	20.2
Middlesbrough	16.5	15.4	7.1	17.9	14.4	8.8	19.8
Redcar & Cleveland	18.8	16.8	7.4	17.8	14.7	7.2	17.2
Stockton-on-Tees	25.4	17.8	5.5	18.6	14.3	4.1	14.3
Tees Valley	18.4	14.7	8.5	17.0	16.5	6.2	18.8
North East	21.3	15.4	7.3	18.3	15.5	6.6	15.6
Great Britain	26.5	15.1	5.6	15.8	14.3	8.4	14.3

Source: Annual Population Survey/JSUTV

Data from Connexions Tees Valley also reveals that more young people currently in training in Hartlepool join the NEET group from work based learning (WBL), E2e or Government Supported Training (GST) than in England 5.1% and 3.6% respectively.

Young people's perception of the training they had undertaken or were currently undertaking raised a number of issues. 5/7 young people were currently on E2e provision in Hartlepool, but all ten young people had undertaken some training provision in the town. Those currently on e2e programmes were all in receipt of EMA.

- It was evident that all the young people were unclear about what they wanted to do when they left school. This appears to result in:

Training as a stop gap – it was evident that most of these young people had taken up training because they did not know what else to do or because “their mates were going on the

course". 6 out of 10 of the young people who had been on training all commented that they were unsure what they wanted to do when they left school and that the training course "was better than doing nothing". One young person was very clear that once they turned eighteen they would leave the course and "they would get a job or sign on".

Dropping out – many of the young people had started courses, usually straight from leaving school at 16 and had then 'dropped out' and then went onto start another programme at a different provider. Two of the young people interviewed said that they did not think they would complete the programme.

- The young people were keen to start the job related aspects of the programmes and were not keen on the classroom elements of the training.
- All the young people interviewed had had contact with a Connexions Personal Adviser with Personal Advisers referring young people to training provision.
- One young person who had undertaken a diploma course at a college, but dropped out after two years, felt that there was not enough vocational support and was unclear as to the available progression routes had he completed the course.
- Young people were keen to have more tasters of programmes to help them identify which course is 'for them'.

The issues raised were reinforced by the agencies and organisations consulted with:

- Concern was expressed that young people are dropping out of training, in particular this was felt to be an issue in relation to young people part completing programmes due to being unable to secure a placement.
- It was felt that academic routeways were not suitable for all and that more vocational routes incorporating different (individual) learning styles were needed to assist with keeping young people engaged in education and training.
- There needs to be "a stronger bridge between training and labour market" and in particular it was felt that there needed to be more input and support from employers for apprenticeships.

A number of further points were raised with reference to young people and learning:

- Introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was seen as having both a positive and negative impact. Whilst it was recognised

the EMA may help some young people to take up training a number of concerns were expressed:

- It was not necessarily helping those young people wanting to progress along the work based learning route and its introduction had resulted in a reduction in numbers of young people on E2e and apprenticeships
 - The 'means test' element of the application was deterring some families from applying.
- The key to engaging and retaining young people in learning is identifying a 'spark' of interest – something that interests and inspires them.
- Mainstream funding can be too output driven and not always flexible enough to support the hardest reach young people. Additional funding streams (e.g. ESF, Co financing) have been targeted at the NEET and hard to reach groups to assist with engaging and retaining them in learning. However, as these short term funding streams come to an end – concern was expressed that Hartlepool may see an increase in these figures without sustained targeting of additional resources.

(ii) Young People and employment

The number of young people in employment in Hartlepool compares well with England and is higher than in the Tees Valley. However, data indicates that a significant proportion of this employment is part time (65%) (NOMIS Jan-March 2006).

Employment is not seen as an 'option' at 16/17, "once I turn eighteen I'll leave the course and get a job or sign on".. The young people interviewed all saw employment as the end goal and were keen to receive a wage –although many were unsure of what kind of job they would like. It was evident that some had unrealistic expectations of the world of work – one young person commented when he was on placement "I had to start work at 7am and didn't finish till 6.30pm and I didn't even get any backhanders".

