

A Youth Employment & Skills Strategy for Gloucestershire

Our vision

Working closely with education providers and businesses, we want to build confidence and support employers to recruit, train and keep our most talented young people in the county. Working with partners we seek to inspire young people in Gloucestershire to fulfill their potential in the world of work.

About the Youth Employment & Skills Strategy

The Youth Employment & Skills Strategy is Gloucestershire County Councils commitment to help young people (14-24 yrs) to get the information and gain the skills, work experience and abilities they need to make a successful transition into employment. It's also aimed at supporting economic growth by helping businesses to access young people who can develop the skills that they need.

The Strategy has been informed by the outcomes of the recent Youth Employment & Skills Summit which brought together colleagues from education and training, businesses and skills sector representatives.

Why do we need a Youth Employment & Skills Strategy?

In times of recession youth unemployment tends to rise quickly and takes time to return to previous rates. The downturn following the global credit crunch of 2008 has been no exception. Indeed the impacts on young people's employment prospects since 2008 have been acute across many developed economies.

Long term unemployment can scar young people and stunt their life chances. Research shows that the financial consequences of young people moving into long term unemployment are high. For example, at a national level, the lifetime cost of a single cohort of young people (16-18) failing to make the transition into regular employment is estimated to be in the region of £13 billion¹.

Beyond the financial costs, the human and societal costs of youth unemployment developing into long term unemployment are considerable. There are often mental and physical health consequences, the risk of offending increases and there are clear links between inter-generational social problems and long term unemployment. This is a price we cannot afford to pay as a society. It is in everyone's interests to ensure that our young people have the best possible start to their working lives.

Whilst **Gloucestershire** has maintained relatively good performance on 16-24 unemployment as a whole in recent years, we are now evidencing a worsening

¹ 'Against the Odds', Audit Commission: July 2010

trend. This is particularly marked in the under 25yrs JSA claimants who now represent 30% of JSA claimants in the county. Of more concern is the longer term nature of unemployment for this group with 32% of them remaining unemployed for 6+ months.

What has been the response to the crisis of Youth Unemployment?

At a national level:

With rising youth unemployment, a generational squeeze on public finances and overall economic uncertainty, the government is now seeking to mitigate the effects on young people through raising attainment & participation, incentivising work & apprenticeships over benefits, and promoting a 3-year Youth Contract.

'Building Engagement, Building Futures' sets out the governments strategic priorities to maximise the proportion of 16-24 years olds who are participating in education, training or work as:

- Raising attainment in school and beyond to ensure that young people have the skills they need to compete in a global economy.
- Helping local partners to provide effective and coordinated services that support all young people, including the most vulnerable, putting us on track to achieve full participation for 16-17 year olds by 2015.
- Encouraging and incentivising employers to inspire and recruit young people by offering more high quality Apprenticeships and work experience places.
- Ensuring that work pays and giving young people the personalised support they need to find it, through Universal Credit, the Work Programme and our Get Britain Working measures.
- Putting in place a new Youth Contract worth almost £1 billion over the next three years to help get young people earning or learning before long term damage is done.

At a local level:

Alongside the numerous funded support programmes which are already in place for 16-24 yr olds provided by the Youth Support Team, Job Centre Plus, education/training providers and the voluntary sector, Gloucestershire has also prioritised Youth Employment & Skills under the wider GROW Gloucestershire initiatives².

The renewed emphasis on this agenda was highlighted at the county's first Youth Employment & Skills Summit which identified the following key objectives:

² www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/grow

- Inspire – we need to **inspire** young people, particularly early on in their school life, to give them the ambition to take control of their future.
- Skills – we want to help young people develop the key **skills** which employers are seeking.
- Access – we need to ensure that both young people and employers can **access** information & support they need via a portal or single gateway.
- Experience – young people need access to the work place via work experience or work trials to get that first hand **experience** of the world of work.
- Best practice – we need to share the **best practice** where schools and businesses work together to ensure this becomes the norm.

However education and skills can only ever be part of the solution. Giving our young people more opportunities to demonstrate their worth to potential employers on a wider scale will be an important part of the solution to youth unemployment. Gloucestershire's employers are critical as it is they who will provide the work and work experience opportunities our young people need.

Who will the Strategy impact upon?

The Strategy will aim to impact upon the following groups:

To have effect on:

- 14-16 year olds in compulsory education
- Early leavers from 6th form/FE provision
- 16-25 year olds who are in the NEET group
- Graduates seeking employment

To Influence:

- Parents/carers
- Employers – public/private/voluntary sectors
- Media channels

To engage with our partners:

- Schools
- FE/HE sector
- Training Providers
- VSC provision
- Job Centre +
- FSB & Chambers of Commerce

How will the programme be delivered?

