**Young Persons Guarantee Stakeholder Advisory Group 09/11/23**

**Present):**

Paul Glaze - Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services

Jane Lewis – Regional Skills Partnership

Tim Opie - Welsh Local Government Association

Angela Kenvyn – Learning Disability Wales

Kiera Marshall – Federation for Small Businesses

Gareth Matthews – ITEC/Jobs Growth Wales Plus

Sarah Frost – Department for Work and Pensions

Richard Tobutt - Regional Skills Partnership

Louise Grove-White - Regional Skills Partnership

Sian Lloyd Roberts - Regional Skills Partnership

Emma Preece – People and Work

Thomas, Liam – Blaenau Gwent CBC

Chloe Rees – Wales TUC

Paul Evans - Coleg Sir Gar

Mared Jones - Wales Federation of Young Farmers Clubs

Teresa Stevens - Welsh Government

Sian Evans - Welsh Government

Ann Swift - Welsh Government

Andrew Chapman - Welsh Government

Gareth Woodhead - Welsh Government

Stephanie Norris - Welsh Government

Alison Marmont - Welsh Government

**Apologies:**

Emma Benger – Careers Wales

Heledd Morgan – Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

Peter Stalder – Welsh Government

Kai Collins – YPG Young Persons Advisory Board

Carys Roberts – Welsh Government

David Price – Regional Skills Partnership

**Welcome & Introductions**

GW welcomed everyone to the meeting. GW also welcomed AK and KM to their first meeting. GW thanked PG for the time he had dedicated to chairing the meeting. The group are grateful that he has decided to remain on the board and will continue to be involved and provide expertise. GW mentioned that there was due to be representation from the YPG Young Persons Advisory Board however KC was unable to make it due to technical problems.

**Young Persons Guarantee Stakeholder Advisory Group Chair and Vice Chair**

GW updated the group regarding the chairs position. Interest had been received for the vice chairs role, however there wasn’t interest in the chairs position. GW expressed thanks for the interest in the role of vice chair role and proposed that the chair be allocated on a rotational basis. GM supported this suggestion and highlighted that this would be a positive move as different people would bring a different focus, where meeting agendas could fit with an individual’s role.

**Action** - GW and team to consider and move forward with this approach.

**Actions from last meeting/minutes/Highlight Report**

AC explained that all actions from the last meeting were complete. All actions concerned circulating wider information and presentations, and these were carried out after the meeting. AC listed some of the key developments from the highlight report. GW asked the group if there were any points or questions.

AK asked if an accessible version of the RSP sector pathway documents had been produced and has this been considered. AK also requested if activity under JGW+ remained a pilot. GM explained that the pilot was incorporated into wider contract delivery. Greater numbers of engaged young people have resulted from providers being able to receive referrals from wider sources. GW agreed that there is a need to understand more granular detail. More work on the detail around disabled young people. This will also fit with the outcomes of the report by Hefin David MS.

AK highlighted the need to drill down on data collected around protected characteristics and the limitations of what is currently collected in Wales. GW stated that there is greater control over what is monitored with regard to WG programmes.

GM gave some background relating to the Estyn report on JGW+ and how key reflections are provided. There is a clear link to mental health which is offered tailored on a daily basis to meet client needs. A new resource (App) Red dot 365 – is being used to assess vulnerabilities on a daily basis. There has been an increase of safeguarding issues, (potentially due to a change in monitoring). Could help other providers and maybe worth inviting in and giving a presentation <https://www.reddot365.co.uk/>

GW thanked JL for leading with the very positive work around sector mapping.

**Young people not in education, employment or training in Wales - Emerging further priority areas**

GW presented the key areas of the paper. GW raised wider evidence and engagement and asked the group, have we identified the right themes and is the report focusing on the right issues moving forwards? Any immediate reflections?

AK raised issues around work experience. The number of young people who havent completed work experience is an issue and this has been picked up through Engage to Change. GW drew comparisons with trends identified from the YPG National Conversation and elsewhere. GW is keen to explore work experience further. GW also highlighted the perspective of employers and benefits and risks with regard to work experience. RT stated that all regional skills partnerships are working on the issue. It was also discussed in a recent round table with MEcon to look at careers in the region. RT offered to share the meeting notes with GW. GW also keen to link in to Careers Wales. AK explained how work experience placements had successfully worked with the Engage to Change programme. There was high level involvement from SMEs and support was tailored to the individual’s needs, (often reducing over the length of a placement).

GW suggested that work experience could form a themed meeting to determine barriers, best models and practice.

TO explained how the gap between work and education seems to be increasing. TO recently supported an LA provide evidence to a WG committee. This mainly focussed on the YPG and report by Hefin David MS to identify tools to enable FE and Employers to access greater communication with schools. However, it is important that the capacity of schools is recognised. Addressing the issue of work experience for young people is a priority. Schools can work together where best practice exists. TO also explained the advantages of having access to work experience at an earlier age.

PGasked ifvolunteering had been part of the conversation as it supported the work going on in schools, and is also part of delivery. GW said that it had, but on the margins and it needs to be part of the offer.

KM explained that it was useful for FSB members to link with further and higher education. Communication is missing with some members at present. GW agreed as it fits with feedback received. GW highlighted the importance of the FSB as a member too, and also highlighted school engagement too.

SLR gave an outline of the pilot project in the North Wales region working with Careers Wales and education consortia, (to market careers pathways and opportunities). SLR indicated that there is a gap with year 7 and 8. SLR agreed with others that there are competing themes. SLR explained that career check data showed that 13% were considering apprenticeships but only 3% commenced. This showed the priority of data monitoring. GW thanked SLR for input towards the recent ETRA Committee report. SLR reflected positively with regard to bringing the different organisations together to improve careers advice and employer engagement.