Concerns were expressed that education and training were not closely enough linked to the labour market and employers and that the curriculum and training programmes do not prepare young people for the labour market.

(iii) NEET Young People

The NEET figures for Hartlepool are higher than England but lower than the Tees Valley at 11.7%.

The NEET group can be broken down into those available for work and those not available for work. In relation to Hartlepool, those NEETs available for work make up 7.9% of the overall 11.7% with those not available for work making up 3.6%. This is significantly higher than Tees Valley at 2.8% but almost three times the rate for England at 1.3%.

Consultation with agencies and organisations revealed a number of factors that lead young people to becoming NEET:

- Disengaging from learning at school
- Low skills and qualifications
- Low aspirations – linked to generational unemployment
- Lack of confidence to access support networks when things go wrong
- Wider social issues eg homelessness, dependency issues, mental health issues, teenage pregnancy, caring responsibilities, young people in care

Vulnerable young people

Further analysis of this group reveals that Hartlepool has the highest percentage of teenage parents of all local authority areas in England. Furthermore, the data indicates that only 50% of 19 year old care leavers in the town are in education, employment or training (EET), therefore, correspondingly 50% are NEET or not known. This trend replicated in Tees Valley (with the exception of Redcar and Cleveland) and England.

The consultation process with agencies and organisations identified very clearly that a significant amount of work and resources had been targeted at supporting the NEET group in Hartlepool and that headway had been made in working with this group. The focus for resources should now be directed towards those vulnerable young people within the NEET group: young people leaving care, teenage parents, young carers and those with other 'family issues', homeless young people, young people with mental health issues, dependency issues and learning difficulties and disabilities.

It was also felt that many NEET and vulnerable young people often have low aspirations, self esteem and motivation and further work is needed to address wider issues of social deprivation and generational worklessness. Many of the young people interviewed had eventually embarked on a particular training route because their Dad, Mum, brother, friend etc had worked in this field. However, the majority of their parents and siblings were currently not working.

(iv) The Not Knowns

Hartlepool has a lower number of not knowns than Tees Valley but is higher than England. Hartlepool in particular has made a significant improvement in reducing the numbers of not knowns at 16 – a reduction of 83% since June 2005 and has also made an impact on the 17 and 18 year olds, however, 18 year olds still make up 70% of those not known.

16-18 cohort – Not knowns	June 2006	June 2005	Reduction	% in age range
Not knowns	122			
Not known at 16	5	29	83%	4
Not known at 17	32	102	69%	26
Not known at 18	85	216	61%	70
16-18	122	347	65%	100

Discussions with Connexions highlighted that destinations of those aged 17 and 18 are much harder to trace at 18 as many sign on and 'shift' contact from Connexions, as a young people's service, to Job Centre Plus. The two agencies have started to share data to enable closer tracking of young people aged 17-18.

The higher numbers of not known at 17 and 18 can in part be explained by the difficulty in tracking them, however, this would also be consistent with a significant number of 17 and 18 year olds dropping out of training programmes as highlighted in the previous sections.

(v) Young People still at school

Although this is beyond the remit of this research, a number of issues were raised in relation to school aged young people and support available at school regarding training and employment:

- Disengagement from school (sometimes exclusion) due to curriculum issues, teaching and learning styles
- Options and route ways are not sufficiently explained to young people early enough. This was reinforced by the young people interviewed who indicated that they would have liked more information about courses and what they entailed and what they could expect
- Pressure at school to perform in course work and exams. Many young people feel they cannot live up to expectations. This was a feeling expressed by one young person interviewed "there was too much pressure to do well".

(vi) Impact of mainstream provision

From the data and qualitative information it is possible to conclude that mainstream support is impacting positively on young people aged 16-18 in Hartlepool:

- The majority of young people in this cohort are engaged in Education, employment or training (EET) - 87%.
- The NEET group and the not known have both seen reductions in Hartlepool.

