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# NOTICE OF MEETING

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**EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL**

**WEDNESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 5.30PM**

**THE EXECUTIVE MEETING ROOM - THIRD FLOOR, THE GUILDHALL,  
PORTSMOUTH**

Telephone enquiries to Lisa Gallacher, Local Democracy Officer 02392 834056

Email: [lisa.gallacher@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.gallacher@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

If any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting has access requirements, please notify the contact named above.

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## **Membership**

Councillor Hannah Brent (Chair)

Councillor Yinka Adeniran (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Brian Madgwick

Councillor Mary Vallely

Councillor Lee Tindal

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE

Catherine Hobbs

Helen Reeder

Rob Sanders

## **Standing Deputies**

Councillor Simon Boshier

Councillor George Fielding

Councillor Spencer Gardner

Councillor Ian Holder

Councillor Abdul Kadir

Councillor Derek North

Councillor Benedict Swann

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(NB This agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting).

Please note that the agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view online on the Portsmouth City Council website: [www.portsmouth.gov.uk](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk)

## **AGENDA**

**1 Apologies for absence**

**2 Declarations of members' interests**

**3 Minutes of previous meeting (Pages 3 - 8)**

**RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.**

**4 Review into work experience opportunities for young people within Portsmouth City Council (Pages 9 - 66)**

RECOMMENDED that the review into work experience opportunities for young people within Portsmouth City Council be signed off by the panel.

**5 Review into Elective Home Education (Pages 67 - 68)**

The attached draft scoping document for the review will be discussed.

Members of the public are now permitted to use both audio visual recording devices and social media during this meeting, on the understanding that it neither disrupts the meeting or records those stating explicitly that they do not wish to be recorded. Guidance on the use of devices at meetings open to the public is available on the council's website and posters on the wall of the meeting's venue.

# Agenda Item 3

## EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 28 November 2024 at 5.00 pm in the Executive Meeting Room, Guildhall.

### Present

Councillor Hannah Brent (in the Chair)  
Councillors Yinka Adeniran  
Brian Madgwick  
Mary Vallely  
Lee Tindall  
Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE

#### 55. Apologies for absence (AI 1)

Apologies had been received from Rob Sanders and Helen Reeder (education representatives) also Councillor Horton and Sarah Daly, Director of Children, Families and Education.

#### 56. Declaration of members' interests (AI 2)

Councillor Vernon-Jackson declared a personal interest in that he is the Deputy Chair of the LGA Children and Young Person Board. Councillor Brent declared a personal interest as she works at the City of Portsmouth College.

#### 57. Minutes of previous meeting (AI 3)

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 October 2024 be approved as a correct record.**

#### 58. A review into work experience opportunities for young people within PCC (AI 4)

Jessi Wilson, Unloc/Shaping Portsmouth

Jessi explained that Unloc is a social enterprise based in the Guildhall. They have four pillars, one of which is 'Youth Voice' and part of this is facilitating the Portsmouth Youth Cabinet. She has since started as the facilitator and programme lead for the Youth Employment Programme. The Youth Cabinet currently have 21 young people aged between 13-18 years old and several have signed up to the Youth Employment Programme. Unfortunately, the positions for work experience are not available for them currently and many have struggled to find placements on their own. Unloc have noticed a gap in skills of young people being able to create a CV, with interview preparation and formal email/telephone communication and they are able to help facilitate with this through some of their programmes.

In response to questions, Jessi said that:

- They were targeting the 13–16 year-olds with helping with CVs as this age group had not had the skills to do this previously.
- One of the other pillars of Unloc is looking at careers specifically so some of Jessi's colleagues have done careers based skills, but it is usually determined by the schools and colleges, who may not realise there is a gap there. Amanda Percy, Post 16 Skills and Campaign Manager, added that there is good uptake from schools. Schools have other offers where they can look at CVs, but they do like the offer from Unloc. It was key to match the right offer to the right schools.

The Solent Careers Hub is new to Portsmouth which consists of Portsmouth, Southampton and IoW local authorities, with Portsmouth as the lead. Within PCC there is the careers service which goes into schools as a traded service and is a free service to any young person who is NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. All schools opt into the service for young people at risk of NEET. Schools also have a careers lead who work on the careers education programmes and link with the Solent Careers Hub, but do not deliver careers guidance.

