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**OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

**Work Programme**

2. We continue to give consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee and taking into account the ambitious programme of change across the Council and the key role of Scrutiny in ensuring that the programme is able to deliver the service improvements and the budget savings necessary.

**Resignation of Community Representative**

3. I received the formal resignation of one of our long-standing Non-Statutory Co-opted Members, Mr. David Moyes and have extended the thanks of this Scrutiny Committee to him for his hard work and dedication over recent years as a Community Representative on this Committee and wished him well for the future.

**Healthy Behaviours Survey 2013**

4. We received a presentation from Paul Hindle, Darlington Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT), on the social norms based survey which had been conducted in Darlington Schools and Academies for pupils in Years 7 to 11.
5. This survey has been carried out by DAAT annually since 2009 and is circulated to the secondary schools and academies in Darlington. The 2013 survey captured the behaviour and opinions of over 3,500 young people which equated to 74 per cent of the available school population giving a good representative sample of the general school population.
6. The survey asks questions relating to tobacco, alcohol and drug use, bullying and sexual health (for older year groups).
7. Social norms is a mechanism for looking at prevalence of an activity and addressing the misperceptions that young people are drinking and taking drugs which is often exaggerated by the media. It was encouraging to note that a very high proportion of young people overestimate the amount of young people their age engaging in risk taking behaviours.
8. By undertaking this survey we can communicate campaigns to be undertaken within schools and develop educational materials to address these misperceptions, giving factual and value based feedback.

9. It was also reported that in the five years that the survey had been undertaken by DAAT, risk taking behaviours have significantly reduced and that less than a tenth of all young people in Darlington regularly drink alcohol or get drunk and even fewer take drugs.
10. We will also be looking at the results of the 2014 survey next year.

### **Destinations at 16 to18**

11. Following receipt of a report in February, 2014, we received a report which detailed that the numbers of 16 and 18 year old education leavers who studied in Darlington and went into sustained Employment, Education or Training (EET) was above the England average (+1 per cent and + 4 per cent respectively). Data shows that Darlington has a higher than average percentage of learners going on to higher education.
12. A significant percentage of Tees Valley residents are studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects to degree level and 2010/11 data shows that 68.9 per cent of Tees Valley graduates found employment within the Tees Valley with another 10 per cent finding jobs elsewhere in the North East.
13. With regard to NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training), overall participation is increasing and numbers are reducing and the local authority has successfully reduced the number of 'not knowns'. We were very pleased to also learn that Darlington also has the lowest level of young people NEET in the Tees Valley.
14. There is a lot of work being undertaken in this area which includes Foundation for Jobs working hard to bring together school age students with employers and industries where sectors are facing skills gaps; schools and colleges are working directly with businesses and STEMNET, the National Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Network to promote STEM opportunities; the Local Enterprise Partnership has developed a Skills Portal to promote local employment opportunities and give schools and young people a resource for careers development; and the National Careers Service also has occupational specific resources for young people.
15. In particular, we discussed with Officers opportunities for young people to access training to ultimately move into engineering and what is being done to encourage employers to take on apprenticeships to help reduce the decline in young people taking up a career in engineering. It was proposed that we undertake a review and meet with representatives from STEMNET to better understand what is being done to enable young people to understand applications of STEM subjects and to encourage the opportunities for apprenticeships.

**Councillor Eleanor Lister**  
**Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**