However, the data and qualitative information highlights a number of areas for further consideration:

- There are vulnerable groups within the NEET group who require targeted and intensive support – in particular teenage parents and young carers
- Young people appear to be dropping out of training and potentially contributing to the significant number of 'not known' aged 17 and 18 in Hartlepool.

- Young people still seem unsure about progression routes and the need for more targeted vocational IAG linked to the local labour market was identified.
- There was a general consensus that training and education was not adequately preparing young people for the labour market. Whilst Hartlepool has high rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2, how far is this training improving their employability and assisting them to get jobs?
- Young people are 'turned off' by traditional learning styles, particularly if they have basic skills issues.
- The young people interviewed and feedback from agencies identified a very clear lack of aspiration and inspiration with some of the provision available

3.3 Unemployment and Worklessness

The brief poses a specific question in relation to the 18-24 cohorts: to assess the impact of mainstream publicly funded employment and training programmes targeted at 16-24 year olds. This needs to be considered in light of the fact that the overall number of Hartlepool residents claiming JSA declining at a greater rate than that of the 18-24 year old age group.

The following table shows a profile of young people in the town in relation to employment and worklessness (May 2006). Due to how data is collected and collated it is not possible to analyse the data consistently across age groups and categories, however, the data in the table below provides an indication of the numbers in each category.

Indicator	16-17 years	16-19 years	18-24 years	20-24 years	Total
Unemployment (JSA Claimants)			820		820
Employment		2300		3700	6000
Income Support	50		730		780
Incapacity Benefit	30		410		440
Workless/Not known (remainder of population)					2560
Total					10,600
Ward with highest unemployment	Stranton				

67% of the 16-24 age groups are in employment, with almost 8% unemployed. 7% of the cohort is claiming income support and 4% are claiming Incapacity Benefit. When this data is compared with the corresponding rates for the 25-retirement age group, (3.7% unemployed, 14% Incapacity benefit, 10% income support), the rates of unemployment and

income support would seem high – however, this concurs with the data indicating that youth unemployment has reduced at a slower rate than overall unemployment but it would also be anticipated that the high incidence of teenage pregnancy amongst this age group would impact on the income support rate.

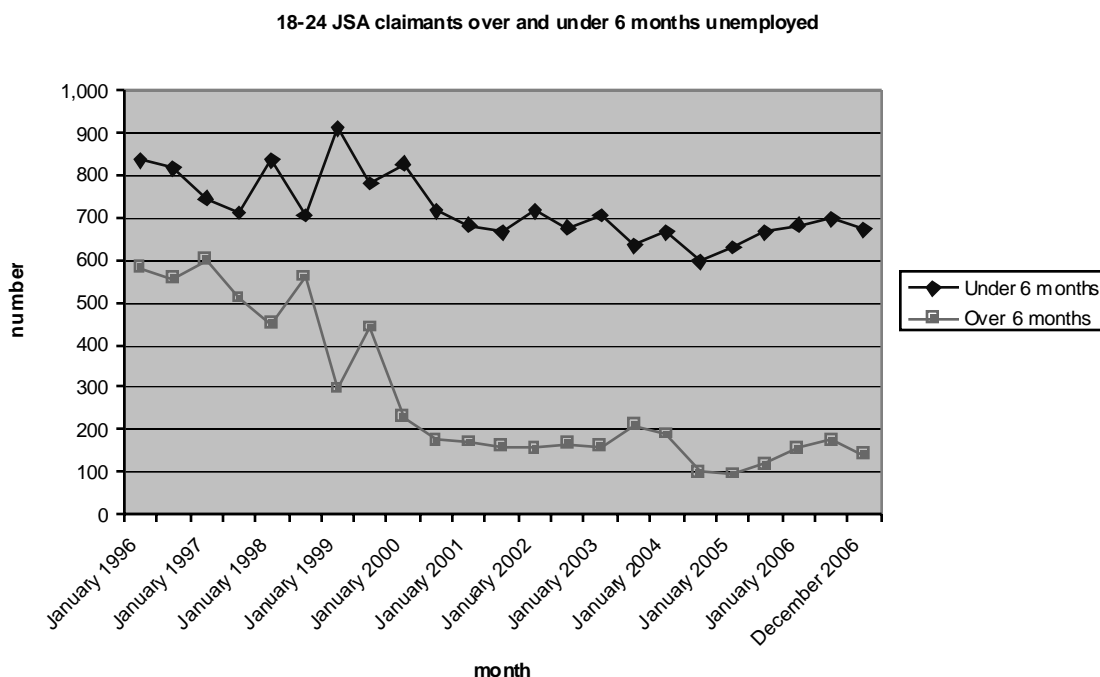
Furthermore, whilst the incapacity benefit rate for this group does not appear overly high in relation to the older age group – there are 440 young people on incapacity benefit – this figure does give cause for concern given the Government's green paper - A New Deal for Welfare Empowering People to Work (January 2006) which stated that "After two years on Incapacity Benefit, a person is more likely to die or retire than to find a new job". Does this mean that 4% of the 16-24 age groups could potentially be looking at long term benefit dependency?