In terms of how the panel could help, Jessi said helping to support the young people with those skills such as CV writing, but she felt the businesses being on board and understanding the prospect of employing young people was what was missing. It would be great to get a few pilot businesses on board to help with case studies to showcase how simple and effective it can be to promote these young people.

Sam Bushby, Deputy Director of Children and Families, said in terms of the companies that the Council contract with, more could be done to ensure it is in their contract that they must take on apprenticeships and this is something officers were keen to do. Amanda Percy added that Mountjoy and Commserve are very supportive of the work and have taken on supported interns and apprenticeships. A question was asked about whether the Port could offer apprenticeships, and it was noted that part of the issue is the level of physical danger with the jobs there. Amanda Percy added that through the Solent Careers Hub the Port offers fantastic immersive days which work well.

#### Steff Jones, Shaping Portsmouth

Steff explained that Shaping Portsmouth is a Community Interest Company, formed and funded by local businesses. There are 70 plus partners, and they have surveyed them as to what they feel are the barriers to employing young people, focussing on the 14-17 year old age groups. Many said that they find the legislation around employing young people confusing and also worry about their capacity and time to train a young person. With regard to CV writing, Shaping Portsmouth have gone out to the businesses again. Biscoes have helped by providing some template CVs on what employers would like to see and these are available as an online resource on their website. Steff agreed that Mountjoy and Commserve are hugely supportive as are Biscoes and Carrington West. They have all supported the apprenticeship bus programme where apprentices are put on the bus which visits schools and they talk to pupils about to leave school. This is a partnership between ??? They are still looking for certain sectors to be involved with this, such as

animal care and the creative industries where students want to find a placement.

In response to questions, Steff said:

- In terms of barriers, he felt this was access to information and how easy it is to understand, also safeguarding and resources. Amanda Percy added that the Safeguarding department at PCC do offer a lot of help with work experience. Supporting safeguarding of employment is more complex.
- The bus visits 10 schools between PO1 and PO6 but they are working on including more. The UTC is not included in this as they have relevant programmes of their own.
- Shaping Portsmouth have no partners in the care sector however they try and sell themselves to every industry in the city.
- The number of partners has remained constant over the past two years. More business means more funding and therefore more social value, therefore the more businesses who join the better.

#### Sarra Gravestock, Biscoes

She explained that she is a solicitor and the head of the Care and Adoption team. She works closely with care leavers and was asked by Shaping Portsmouth to lead on the care leavers employability programme. This has dovetailed in with Portsmouth Employability Academy, with the idea being that children's services get the young people ready for employment and the academy work with the businesses to make sure they are care leaver ready. Biscoes are ringfencing a role for a care leaver and encouraging other businesses to do that. This role will likely either be front of house or an operations assistant role. They are also looking to hold aspirational visits at Biscoes; there are various roles within the company including HR, finance and marketing that are not legal, which young people may not be aware of.

In response to questions, Sarra explained:

- The Employability Academy have worked with PMC Construction and also with the HAHA Hair Salon and training.
- Barriers include businesses not knowing what to expect from young care leavers; they can present with very different problems so employers need to have more understanding and flexibility whilst maintaining the business needs.
- They have been looking at work experience and ways to make this more meaningful for the young person, as well as for the business.
- Biscoes have just recruited several trainees and two came from the University of Portsmouth.

Councillor Vernon-Jackson said that he was aware that Whites Motors on St Pauls Road were wanting apprentices and Amanda Percy said she would be grateful for their details.

#### Kev Sadler, Solent Careers Hub Lead

He explained that his main role was to act as a conduit to bring schools, colleges and employers together to make sure that careers education is high quality and consistent across the region. Schools and colleges have a

responsibility to produce good careers guidance and have benchmarks that assist with that. Two of these are Gatsby Benchmark 5, 'Encounters with Employers and Employees' and Gatsby Benchmark 6 'Experiences of the Workplace'. Kev advised that his team speak to lots of employers to get them to engage with the schools and colleges, this could be attending a careers fair, supporting mock interviews, helping with CVs and work experience.

The Careers and Enterprise Company are trialing some flexible work experience models rather than the traditional two solid weeks of work experience. The new trial means that work experience can start any time from year 7 and can span through to year 11 and this is something that will be rolled out further. The Careers and Enterprise Company are also working on a diagnostic tool to see what the local situation is in the region to see what schools are doing work experience, what time of year and pulling all this information together. An action plan will be created from this information.

