

Equality Analysis – Reviewed Policy

EA Summary

Equality Impact of the EU funded Birmingham and Solihull Youth Promise Plus Project – (ESF Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) project change request (PCR) to be evaluated/approved by the DWP in January 2019. This extends the project to deliver a modified programme from July 2018 to December 2021 (Phase 2) on behalf of a collaborative partnership across BCC Directorates (and the Children’s Trust), and Solihull SMBC with specialist Delivery Partners such as The Prince’s Trust, and funding from the Police Crime Commissioner’s Office to support NEET young people (school leavers to 29 year olds) with more intensive support towards employment, education or training entry. In total this extension will support 7735 young people, including the more disadvantaged, with at least 3403 (44%) going into employment education or training allowing the project to deliver over an extended period to maximise both impact and resources. Birmingham and Solihull Youth Promise Plus (Phase One) underwent an Equality Analysis in 2016 under the reference **EA000677**.

Purpose and Expected Outcomes

The general focus of the project has not changed, the sustainable integration of NEET young people, those not in employment, education or training, including those young people at risk of social exclusion and young people from marginalised communities, into a positive destination. Participant support is still based on 1:1 mentoring, and provision of additional employment, education and training (EET) opportunities that support young people on a pathway to meet their educational and vocational aspirations.

The model has Delivery Partners at the heart of the support pathway ensuring that all the elements link together and the right support is being provided as the participant’s needs and aspirations change:

- Birmingham Careers and Youth Services, and the corresponding services at Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) will lead and oversee the support pathway for the under 19s. This will maintain our focus on delivering to the Raising the Participation Age agenda through supporting YPP participants with additional advice and guidance into existing education and training offers or into YPP pathway support and / or new vocational opportunities created through the project work with employers and education providers.
- The Prince’s Trust will create a new team to provide YPP delivery engagement work for the 18 to 29 year olds (this provides alternative provision for 18 years olds’ who could alternatively be supported by Careers Service). The team will be based in local areas to engage/re-engage participants, including working directly in liaison with the 10 job centres in Birmingham .The team will provide initial eligibility and needs assessment, and then support participants to access the range of intensive YPP provision available from across the partnership, which may be assignment to one of the contracted Intervention Workers (specialist mentoring support) and/or placement into one of the YPP development opportunities. For the Solihull area, SMBC staff will undertake this role.
- All Delivery Partners will continue to support participants into existing and YPP bespoke EET opportunities. Birmingham City Council Employment Access team will deliver employer links and matching, and The Prince’s Trust will also add two more employer-facing staff to link to local businesses, and to capitalise on the Trust’s national employer links (such as the ‘Get Into Marks and Spencer’ or ‘Get Into Apps’ programmes). University Hospital Birmingham Health Training Consortium (UHBC) will continue to provide a bespoke pathway into a range of health sector roles across their partnership of 9 health sector employers. Birmingham City Council will continue to provide management and administration, including contract management and training provision that will be procured as needed though the training budget

Analysis on Initial Assessment

The proposed project extension has been subject to consultation with proposed partners and stakeholders and the revised delivery model has been developed alongside this consultative process. The project Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities plan has been drawn up to reflect those revised obligations laid out by the ESF managing authority with a given full commitment to promote equality in line with the Equality Act 2010 at programme and delivery levels with a specific Equality Policy and Implementation Plan.

The project extension proposal seeks to directly benefit young people between the ages of 15 to 29 who share particular economic and social characteristics and therefore, the **AGE** characteristic is relevant. In addition to partner delivery there are contracted elements for young people with significant personal barriers and wraparound support for individuals who experience mental ill health, therefore the **DISABILITY** characteristic is relevant.

Other protected characteristics are not relevant to this proposed policy for the following reasons:-

GENDER: There should be no negative impact on individuals as the proposed revised Policy gives equal access to both genders. Our engagement with women under Phase One has been below target (41% against a project target of 47%) our data (analysed by our independent evaluator at October 2017) shows that women represent a proportionally greater level (47%) of outcomes achieved. This indicates that, as a proportion of those entering the project; females are achieving more outcomes to date. The programme would like to achieve a more equitable gender balance. This data, however, compares favourably to DWP data for the 18-29 (unemployed) group which shows 37 per cent of claimants are female.

RACE: All assessments, planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the policy will be individualised and address issues specific to the individual which will include issues related to race. There should be no negative impact on individuals.

RELIGION OR BELIEF: All assessment, planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the policy will be individualised and address issues specific to the individual which will include issues related to religion or belief. The service will be non-discriminatory, irrespective of an individual's religion or belief. There should be no negative impact on individuals. No data is available on the religion or faith of young people who will be eligible for the Youth Promise Plus Programme. All individuals accessing the project provision will continue to be treated fairly, irrespective of their religion or beliefs. They will not be asked to undertake any activity which goes against their beliefs, and allowances.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: All assessment planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the policy are individualised and address issues specific to the individual which will include issues related to sexual orientation. The policy is sensitive to the needs of a wide range of people and ensures compliance with data protection policies and procedures. There should be no negative impact on individuals

PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY

No data is available to assess if proposed amended policy has an equality impact relating to pregnancy or maternity. Pregnancy or maternity will not affect young people's eligibility or take-up

because the programme is holistic and will continue to offer support tailored to an individual's needs.