(i) Claimant count and duration of unemployment

A closer look at the data reveals that the rate of unemployment is affected according to how long a young person has been unemployed.

Duration of unemployment

The following chart shows that those young people who have been unemployed for over 6 months have seen a significantly greater reduction in the numbers unemployed over the period than for those unemployed under 6 months.



Those unemployed over 6 months are eligible for New Deal and it is this group that have seen a downward trend of 84% from its peak of 600 in January 1997 to its lowest point of 95 in January 2005. However, the numbers in this group have also started to increase steadily from this point, increasing to 175 in July 2006, although this figure has since come down to 140 in December 2006.

Those unemployed for less than 6 months have not seen the corresponding reduction in numbers. This group has seen a 35% reduction from its peak of 910 in January 1999 to its lowest point of 595 in July 2004. It would appear that the lower rate of reduction amongst this group is keeping the overall 18-24 rate at the 'high' identified in the baseline data. This trend is repeated across Tees Valley. Redcar and Cleveland have the lowest reduction in this claimant group of 33%. Further exploration of the factors impacting on the under 6 month unemployed group is required.

(ii) Churn

Churn is the number young people moving on and off the unemployment claimant count. The table below shows on and off flow for across Tees Valley, the region and nationally for those aged under 25 years.

	On flow		Off Flow		On flow under 25 years		Off Flow under 25 years	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Darlington	495	29.4	520	30.9	210	42.7	220	42.7
Hartlepool	585	24.4	590	24.7	280	48.2	245	41.6
Middlesbrough	945	23.5	1010	25.2	430	45.7	445	44.0
Redcar & Cleveland	835	27.3	860	28.2	415	49.7	400	46.7
Stockton	1130	29.1	1030	26.6	480	42.4	435	42.1
Tees Valley	3985	26.6	4015	26.6	1815	45.6	1750	43.5
North East	14060	28.2	14190	28.5	6375	45.3	6080	42.8
Great Britain	242735	26.0	233610	25.1	103445	42.6	90995	39.0

Source: JSU July 2006

Hartlepool has slighter lower numbers of those signing on and off the register than in Tees Valley, the North East or nationally. However, amongst those aged under 25 years, Hartlepool has a higher percentage (48%) signing on than that of the sub region, the region or nationally and for those signing off the register, Hartlepool's rate is lower than Tees Valley and the region but higher than the national rate. This indicates significant churn amongst this age group.

The following table provides the reasons why young people sign off the register.

Reason for leaving claimant count – 18-24 year olds	January 2006	April 2006	July 2006	October 2006
Found work	40	80	60	70
Increases work to 16+ hours/week	0	5	5	5
Gone abroad	0	0	10	0
Claimed Income Support	15	5	10	5
Claimed Sickness Benefit	-	-	-	-
Claimed Incapacity Benefit	5	5	15	20
Claimed another benefit	0	0	0	0
Gone to full-time education	0	0	0	15
Gone onto approved training	0	5	5	5
Transfer to Govt-supported training	15	45	20	40
Retirement age reached	0	0	0	0
Automatic credits payable	0	0	0	0
Claims back-to-work bonus	0	0	0	0
Gone to prison	0	0	0	0
Attending court	0	0	0	0
New claim review	0	0	0	0
Defective claim	0	0	5	0
Ceased claiming	0	0	0	5
Deceased	0	0	0	0
Not known	15	10	25	25
Failed to sign	90	120	90	110
Total	180	285	245	300

- These figures are missing. Data rounded to nearest 5.