Amanda Percy added that the Solent Careers Hub recently went to Miltoncross Academy as part of a pilot programme taking place in 2025 to look at how to develop this. They are developing a project week where employers will offer projects where the young people have a project to deliver over five days within school. Kier Construction London & Southern were the first business to sign up to this and they have asked a group of year 10 students to design a new café and classroom. This will involve the architect having a conversation with the young people, someone to talk about green and sustainability and a communications person. At the end they have an immerse day at Bournemouth where Kier are developing a site for a college, they will then be taken to Southampton Solent University to look at some courses available relevant to this project. The aim is to have several employers across different sectors willing to do this so young people get experiences of the world of work, rather than work experience. This was an exciting project, and it was hoped this would go live in 2026 across the city. Information interviews, where people have a conversation with someone currently doing a role, are also a valuable tool for a young person to find out about a role.

Amanda Percy said that the next step would be training for employers, so they have the confidence and skills to help support young people in their workplace who are care leavers. Another event is taking place in two weeks to co-produce with young people who are care experienced to work out the support they need. They have noticed that young people need a lot of support through the early weeks and months as this works. What they really want is for more businesses to ringfence posts for care experienced young people and get involved with the Employability Academy to offer visits, so the young people to have choice.

Kev added the hub have an initiative asking employers to 'give an hour' and this is for young people to have a workplace encounter. Amanda Percy said this is something that PCC could run a campaign on.

In response to questions officers advised:

- The Employability Academy work with those young people on alternative provision and they are looking to expand the programme to include the youth offending team. There is a programme starting in February which is a Kings Trust programme for young people on the edge of knife crime who are interested in construction to get them a CSCS card so they can work in construction.
- Officers are keen to get a version of the Employability Academy into the Harbour School to get employers involved to work in the school. It was hoped that some funding could be obtained through the careers hub.

Councillor Vernon-Jackson said he was Deputy Lord Mayor and he felt there was an opportunity for young people to have work experience in the hospitality industry for the various Lord Mayor hosted events, and he would look into this, officers said that would be very welcomed.

Members said they all had networks of people who own businesses, and it would be helpful to have an email from the Employability Academy to say what they are looking for and members could forward this on to increase the number of employers. Amanda Percy said she would be very grateful and action this. She added that since the review started, more directorates at PCC are coming forward offering placements. The supported internship has been very successful and part of this is because there was more choice.

The Panel thanked all the witnesses for attending today and felt this had been a very refreshing and positive meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.10 pm.

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Councillor Hannah Brent  
Chair

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# Portsmouth

## CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY  
PANEL

**REVIEW INTO WORK EXPERIENCE**  
**OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN**  
**PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**

Date published: 26 February 2025

Under the terms of the Council's Constitution, reports prepared by a Scrutiny Panel should be considered formally by the Cabinet or the relevant Cabinet Member within a period of eight weeks, as required by Rule 11(a) of the Policy & Review Procedure Rules.

## PREFACE

As Chair of the Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny panel, I am pleased to introduce our report into the provision of work experience opportunities for young people and young adults aged 14 to 25 within Portsmouth City Council. Our future goal is to ensure that no young person is left behind due to their background or circumstances, and that all have the chance to develop the skills and confidence needed to succeed in the world of work.

The aim of this review was to identify the barriers that may be limiting access and explore how the council can enhance both the availability and accessibility of work experience across all directorates.

Throughout the year we have gathered evidence from several sources, which have been used to draw up a series of recommendations to submit to the Cabinet.

It has been a pleasure to chair this panel, and I would like to give my thanks to all the officers and witnesses who have contributed to making this review a success.

Councillor Hannah Brent  
Chair, Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel.

Date: 26 February 2025

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Aims of the Review</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The National Context</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The Local Picture</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Evidence &amp; Conclusions</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Budgetary and Policy Implications</b>	<b>13</b>
<b><u>Appendices</u></b>	
<b>Appendix 1 - Timeline of meetings</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix 2 - Minutes 12 September 2024</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix 3 - Scoping Document</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Appendix 4 - Minutes 26 September 2024</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix 5 - Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services Directorate written submission</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix 6 - Public Health written submission</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Appendix 7 - Minutes 17 October 2024</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Appendix 8 - Minutes 28 November 2024</b>	<b>48</b>

