



Skills & Employment Committee

20 January 2025

Title:	Youth Forum for the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer
Report of:	Eva Woods, Skills Programme Administrator
Lead Member:	Cllr Lucy Nethsingha, Lead Member Skills
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	No
Voting Arrangements:	A simple majority of voting members

Recommendations:

A	The Committee is asked to approve the establishment of a Youth Forum (age 16-21) that will ensure the young person's voice is embedded into plans for the delivery of for the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer, with the below Terms of Reference.
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Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

x	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
x	Achieving good growth
x	Enabling resilient communities

1. Purpose

1.1	This paper provides members of the Skills and Employment Committee with a proposed Terms of Reference and delivery timeline for the establishment of a Youth Forum. The Committee is asked to recommend the establishment of a Youth Forum that will ensure the young person's voice is embedded into plans for the delivery of for the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer.
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2. Proposal

2.1	Why Youth Voice? The Youth Guarantee Trailblazer stands to test new ways of supporting young people aged 18-21 into employment or training, by bringing together and enhancing existing programmes in partnership with local areas.
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	<p>Within initial guidance provided by the Department for Education and Department for Work and Pensions, it was recommended that insight be sought directly from young people when considering the delivery plan of the Trailblazer. The Combined Authority and its partners are tasked with defining local challenges and developing innovative approaches to engaging young people in existing services. This will include the co-production of new solutions, including exploring alternative and digital service delivery platforms. Collaboration is advised with constituent local authorities and with young people (18-21) experiencing barriers to the labour market and accessing services, that vary significantly across districts.</p> <p>It is recommended that a Youth Forum be established with representation from the six constituent Combined Authority regions and reflective of our diverse population, drawing in part from the membership of existing youth voice provision across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Whilst the Youth Guarantee seeks to support young people aged 18-21, forum members would be aged 16-21, or 16-25 for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).</p>
2.2	<p>Scope and Terms of Reference</p> <p>Following positive initial discussions with partners, membership of the Youth Forum will be recruited from the existing youth voice infrastructure and youth service user groups across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, in collaboration with constituent local authorities and other partners including health, education, job centres and the voluntary sector.</p> <p>This existing youth voice infrastructure is diverse and operates various delivery models across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Promoting the opportunity for membership of the Youth Guarantee Youth Forum in collaboration with local youth voice workers will ensure the targeted and timely onboarding of Forum members with the skills required to fulfil this advocacy and scrutiny role. As part of the proposed delivery timelines, it is intended that youth workers will approach young people in their networks with the Youth Forum opportunity, with applications to be reviewed and accepted by a panel of CA Officers.</p> <p>The intention is to consult the Youth Forum on strategic and operational ideas, concepts and decisions relating to the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer, informed by current NEET data held by constituent authorities and guidance from Government. These key issues the group would input on include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous experiences of careers and employability support, by members or their peers • Engagement with DWP and voluntary sector services • Access to digital careers and employability support • Preferred platforms and formats to receive careers and employability support • Barriers existing to support • Concerns and worries about the workplace • Features of a 'young person friendly' job <p>Youth Forum members will be encouraged to contribute from their own lived experience and that of their community, receiving support from local youth sector partners to build confidence in public speaking, communication, advocacy and peer research and gaining transferable skills for future roles. For the full Terms of Reference, please see Appendix A.</p>
2.3	<p>Programme Delivery Timeline</p> <p>The indicative timeline for establishing the Youth Forum is as follows:</p> <p>31 January 2025: Applications open and the opportunity is shared with targeted young people across the county through youth voice workers and other youth services.</p> <p>16 February 2025: Applications close and are reviewed by a panel of CPCA officers and county-wide youth workers.</p>

Week commencing 21 February 2025 (Half Term): Successful forum applicants are notified and invited to an initial full-day in-person meeting. Forum members will elect two co-chairs and agree future meeting dates and locations.

March-December 2025: The Forum continues to meet monthly, with outcomes and engagement reported to Skills and Employment Committee.

Meetings will be supported by youth voice workers in constituent authorities and the third sector. Meeting format and location will be agreed with members at an initial in-person meeting, but hybrid or in-person meetings are preferred.