Source: NOMIS

A snap shot of flow off the register in 2006 taken at quarterly intervals shows that by far the most common reason for leaving the claimant count is failure to sign amongst this age group – accounting for between 37-50%, with finding work second (22-28%), and transfer to government supported training programme next (8-16%) with not known accounting for between 3-10%. Those signing off JSA to claim another benefit (incapacity and income support) account for 3.5-11%. It is not clear from the data how many of those transferring to Government supported training are young people on New Deal transferring to the options period.

The data also indicates a slightly greater churn amongst those young people unemployed under 6 months. It has not been possible to analyse the data further but consultation suggests a number of reasons for the slower reduction in the rate of those under 6 months unemployed and the significant churn on and off the register:

- Avoidance of New Deal – ‘the threat effect’. Young people signing off the register before they are eligible for New Deal to take up employment or training, transfer to another benefit or fail to sign – only to sign on at a later date.

- This creates the potential for churn between those claimants unemployed for over 6 months and those unemployed for under 6 months. If a young person who is eligible for New Deal signs off or fails to sign for 13 weeks, they break their eligibility for New Deal and return to under the 6 months unemployed category. Given that failure to sign is the most common reason for claimants in this age group signing off the register, there is a significant possibility that this kind of churn is taking place. Without further in depth analysis – the extent of this is not possible to gauge. Those who complete the gateway, options and follow through parts of New Deal return to JSA and have to complete another 26 weeks on JSA before they are eligible again for New Deal however, they are still counted in the 6+ unemployed category. To reduce this incidence of ‘churn’ amongst the 25+ claimants on New Deal, the eligibility criteria was amended – claimants would be eligible for New Deal if they had claimed JSA for 18 months over a 21 month period.
- Young people dropping out of training and signing on. Discussions with young people and agencies indicate a number of possible reasons for this:
 - Young people completing the first year of their training who are then unable to secure a placement to complete their second year of training. These young people then join the claimant count when they are eighteen years old.
 - Young people leaving school and start training but have no clear direction or progression route in mind. They later drop out as this was not the appropriate progression route for them.
 - Young people leave school and embark on NVQ level 2 training. The progression routes available at this stage include level 3 training and university or employment. For those not ‘academically’ able to progress to a level 3 or University, the links to the labour market after completing their level 2 are not always visible or achievable. This may also link in with the high number of those at 18 who are ‘not known’ to Connexions.

(ii) Young people and the labour market

From discussions with young people, agencies, organisations and employers a number of key barriers were identified to young people accessing and progressing in the local labour market:

Employability skills – it was felt that many young people lack key employability and life skills. Those specifically mentioned included, communication skills, confidence, motivation – getting out of bed, personal hygiene, and an appreciation of ‘appropriate behaviour’ in relation to the workplace. From discussions with employers and training providers it is

possible to see their role developing into one of 'parent', providing 'life skills' support to young people e.g. help with managing money, personal hygiene, getting to work/training on time, taking responsibility for their actions.

Basic skills- concern was expressed that despite significant funding to support the improvement of basic skills, this was still a major barrier to young people accessing and progressing in training or the labour market. Changes to the New Deal programme in Hartlepool have seen the introduction of basic skills support in the gateway period to assist with job search and progression to training.

Generational unemployment

It was felt that young people lack role models in relation to training and employment and that this was limiting their aspirations. 7 out of 10 of the young people interviewed stated their parents and other family members were not working – a significant number of parents had caring responsibilities either for other siblings or relatives.