Please find a detailed delivery plan for the Youth Employment & Skills Strategy at **Annex A**

The Youth Employment & Skills Strategy sits under the wider GROW Gloucestershire initiatives and is comprised of three programme streams:

- **'BE Inspired'** – a campaign aimed at 14-16 yr olds (and their parents/carers) to promote awareness of the range of career pathways open to them on completion of compulsory education. Support to build and develop the critical relationship between schools and employers.
- **'MAKE your Choice'** – support for a series of initiatives which can help both young people and businesses to maximise employment opportunities for young people (aged 16-24 yrs) in Gloucestershire.
- **'GROW your Skills'** – support for activities which specifically promote the skills agenda for young people and develop innovation & entrepreneurship

How will the Strategy be monitored?

The governance arrangements for the Youth Employment & Skills Strategy are detailed at **Annex B**.

Conclusion

This strategy outlines an ambitious approach to supporting young people in Gloucestershire toward and into work. We look forward to working with existing partners, as well as creating new partnerships, to help make the difference we need to make.

Youth Economic Stimulus Project

July 2012

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS STRATEGY – DELIVERY PLAN

Strategic Aim		Projects		Actions	Link to Strategic Objectives	
'BE Inspired' (support for 14-16 yr olds)	1	<p>'GROW Gloucestershire' - Options & Careers choices publication.</p> <p>Proposal to produce and mail out a publication to home addresses of all year 9, 10 & 11 pupils during Sept-Jan. Approx 20,000 copies required.</p>	1	Consult over content and usage of publication	Access, Inspire	
			2	Exam results – use the opportunity to launch 'BE Inspired' campaign	Access, Inspire	
				3	Additional literature to be produced – web and paper-based to support the campaign	Access, Inspire
				4	BE Inspired skills booklet to be produced and made available to all Year 9, 10, 11 pupils. Copies posted to home addresses with information for parents/carers included.	Access, Inspire, Skills, Experience
	2	Skills Festival – skills events for young people & their parents/carers	1	Road shows to promote the skills message to young people and parents/carers	Inspire, Skills	
				2	Deliver a large scale skills event for young people etc in Gloucestershire	Inspire, Skills
				3	Skills POD to be available to schools via the YES Charter	Access, Inspire, Skills
	3	<p>YES Charter for Schools</p> <p>Develop a 'Youth Employment & Skills Charter' – a framework which schools can use to highlight the careers & skills support their pupils will receive.</p>	1	Work with school colleagues and develop Youth Employment & Skills Charter for Schools to promote employability, work related skills and careers guidance. GCC and School commitment to be outlined.	Skills, Best Practice, Experience	