3. Background

3.1 Youth Guarantee Trailblazer

In November 2024, the Combined Authority were recognised as one of 8 Authorities to trial the new Youth Guarantee Trailblazer. This new Government Policy comes from the Get Britain Working White Paper. The Youth Guarantee Trailblazer is expected to take place between 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026. Initial guidance from the Departments has been scant, however, the White Paper sets the Youth Guarantee out as follows:

From spring 2025, the Government will launch Youth Guarantee Trailblazers in eight mayoral authorities across England. Building on the existing range of employment support provision and training entitlements, these will provide a focal point for our ambitions to mobilise the Youth Guarantee and bring it to life for young people. We will work closely and at pace with mayoral authorities to design and mobilise these trailblazers, so that they can test ways to tackle persistent challenges around coordination, engagement and accountability, by:

- Providing tailored support for 18 to 21-year-olds who may need additional help with preparation for employment and help to access education and training opportunities locally.
- Developing clear leadership and accountability through mayoral authorities, working in partnership with their constituent councils, training and other providers, Jobcentre Plus, National Careers Service and local employers.
- Connecting the local system together through a coherent offer, along with improved digital services and outreach to connect young people to support, so that no one misses out.
- The trailblazers will have a set of common core elements, to ensure that we can maximise the learning from their implementation:
- Clear plans for delivery with agreed outcomes – including the proposals being tested, strong performance oversight and management, how existing and new resources will be used, and measurable goals for maximising participation in the Youth Guarantee and reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training.
- Governance and management – including accountabilities and responsibilities across partners, arrangements for making the best use of data, and management structures.
- Evaluation and support – an agreed and common approach to measuring impact, including an evaluation strategy for tests and trials, along with a support programme to develop capability, capacity and infrastructure. We will take the learning from these trailblazers to inform the future development of the Youth Guarantee.

The key objectives of the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer are:

Youth Guarantee Trailblazer Objectives

<p>Challenges: the current approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of unified authority: currently no single body is responsible for ensuring young people access opportunities after 18. Local accountability: without clear accountability at the local level for young people, coordination is difficult. Disjointed policy delivery: policy initiatives exist, but they don't always operate cohesively, making navigation complex for young people and those supporting them. Service gaps: existing initiatives are less effective due to weaknesses at transition points, capacity challenges and some missing services <p>We hope the Trailblazers allow us to link existing prevention work with your specific local priorities like care leavers or mental health.</p> <p>What are your local policy problems and priorities?</p>	<p>Learning goals: through the trailblazers we will explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What provision comes under the Youth Guarantee: mixing national offers from various departments, local offers, third sector programs, and employer support. How to connect provision: coherent approaches at local level that enable accessibility and smooth transitions into and out of the Youth Guarantee. Gaps are identified in the existing system. Who delivers support: determine the best organisations to deliver support at different stages and understand who should be accountable. How to identify and engage young people: ways to identify young people in need, engage them, support their journey, and prevent disengagement. <p>How can national government support you to generate learning across these goals?</p>
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The indicative timeline has been shared by the Department:

Indicative timeline: high-level



3.2

Youth Voice in other Combined Authorities

Involving Youth Voice in Combined Authority governance is an established practice, with several Combined Authorities in England supporting a Youth Combined Authority ('YCA'). The running of these YCAs is mostly commissioned out to Regional Youth Work Units that meet regularly to share best practice across the nation.

Several of the other six Combined Authorities with a Youth Guarantee Trailblazer already operate a Youth Combined Authority. CPCA intends to work closely with all six Combined Authorities and develop communities of practice for the Youth Forum.

3.3	<p>Local ‘Youth Voice’ Infrastructure</p> <p>Youth Voice infrastructure across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is strong, with young people and youth workers ambitious for increased engagement with the Combined Authority. This was evidenced through campaigns discussed at the recent Cambridge Youth Assembly, commissioned by Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.</p> <p>These Youth Voice networks include but are not limited to: Peterborough Youth Council, 20Twenty Productions, St Neots Youth Council, Fullscope Collaborative, Citizens UK, CPFT NHS Youth Forum, parish Youth Councils, Children in Care councils, Members of Youth Parliament and of course School Councils.</p> <p>Membership of the Youth Steering group would be recruited from participants in this existing infrastructure but would also seek to engage young people engaged with youth services but new to advocacy and scrutiny opportunities and support them appropriately to upskill, including through digital badging and opportunities to participate in debate and presentations.</p>
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4. Appendices

4.1	Appendix A: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Youth Forum Terms of Reference
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5. Implications

Financial Implications	
5.1	Costs incurred for the delivery of the Youth Forum will be covered by the DWP/DfE Trailblazer Grant. Costs are not expected to be significant.
Legal Implications	
5.2	No legal implications
Public Health Implications	
5.3	No public health implications
Environmental & Climate Change Implications	
5.4	No environmental or climate change implications
Other Significant Implications	
5.5	No other implications
Background Papers	
5.6	Get Britain Working White Paper: Get Britain Working White Paper