TRANSGENDER: All assessment planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the policy are individualised and address issues specific to the individual which will include transgender issues. The new service will be sensitive to the needs of a wide range of people and ensure compliance with data protection policies and procedures. There should be no negative impact on individuals;

The policy does not disadvantage young people who are not eligible for support through the project, as they will be signposted to access work, training or education and other support needs.

Because this policy affects two groups with protected characteristics, namely AGE and DISABILITY a Full Analysis will be undertaken. This will detail ongoing consultation that has been undertaken, what supporting data is available and the issues raised.

Full Assessment

Age – Relevance

Describe how the Policy meets the needs of Individuals of different ages?

The programme aims to support young people (15-29 years) who are either NEET (Not engaged in Employment, Education or Training) or unemployed and claiming Job Seekers Allowance or other work related benefits. The policy will continue to have a positive direct impact upon the young person and indirectly, people of all ages. Communities will benefit both economically and socially by helping to tackle NEET 'inactivity' and foster good relations by actively engaging with hidden NEETs. The project is currently being informed by the Birmingham Skills Investment Plan By seeking to raise the skills of Young People to secure jobs in growth sectors such as digital and Engineering. This project aims to have a positive impact on age equality as it will help redress the Balance of Birmingham's young people having a higher unemployment rate than the National Averages'

Please record the type of evidence and where it is from?

The longstanding statistical inequalities in unemployment rates for Birmingham's young people is Evidenced through the Office for National Statistics and regular local Unemployment Bulletins Produced by Birmingham City Council for internal and external staff and partners.

Birmingham Commission on Youth Unemployment, in their report January 2013, scoped out the Level of need within the City around young people who are either not engaged in employment Education or training (i.e. NEETs) or who are unemployed and claiming Job Seekers Allowance (Or latterly Universal Credit). Since the original commission report levels of unemployment and NEETs in Birmingham have reduced. However, Birmingham still has the highest volume of young unemployed of all UK core cities and not known NEETs. In September 2018 Birmingham still has a comparatively high youth claimant unemployment rate. At 10.8% Birmingham's youth claimant unemployment rate is the highest of the core cities - significantly above the core city average of 5.7%. (Birmingham Labour Market Update October 2018)

Views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Policy on Individuals of different ages

An external comprehensive evaluation of Phase One of the project engaged with relevant external stakeholders including those young people who engaged or chose not to engage/were ineligible for the project; this has helped inform the proposed Phase 2. Internally, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Skills, Corporate Leadership Team, Corporate Director, Economy has been consulted about the amended policy.

Disability – Impact

Describe how the Policy meets the needs of Individuals with a disability

The revised project policy includes specifically targeted support for young people with significant barriers to EET destinations, including those who experience Mental Ill Health. These young people will be supported by specialist interventions offering an holistic and wrap around service tailored service to meet their needs. The revised offer reflects the large numbers of young people who in Phase one who self-declared Social, Emotional, Mental Health Needs (19% as compared to 9% census data who are self-declaring Social, Emotional, Mental Health Needs).

Views of relevant stakeholders on the impact of the Policy

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Concluding Statement on Full Assessment

The proposed revised Youth Promise Plus project continues to specifically target employment support activity for unemployed young people between the ages of 15 and 29. In addition the project will continue to target key service access points through which the project will, via appropriately qualified partners and contractors, engage with those most distanced from the labour market with a specific focus on Care leavers, those at risk of offending and young people who declare mental ill health and hidden NEETs. The equality assessment has therefore identified that the project should continue to have a positive impact on the following protected characteristics: Age and Disability by providing support that is person-centred and flexible enough to include employment, education and training outcomes. The proposed policy continues to address inequality by targeting at scale and intensity a client cohort which is demonstrably disproportionately excluded from the current labour market. Young people who are not identified as potential beneficiaries of the project will not be impacted upon as they are likely to be engaged in work, education or training and will be able to access existing Council, voluntary and community provision. The Equality Assessment has demonstrated that significant consultation has been undertaken with relevant internal and external stakeholders who agreed the Revised Policy will continue to deliver its core aims and no equality adverse impacts have been identified. The project has ongoing equality monitoring arrangements as a requirement of its EU funding. This includes statistical equality

monitoring and the production of a Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy and Implementation Plan. A key strand of the project is the continuation of a Learning and Practice Hub activity which will continue ongoing consultation with stakeholders (including Young People, through the Youth Voice), evaluation and feedback to drive forward continuous improvement. Equality assessment monitoring is an on-going project priority and mitigating actions will be implemented to address any issues identified