Annex A

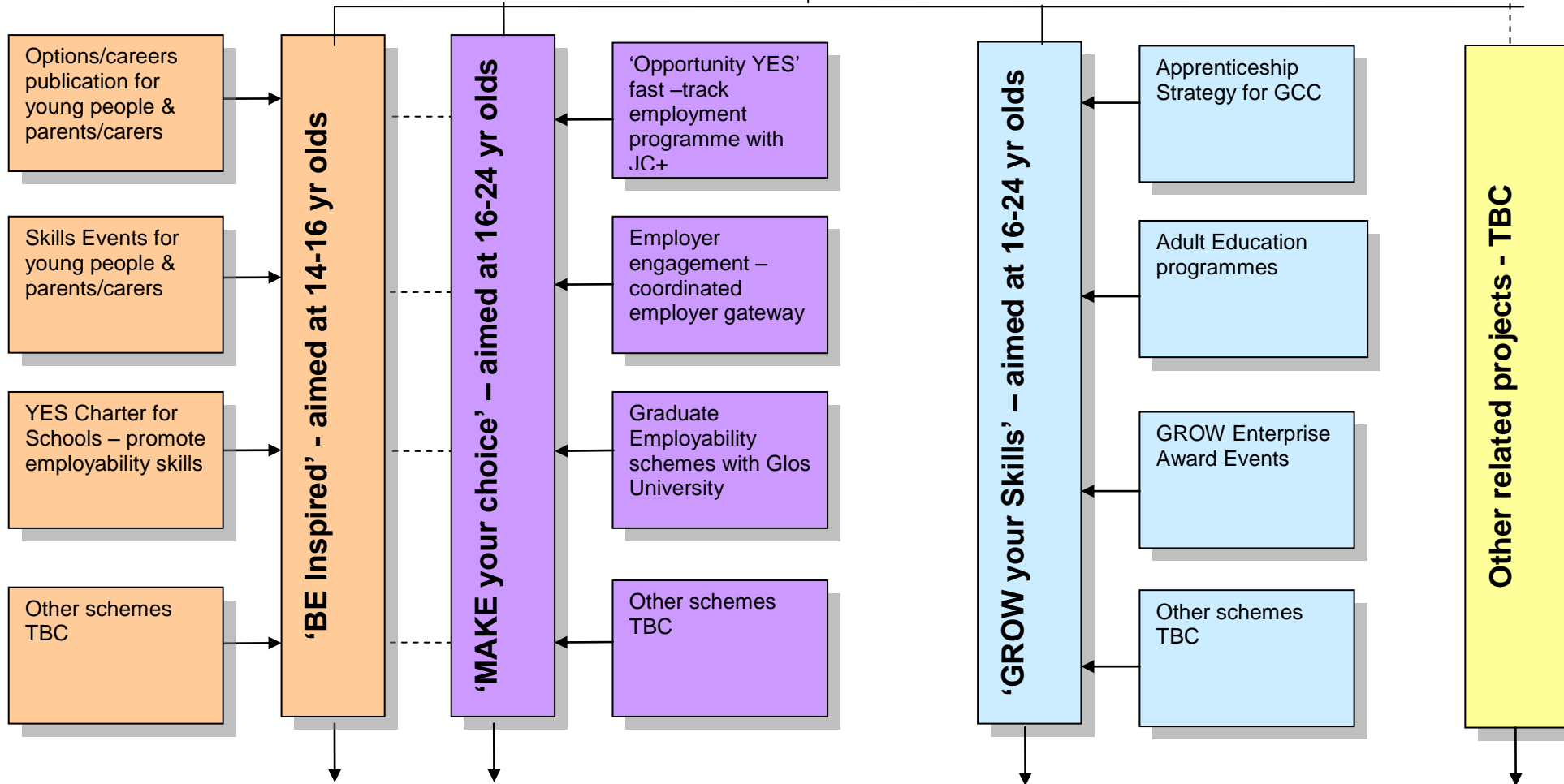
Strategic Aim	Projects	Actions	Link to Strategic Objective
'MAKE your choice' (support for 16-24 yr olds)	1 'Opportunity YES' - develop and implement fast-track pathway to support young people (16-24 yrs) in the NEET group. Proposal to support 1000 job-seekers into employment over a 2 year period in-conjunction with JC + and partners. NB. Payment by results only.	1 Scope delivery requirements with JC+	Skills, Access
		2 Develop partnership delivery model with providers	Skills, Access
		3 Commission delivery of diagnostic and mentoring support & additional provision as required	Skills, Access
		4 Implement robust contract monitoring arrangements	Skills, Access
	2 Coordinated Employer Gateway Proposal to develop a single portal for employer engagement to support youth employment & skills.	1 Agree need and purpose and develop specification for gateway – front/back end	Access, Best Practice
		2 Work with provider to launch and market the service	Access, Best Practice
		3 Monitor usage, develop additional products and sustainability	Access, Best Practice
	3 Specific support for Graduates Graduate Challenge offers businesses the opportunity to have a recent graduate working within any area of their organisation to deliver specified projects in a 16 week internship.	1 Work with University of Gloucestershire to promote the wider take-up of the Graduate Challenge programme with local businesses	Inspire, Skills, Experience

Annex A

Strategic Aim		Projects		Actions	Link to Strategic Objective
'GROW your Skills' (support for 16-24 yr olds)	1	<p>Gloucestershire County Council Apprenticeship Scheme</p> <p>Proposal for GCC to recruit 25 apprentices over a 2 year period.</p>	1	Scope business need and gain support from CoMT	Skills, Experience
			2	Agree support arrangements and recruitment process	Skills, Experience
			3	Monitor, evaluate and build retention	Skills, Experience
	2	<p>GROW Enterprise & Entrepreneurship</p> <p>Work with partners to develop enterprise and to promote and support the entrepreneurial spirit within young people in Gloucestershire</p>	1	YES Skills and Enterprise week – work with partners to showcase activity and promote positive role models	Inspire, Skills, Experience, Best Practice
			2	GROW Enterprise Hub – seek to develop a community based model for supporting young entrepreneurs	Access, Inspire, Skills
			3	GROW Enterprise Award Event/Fund – working with providers who have a proven track record of supporting young entrepreneurs.	
	3	Exploit learning & training opportunities via Adult Education.	1	TBC	TBC

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS STRATEGY
Project Board Membership – Cllr Mark Hawthorne (Chair), Cllr Jackie Hall, Cllr Brian Robinson, Linda Uren & Alison Williams

STAKEHOLDER REFERENCE GROUP *
Representatives from: Schools, FE & HE sector, Training Providers, Employer representatives, GFirst/LEP, Vol Sector, JC+, GCC



Gloucestershire Economic Stimulus Package – GROW Gloucestershire

Cross project support from GCC: Human Resources, Communications, Commissioning and others TBC

* subject to specific governance arrangements for each programme stream