## **Aims of the Review**

To review the current extent of work experience opportunities for young people / young adults 14 - 25 within Portsmouth City Council, what the barriers are and what more we can do as a council to increase the availability and accessibility to a range of opportunities across all directorates. The work will extend to other opportunities that can provide a stepping stone to sustainable employment e.g. apprenticeships and internships.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. That every directorate within the council are made aware of the different options for work experience, internships, traineeships and apprenticeships by officers and are encouraged to offer flexible work experience/taster days/information interviews for young people which could be as little as a weekly two-hour slot. This will inform young people of the opportunities available within the council and give an insight into different roles. Each directorate will be held accountable for this, and officers will prepare a quarterly report to the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education to report on progress.**
- 2. That directorates nominate a lead contact for work experience opportunities and the leads are supported to attend the Employability Academy so that officers can do some co-ordinated matching with the young people looking for experience and the opportunities available. Directorates should be supported with a 'how to'/crib sheet with what they need to consider when taking on a young person.**
- 3. That all existing and new contractors/ partners with the council are encouraged to offer work experience opportunities for young people and this is written into contracts and local agreements. They should also be encouraged to ring fence several roles for care experienced young adults.**
- 4. That consideration be given to employing an additional part time member of staff within the council dedicated to helping care experienced and vulnerable young people find work experience both within the council and externally. Opportunities to identify external funding should be sought to fund this post.**
- 5. That young people who have completed an apprenticeship at the council are supported to visit schools and colleges to talk about their experiences and encourage young people to think about starting an apprenticeship. The feedback stories of young people should also be shared more widely to promote the good work the Council are doing to raise aspirations.**

6. **That the immersive days continue, and young people be given an information pack.**
7. **That a mapping exercise takes place across the council to establish who is IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) trained who could then assist with undertaking risk assessments for young people working within the council.**

### **Background**

Many of the young people and young adults that the council work with are struggling to access work experience opportunities. These include young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), care experienced young adults, those in the youth justice process, young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET, children we care for, etc. Work experience opportunities are essential if they are going to progress in education, training and employment.

The council already offers work experience opportunities in a variety of guises, but the potential exists to significantly increase the offer.

This topic was agreed by the Scrutiny Management Panel on 22 July 2024.

### **List of witnesses/contributors**

- Sarah Daly, Director of Children, Families and Education
- Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education
- Sam Bushby, Deputy Director, Children & Families
- Amanda Percy, Post-16 Skills and Campaigns Manager
- Clare Poyner, Principal Social Worker
- Lauren Bumstead, Team Leader, Careers & Progression
- Portsmouth Youth Cabinet
- Young People
- Representatives from PCC directorates:
  - Ian Maguire, Economy Transport and Planning
  - Donna Hoyle, Adult Social Care
  - Helen Atkinson, Public Health
  - Natasha Edmunds, Corporate Services
  - Chris Ward, Finance and Resources
  - Jo Bennett, Housing
  - Claire Watkins & Rachel Richardson, Culture and Regulatory Services
- Jessi Wilson, Unloc/Shaping Portsmouth
- Steff Jones, Shaping Portsmouth
- Sarra Gravestock, Biscoes
- Kev Sadler, Solent Careers Hub

## **The national context**

Ensuring that young people have appropriate work placements is a national issue and disadvantaged young people are more likely to miss out than others. Work experience opportunities for young people who are NEET are a particular challenge as these young people need to increased support to build confidence in the workplace.

The introduction of T Levels which require a significant number of work placement hours has increased the pressure on employers and impacted on the placements they can offer for general work experience. T Levels are an alternative to A Levels that focus on vocational skills. Each T Level includes an in-depth industry placement that lasts at least 45 days and will be linked to a project.

The Careers and Enterprise Company is currently piloting a work experience programme on behalf of the DfE. Equalex is a new approach, that is designed to support two weeks' worth of high-quality work experience for every young person. It is currently being piloted in partnership with four Mayoral Combined Authorities. The 10 days work experience. The 10 days of work experience will be offered across the secondary phase building to 5 days in year 10. A review is of the pilot will be shared in 2025 and this may become a national programme.

## **The local picture**

The local picture reflects the national picture with the additional impact of the high number of SMEs in the City.

Schools in the City take different approaches to work experience that includes paying a 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider (which is increasingly unaffordable), asking families to organise placements and school arrangement placements.