The issues was also raised that worklessness was increasingly concentrated in families and communities where a culture of worklessness and benefit dependency was the 'norm' and an accepted way of life. Since 1996 the number of families on benefits with children under 15 in the town has increased overall. However, single parent families have significantly decreased. This could be an indication that New Deal for Lone Parents is having an impact on lone parent's families.

Structural issues

Benefit dependency was felt to impact on this group, particularly in relation to a young person's status (e.g. in learning, unemployed working) and its impact on the family's benefits. It was also felt to be an issue where young people were claiming incapacity benefit, where minimum wage jobs are not that attractive in comparison.

Macro economic issues – there was felt to be a lack of jobs resulting in a significant number of young people taking up training

Recruitment and training of young people

Employers were not always clear about "how to go about" recruiting young people under the age of 18. Where recruitment and retention of young people had been successful this was attributed to:

- Good local networks – local businesses embedded in local communities
- Employer had employed the young person straight from school and invested significant training and support. One employer felt that when young people leave education/training at 18-20 they were less inclined to "learn a trade and more difficult to mould".
- Employer assumes the 'parent role' providing significant social and emotional support to young people.

The young people interviewed felt there were not enough jobs advertised for young people. Job adverts tended to ask for people with experience.

(iv) Impact of Mainstream Provision

From the data on claimant count and duration, there would appear to be a link between the introduction of New Deal in 1998 and the reduction in numbers claiming JSA who are over 6 months unemployed. However, young people can access additional training and employment support initiatives aimed at enhancing New Deal provision provided through the voluntary and community sector as well as the local authority and therefore, it is not possible to isolate the impact of New Deal.

Furthermore, data on young people on New Deal in Hartlepool in terms of destinations is not available. This means it is not possible to analyse the impact of New Deal on the flow of young people on and off the register to gauge the extent to which New Deal has supported young people into employment or training and how sustainable that destination has been. From discussions with JCP it would appear that:

- New Deal data recorded and collated by JCP is only available on a Tees Valley wide basis and cannot be interrogated for Hartlepool only
- Performance is measured by contractor not by area or cohort
- Targets and measures have changed over time making any form of time series analysis difficult.

Feedback from young people on New Deal was limited as only two young people had experience of New Deal. Both young people had completed the gateway elements of New Deal and were about to start 'employment' with Hartlepool Borough Council's intermediate Labour Market Programme as a result of joint working between Economic Development and the Leaving Care Team. Both young people would have liked more intensive support from New Deal. One of the young people had completed a short training course whilst on New Deal which he found useful but had then sourced employment himself and with the help of his social worker. The other young person would have liked more proactive job search support during the gateway period.

Evaluations of New Deal

An initial search for local evaluations of New Deal for Young People has revealed very little. There have been numerous national evaluations that comment on the performance of the programme and the experience of young people.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation- The New Deals: The experience so far (July 2000) found that just under a half of young people participating on the programme had found work and three quarters of these were sustained jobs. The report goes on to suggest that the programme had led to a reduction in youth unemployment by about 30,000 in the first year, but also raises the issues that some of these would have got jobs without the programme.

Research undertaken by David Wilkinson (2003) concludes that the New Deal programme has reduced youth unemployment, “a significant part of the impact has come from young people who no longer claim unemployment benefit for 6 months and hence do not qualify for New Deal. For those that did participate in the programme, the largest effect is an increase in the proportion of young people who left unemployment to go into GST”.

These findings are supported by a study undertaken by **Duncan McVicar and Jan M Podivinsky** in 2003 ‘**Into Jobs or into the classroom**’ which found that the New Deal for young people boosted exit rates to all destinations* at different durations of unemployment but identified a previously unidentified primary effect to “shift large numbers of young people out of unemployment and into education and training”.

*definition: employment, other benefits, education and training, other

This study went on to pose the further question “it is not yet clear whether these young people are subsequently more employable as a result of the intervention”. Without data on the destinations of young people in Hartlepool on New Deal, it is not possible to comment on the impact on exit rates or employability.

