

# All-Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Employment

APPG Minutes  
18<sup>th</sup> October 3.00pm – 4.00pm  
Committee Rooms 5 & 7

## Attendees:

Chair: Michael Tomlinson MP	Scott Hyland: Big Lottery Fund
William Burstow: Office for Michael Tomlinson MP	Gill Bainbridge: Merseyside Youth Association (TM Liverpool)
Laura-Jane Rawlings: Youth Employment UK	James Godsal: Big Lottery Fund
Lauren Mistry: Youth Employment UK	Imogen Lawry: Cockpit Arts
Chloe Hopkin: Essex Youth Service and Children in Care Council	Sheena Bell: SENEL
Tony Brennan: Essex Youth Service	Alex Walker: Rinova Ltd
Ruth Forster: Wagstaff Recruitment	Lesley Thain: Careers & Enterprise Company
Chris Rowe: Navigate	Morgan Bestwick: The Princes trust
Lin Proctor: Pimlico Academy	Milly Rawley: The Princes Trust
Rob Phillips: Dame Kelly Holmes Trust	Claire Harvey: Success at Schools
Alistair Faulk: Careers & Enterprise Company	Mark Pike: Develop EBP
Harvey Morton: Youth Employment UK Ambassador	Rachel McKims: My Work History
Sagar Haria: Youth Employment UK Ambassador	John Burton: Inside Connections
Patrick Cantellow: Youth Employment UK Ambassador	Joanne Turley: ARK Consultancy
Rabia Baig: Youth Employment UK Ambassador	Katherine Bird: GM Talent Match
Xavier Rodrigure: Bridging to the future	Cicely Hill: GM Talent Match
Matt Dronfield: London Youth	Chris Tarry: Access Generation
	Gemma Redden: Access Generation
	Beth Jenkinson: Intergenerational Foundation
	Paul Russell: Department for Education
	Laura Gibbon: National Citizen Service

1. The meeting began with thanks and welcome from Laura-Jane Rawlings and Michael Tomlinson MP, followed by introductions from around the room.
2. Laura-Jane Rawlings covered events for the month ahead

Next meetings of the APPG for Youth Employment - supporting young people furthest from the labour market

15th November – 3pm – 4pm – Committee Room 16

13th December – 3pm – 4pm – Committee Room 16

***Inquiry deadline 31st October***

WorldSkills - UK team is currently in ABU DHABI competing at the competition

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Work Experience Month - 16th October - 16th November #WEMonth2017

National Mentoring Day - 27th October

#iwill week - 20th - 24th November

Laura-Jane Rawlings explained that any attendees with activities or events could send them through to be read in upcoming meetings.

3. Michael Tomlinson encouraged attendees to look through the latest employment ONS data. The current unemployment rate sits at 11.9%, which is very close to the record low of 11.6%. Michael Tomlinson explained that in all of the messaging around the positivity of the numbers decreasing we must remember that we are talking about people and that these figures might not always reflect the real numbers.

4. Mark Pike, Guest speaker from Develop EBP explored those furthest from the labour market. Mark stated that there is a lot of information available around unemployment and those furthest from the labour market and it was important to establish what the data is telling us and what might be missing or hidden from that data.

Develop EBP was initially an education business partnership they work with 16 – 18 year olds across supported learning and placing around 8,000-9,000 young people into work experience opportunities. Develop EBP also run employment programmes within prisons.

It is commonly understood young people's lack of work experience and life skills mean they struggle to transition from education to employment. Develop EBP have found that young people are often facing multiple disadvantage; minorities, English as a second language, homelessness, SEND & mental health issues to name just a few. There is often not just one barrier.

We do not yet know the full size of the problem; there are a lot of unknowns locally and nationally with a variety of causation factors. There are some things compounding the issues such as the changes to apprenticeships, there's a decrease in those taking up apprenticeships and more high-level apprenticeships being introduced as part of the levy that may well have a perverse implications for social mobility

There are many challenges but the system being too complex with too many players involved is a big one; schools, FE, Department for Work & Pensions, LEPs, Careers and Enterprise Company, Ministry of Justice, National Health Service, OFSTED, Department for Education are just some of the people involved in supporting those young people furthest from the labour market but it can seem that there is no shared common vision to pull together.

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Mark explained that there are many issues in the system:

- Work experience takes place in July when young people do not return to school to understand and plan next steps.
- The expectation is that we 'produce' 16 year olds who can just walk into employment – is this expectation too much, is school system still undervaluing the skills process?
- Is an A-C or 1-9 the measure of success? What other measures are suitable and motivate? At present young people achieving 5-9 sits at about 60%, leaving 40% as 'failures' under that way of thinking.

Some programmes are funded in ways that make it difficult to work with others. The targets and challenges put in place mean that if you fail you lose funding. This can lead to some young people with higher chances of failure not being supported.