GW indicated that data would continue to form part of a pilot moving forwards and welcomed input from YPG Stakeholder Advisory Group members. GM stated that the work was needed but there was a necessity to avoid any duplication. GM mentioned that there was a positive work by Careers Wales around work placements but the issue was worth talking through as a there are lot of positives. GM also brought Junior apprenticeships to the attention of the meeting and the impact these can achieve.

SLR underlined the importance of a Data intelligence Hub and would like to see existing work continued. GW mentioned that the team would be in touch with CW colleagues about this moving forwards.

TO highlighted that for the right learner junior apprenticeships can be successful. Some care required so that school maintain responsibilities for attendance. School should be checking attendance and progress. TO drew on experience of misunderstandings of responsibilities between schools and FE colleges.

GW suggested that it would be useful to bring apprenticeship leads to a meeting to give an overview of detail and scope.

**Action** – to invite Apprenticeship lead to a future meeting.

PE also informed the meeting about the value of junior apprenticeships. PE also gave an overview of skills competitions where Wales has performed strongly. There are also strong examples of where individuals who have taken part in this approach are now employed, (some of these will be featured soon in the national media). Schools are keen to expand and the approach gives young people to achieve in a sector. PE is working with education colleagues in Welsh Government and work is underway. PE agreed with SLR with regard to the point made around young people making the incorrect career choices and the influence of peers.

GM informed the meeting of the large demand with regard to JGW+. In the month of July 1477 young people joined the programme.

The ability to engage on a more flexible basis is driving higher engagement figures. Also, those young people who benefit from pre-engagement activity often have a lack of confidence/motivation. Contract values have increased but there are ceilings, prior to the announcement with funding gap. Concern is that if funding lessens this could impact on what is delivered. Numbers are already high this year. This is positive but it has an impact on funding the programme costs more. Integration of provision is key and could help with the funding challenge. One key message to providers is that tailored support needs to support appropriately and quickly achieving participant goals, but with pace. There is an average participant time of 21 weeks on programme. In terms of monitoring engagements and re-engagements can produce a mixed picture. GW agreed and was keen that the right picture was understood from monitoring. GW thanked GM and all contributors for the points raised and mentioned that the issue could form an issue specific meeting in future.

**Board member updates**

SF gave a brief presentation outlining the expansion of the DWP young people’s offer. This consisted of three main elements – a thirteen-week youth employment programme, youth hubs and specialist young employment coaches.

All YP who are claiming UC from September 2020 in the intensive work search scheme will be supported. Still the same age range but not those on the health journey. The Universal Credit regime includes work focused interview work preparation for those who have no work/out of work. The expansion of this approach will be phased.

The thirteen-week support programme will include a range of offers and will link up with existing provision and programmes, (for example DWP run programmes, WG programmes, work exp placements). Conversations are ongoing with employers regarding the movement to work of the 16-30 group. Wales skills to work pathway supports people who have never worked into employment.

Youth Hubs are specialist facilities co-ordinated by the DWP where different providers work in partnership to support young people back into employment. Dedicated youth employability coaches co-ordinate and are based in the facilities.

GW thanked SF for the DWP update. The offer was encouraging, and it was particularly positive to hear about the developments around work experience which correlated with the earlier group discussion.

PE brought everyone up to speed with the ‘Have a go’ initiative. It has been a busy couple of weeks with the initiative as the national finals are taking place. 30% of participants in the UK finals are from Wales. This demonstrates the quality of provision and participants are dominating competitions. The average age of participants is 20. The initiative will have significant media coverage as filming has taken place for the One Show featuring those who have moved into employment. Every year there is a UK final. A bid is planned to bring the event to Wales for 25/26. This is supported by the Minister and intent will be launched next week.

KM asked about entrepreneurship/self employment and its place in the YPG. AS gave an update on the current work delivered through Welsh Government and gave an up-to-date position on programmes. AC posted relevant figures in the chat.

**YPG Young Person’s Advisory Board - Introduction and update** (GW/RC)

GW provided an update. A Member of the YPG Young Persons Advisory Board was due to attend but was unable to due to technical issues. There have a been a number of meetings, with the last taking place on November 1st. In the most recent meeting the group received a presentation from Transport for Wales and raised a number of points around accessibility, staffing and availability of trains. The group also raised wider issues linked to transport around hidden disabilities. Transport for Wales also covered the metro and bus legislation. TFW will be more accountable for running busses. Awareness of promotional material was also an issue and there is more work to do on this.

The Money Advice and Pensions Service also gave an interesting presentation covering the cost of living and related interventions. GW reminded the group that the new curriculum will also touch on money management learning.

GW mentioned that as well as set agenda items it is valuable to informally communicate and listen to how YP have got to where they currently are, and also hear their individual stories and issues.

JL also attended the meeting and gave a presentation on career pathways – (sector maps). JL found it a very useful day. Feedback and questions received were important. GW thanked JL for attending and contributing. It is important that the meeting is not a talking shop we listen and act on what we are told.

AK offered to help with ongoing recruitment to the group and asked if an easy read document of the promotional material could be produced. GW has asked Children in Wales (who are contracted to facilitate the YPG Young Persons Advisory Group) to produce this and will forward on.

**Action** – GW/AC to forward to AK when complete.

**AOB**

GW suggested moving forwards with the key areas from the Emerging further priorities paper – Work Experience, Apprenticeships and Data collation/management - as there appeared strong agreement from meeting attendees. The YPG Policy team will be in touch with further details about a specifically focussed meeting and dates/times.

GW thanked everyone for attending.