There exists a consensus that job search programmes work best in dynamic labour markets and that whilst “active labour market policies can assist the long term unemployed, the key to widening the opportunities available to the unemployed and work poor is sustained employment growth” (CLES report pg 8).

With reference to learning and training provision for the 18-24 age group, many of the issues raised in the section 4.1 apply:

- Provision is not closely enough linked to the labour market and ‘real jobs’.
- Young people completing NVQ level 2 training who are not ‘academically’ able to progress to a level 3 or University are struggling to make the transition to the labour market.
- Impact has been curtailed due to young people ‘dipping in and out’ of provision. This fragmented nature of support often dilutes any positive outcomes.

Whilst assessing the impact of mainstream provision has proved a very difficult exercise, it has raised a number of important issues:

- Additional data and further interrogation of available data is needed in relation to:
 - () Claimant count and duration of unemployment – in particular flow on and off the register to investigate further the potential links between claimant flow and :

- Avoidance of New Deal
- Young people dropping out of training

(ii) Incapacity benefit claimants – further understanding is needed of this group to ensure support can be targeted to prevent long term dependency on this benefit.

- In order to ensure the development of new and existing training and employment projects in Hartlepool can benefit from the experience of New Deal, systems for recording, collating and sharing data need to be developed and implemented.

4. Gap Analysis

From discussions with young people, agencies and organisations it is possible to identify a number of areas where additional resources could be targeted.

1. Links to the local labour market. Training and employment support must be closely linked to current and future opportunities in the local labour market. Employers are central to this and need to be:

- Involved in the design and delivery of programmes.
- Enabled and supported to provide work experience and placements to young people. The brokerage of placements is crucial to ensure young people complete their programmes.
- Enabled and supported to provide more w aged apprenticeships.
- Involved as earlier as possible. Employer involvement needs to start in schools with clearly identified progression routes with training.

Specialised Diploma Lines will be available from 2008 onwards to learners aged 14-19 within applied settings and contexts. They are designed to meet skills needs of employers and on this basis should assist in bridging the gap between learning and the labour market.

2. Sustained support for those with multiple barriers. Mentoring was seen as an initiative that could provide sustained support to this target group.

3. More Intermediate Labour market provision – in linking points 2 and 3 together, ILM type activity can provide intensive support clearly linked to the labour market, engaging local employers and leading to real jobs. This provision would need to be available across the age range 16-24.

4. More training and vocational tasters. This would provide more opportunities for young people to gain a real insight into different courses and areas of work before making decisions as to which training/vocational route they would like to go down.

5. Information, advice and guidance

- Additional support needed for those that drop out of training or are in danger of dropping out of training. Once a progression route had been identified additional support is needed to ensure that young person does not become NEET.
- More focused and clearly linked to progression routes to the local labour market

6. More intensive and focused support for those young people unemployed under 6 months

- To ensure they identify an appropriate progression route and that their engagement and retention in that provision/opportunity is supported to prevent them returning to the claimant count.

7. Funding

- Funding needs to be more flexible to respond to the needs of those hardest to reach
- More provision needs to include flexible grants to support young people to overcome barriers to accessing and staying in training and employment.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Young People 16-18

The majority of young people at 16 are identifying progression routes – the vast majority of these into further learning (71.7%). However, for a significant number of these young people this is not a sustained outcome and they are disengaging from learning for a variety of reasons:

- Lack of direction – “I don’t know what I want to do” and many seem unsure about progression routes
- Unable to secure a placement
- Inappropriate provision often due to:
 - basic skill needs
 - ‘academic’ teaching and learning styles

The majority of young people are signposted to education and training at 16 as they cannot claim JSA. Employers and young people rarely saw employment between the ages of 16-18 as a possible option.

There was a general consensus that training and education was not adequately preparing young people for the labour market. Whilst Hartlepool has high rates of people achieving NVQ level 1 and 2, how far is this training improving their employability and assisting them to get jobs?