70% of the young people that Develop EBP support are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have complex social needs. These needs aren't always clear in the beginning and the referrals and data sharing aren't robust which means that the right help can't be given in the beginning.

Funding is an issue, it is impacting the services being provided and as there is a move to being output driven those with multiple disadvantages move further down the line

From the experience of Mark Pike and Develop EBP there are some things they believe will help:

- There needs to be a high level strategic approach pulling together policies, cross departmental working.
- Recognition of what and how policies and issues are impacting and stopping people working and having quality assurances in place
- There need's to be an approach that gives young people a voice that is taken seriously
- Online can not be the only answer, there needs to be face to face interactions too
- Employer involvement, there is a recognition that employers are being stretched. There is a collective responsibility to support young people into the labour market but the responsibility isn't just on employers.
- A focus on social development, skill development is often deemed the priority but Develop EB have found that the social development it is an important first step
- Skilled bid writers from large organisations are winning funds and securing contracts but then not delivering taking vital money from local providers.

In summary supporting young people furthest from the labour market:

- Is a complex problem that must be addressed

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- Young people need to be integral to any changes
- One size does not fit all

Q. Michael Tomlinson asked about the work Develop EBP are undertaking in prisons and what the outcomes are for the most vulnerable.

Mark Pike explained that Develop EBP are taking ex-offenders back into prisons to talk about barriers they have overcome and how. They also run employer events in prisons, employers holding local opportunities are invited and the sessions run informally.

Mark explained that for the most vulnerable there is evidence that young people with the most complex needs are being bumped from provider to provider. In addition the risk is that programmes in education and training are funded against young people being able to achieve a number of markers. For those most vulnerable young people committing to that structure can be impossible and they may need a phased approach that isn't supported.

Q: Tony from Essex Youth Service stated that some local authorities had a quota for how many children in care are in apprenticeships, he questioned if that was a good idea.

Mark explained that he was always nervous about quotas but he could see that perhaps that could create a mind-set and change that might move things forward for young people in care.

Q. Ian Smith/Diego/Movement to Work, agreed that employers could be part of the support network. Employers are being engaged and recognise their role but it is a cluttered landscape. Ian questioned if there was a case to be made to access the apprenticeship levy pot to help those further from the labour market.

Mark explained that the apprenticeship landscape is a challenging one; some employers are waiting before making any changes. At present it looks as though lots of the levy is being spent on new apprenticeships for 19+ and on training the existing workforce. Whilst we aren't sure what the impact will be Mark explained that there needs to be a stepping stone programme to support a move in to apprenticeships.

Q: Chris from Navigate explained that they support 500-600 schools for work experience most in July but he has seen success in year 10 every student undertaking work experience for half a day a week across the year. Chris questioned how open schools were to changing work experience dates?

Mark explained that this is a mixed picture. The majority of schools he works with still do one-week placements there are some shifts happening but nothing universal. Mark noted his concern in the quality of work experience.

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Michael Tomlinson noted that it could be difficult for employers to support young people when they all require work experience at the same time.

John Burton from Inside Connections talked about his journey after leaving prison, he talked about the reoffending rates being higher for those who will struggle to find an employer, training or housing.

Patrick Cantellow, Youth Employment UK Ambassador shared experiences from his local area. 3 schools have scrapped work experience completely but they are starting to see the value of social action instead. Social action projects are being used to give insight to young people who go to local hospices or charities. Ofsted is weighting social action – SCEM – not just work experience but social action this is happening in from year 9 which can then be a natural progression to things like the National Citizen Service.

Chloe: I used to do maths, English, food hygiene got all qualifications needed PLAN B – level 1 maths and English, with Essex County Council

Matt Dronfield explained that London Youth had commissioned a survey around work experience and found that 30% hadn't done any we and 60% said it was who you know not what you know that got you a placement – there is a lost connection. Matt Dronfield suggested that taster days could be a good step before work experience, for families where young people might be the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> generation unemployed these days can be a good introduction to build upon..

Q. Alistair Faulk from the Careers and Enterprise Company suggested that if we can loosely agree that national policy is working together we need to look locally to move things forward – people in the system locally need to be more skilled in moving people through the system and changing and moving the system.

Mark Pike explained that overall people do want young people to do good but that areas such as health need to be more joined up. In some instances local levels and communities are being eroded by big organisations that win national contracts and then don't deliver locally

Chris from Access Generation noted that there are many good organisations doing good things. SMEs changing and seeing the benefits of reducing from a really wide range, benefits of employing all different people not just based on age

Gill from TMLiverpool: Highlighted the lack of cohesion from education, health and social work. Their programme directly commissions speech and language and mentoring as one integrated programmes. This programme has been co designed and locally delivered.

Michael Tomlinson MP closed the meeting thanking Develop EPB and Ark Consultancy for supporting the APPG for Youth Employment.

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Organisations were urged to contribute to the inquiry.