The NEET Group

There are vulnerable groups within the NEET group who require targeted and intensive support – in particular teenage parents and young carers. The wider issues of social deprivation and generational unemployment also need to be addressed before issues relating to learning or employability can be addressed. It was evident that training providers and employers were confronting many of these issues on a daily basis and in some instances assuming the role of 'parent' to provide these young people with the necessary level of support.

Barriers to training and employment

Young people face particular barriers in relation to their engagement and retention in training and employment:

- Lack of employability skills
- Lack of basic skills
- Structural barriers, including benefit dependency and a lack of jobs in the local labour market

Impact of mainstream provision

Over the last 10 years Hartlepool has seen a reduction in the number of 18-24 year old claimants. But there is insufficient data available to ascertain the impact of New Deal on this reduction or to analyse the destinations of these young people. Within this cohort there is significant 'churn' on and off the claimant register which would be consistent with feed back from young people, agencies and organisations that young people are dropping out of provision or avoiding New Deal, however, without further data and analysis this cannot be confirmed.

The young people interviewed and feedback from agencies identified a very clear lack of aspiration and inspiration in relation to some of the provision available. However, there was a general consensus that mainstream provision had the potential to make a difference to young peoples' training and employment opportunities and to their lives in general, but it was felt that this was down to how individual providers delivered the programmes and that due to the sometimes fragmented nature of provision the support to ensure their learning and experience gained from various programmes of support was translated into positive outcomes, was often lacking.

Recommendations

Data

There are a number of data issues that need to be addressed

- More in depth analysis of 18-24 claimant count and flow
- Data on the delivery and outcomes of New Deal for Young People in Hartlepool.

In order to gain as full an understanding of these claimant group systems for recording, collating and sharing data between agencies need to be developed and implemented.

Potential projects areas

Extending ILM type activities across the age range to provide intensive support that can effectively address issues of basic skills, employability and wider social issues. Consideration needs to be given to extending current provision to 12 months and introducing increments as incentives. Particularly with the 'hard to reach' groups a significant amount of resources and multi-agency working is required to remove more fundamental barriers eg care, financial/benefit, health, housing, aspirations

Support for those young people unemployed under 6 months to ensure they identify an appropriate progression route and that their engagement and retention in that provision/opportunity is supported to prevent them returning to the claimant count.

Support for young vulnerable young people – ensure existing and new provision can be targeted to the needs of vulnerable young people as identified in this report: young people leaving care, teenage parents, young carers and those with other 'family issues', homeless young people, young people with mental health issues, dependency issues and learning difficulties and disabilities. This also touches on the need for **support for those young people on incapacity benefit**. A greater understanding of this group and the support they require to move into training or employment is needed.

More training and vocational tasters to provide young people with the opportunity to gain a real insight into different courses and areas of work

IAG must be focused and clearly linked to progression routes in the local labour market and provide targeted support for those that drop out of training or are in danger of dropping out of training.

Explore the potential for social enterprise activities to support young people in training and employment opportunities

Further consultation with young people, agencies and organisations

The research brief 'threw a very wide net' over the issues to be explored. This initial report has highlighted some of the key areas that require further exploration.

Other issues

Impact of the EMA needs to be monitored in terms of how far it assists young people to engage and stay engaged in learning.

Appendix 1

Interviewees

Tom Argument, Hartlepool Borough Council – 14-19 Coordinator

Rick Wells, Principal, Hartlepool Sixth Form College

Terry Curren, English Martyrs Sixth Form College

Trevor Mortlock and Susan Alderson, Job Centre Plus

Dave Waddington and Paul Marshall, Hartlepool College of Further Education

Marjorie James, Community Empowerment Network

Miriam Robertson and Terry Wilson, Connexions Tees Valley

Sue William, Denise Taylor and Paul Johnson, Hartlepool Borough Council,
Hartlepool Working Solutions

Dane Mills, Managing Director, Flexability

Leo Gillen,

Gill Dunn, Call Centre Manager, Garlands

Respondents to Questionnaires

Stephen Wright, Partnership Manager Learning and Skills Council

Chris Wise, West View Project