Post-16 providers are concerned about the opportunities for T Levels. The Careers and Progression Service support young people or are NEET, children we care for, care experienced young people and young people with SEND to access work experience and support them to participate. A lack of suitable placements has a major impact on this work.

A conference organised by the council and the Solent Careers Hub, will explore these issues and look at creative ways to support young people with experience of the world of work will be held at the Solent Hotel on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

## **Evidence and Conclusions**

The Panel heard from Amanda Percy, Post-16 Skills and Campaign Manager, that Portsmouth City Council (PCC) track every young person who is leaving year 11 at school and those who have a college or training placement are prioritised and offered support. In year 11 there is a 'risk of NEET' programme which is jointly funded by the council, schools and colleges. Where young people are identified most at risk of becoming NEET and an advisor will work with them from the Spring term in the school and in the Summer term take them to enrolment. Those referred to the team will often need work experience during that time. There is a drop-in

service based on the ground floor of the Civic Offices where families and young people can drop in when it is right for them, and this is making a big difference. Although the council is very good at tracking these young people, the challenge is that the numbers who are NEET are increasing which is a concern. More placements for the young people would make a big difference but it was also important to be creative with these.

There are approximately 200 vulnerable young adults that the council are working with at any one time. For many of the young people, the council is the only organisation who are able to help them find placements as they don't have the links or networks to find placements. The young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET should be the ones to prioritise. Many of the young people are not in a college placement and school work experience programmes vary considerably.

#### Care experienced young people

Keeley Mitchell, Head of Adolescents and Young people said a care experienced young person will be allocated a Personal Advisor (PA) from the age of 16 and have access to them until the age of 25, unless aged 21 (or over) or they do not wish to receive this support. It is a statutory requirement to support care experienced young people until they are 21. Between the ages of 16 and 18 the PAs will work alongside the allocated social worker and focus on growing the young person's independence and will complete a pathway plan with them. The 16-18 age can be a very difficult transition period for young people, and it can be difficult to focus primarily on education or employment when they also must look at their housing and other areas. Sam Bushby, Deputy Director Children, Families & Education added that the team does a lot of work to support young people but there is more that can be done to identify opportunities within and outside of PCC. Sarah Daly said that the Children, Families and Education Directorate offers apprenticeships to young people with various backgrounds and have had excellent experiences with this and the young people have taught the team various new skills. It was hoped that other directorates within the council would offer more apprenticeships to young people who may have had a more challenging background.

#### Progression Advisors

Young people who are NEET have an allocated careers progression advisor who will mentor them through their journey, which might involve a return to education. They also work with the HIVE for workplace and volunteering opportunities and work closely with the King's Trust who have short programmes to boost young people's employability skills.

Some of these young people have had a difficult background so may need extra support and mentoring in the workplace so employers need to be empathetic and patient with them. Amanda Percy said another thing that benefits the young people they work with is being paired with a younger member of staff who may have been through a similar experience. This can have a positive effect on the young people.

#### Employability Academy

The Employability Academy supports vulnerable young people, including those on alternative provision, into employment and aims to give young people the chance to meet people in a working environment, understand the opportunities available, receive informal mentoring and raise aspirations. This is a new programme, and one small cohort has gone through this so far and a second cohort is about to commence. This will be a 10-week programme in which they will attend a weekly workshop covering sessions such as CV writing, mock interviews and identifying their skills. Throughout the course they will have pathway discussions to discuss their aspirations, and staff will try to match them to a workplace opportunity and support them in the workforce. If they are not successful in that time, they will continue to work with one of the advisors who will support them until they are successful in obtaining a placement.

The Employability Academy is working closely with council departments and also Shaping Portsmouth to tie into those companies working with them to see what opportunities are available. These could be a couple of hours a day to start with as some of the young people will not be ready for a full day or week placement. They will then hopefully gain the confidence to work up to more days.

There is some very good support developing with internships and apprenticeships, but many of the young people they work with have never had experience of a workplace. It is not always about the traditional two-week work placement; often they are looking for opportunities for a young person to spend some time in a workplace to build on their confidence, start to develop a knowledge of the workplace and gain skills that might make them employable. A high proportion of the young people who are NEET have never had an introduction to employment, and these are the ones that need the most support.

#### Solent Careers Hub

The Panel heard from Kev Sadler, Solent Careers Hub Lead. The Hub consists of Portsmouth, Southampton and IoW local authorities, with Portsmouth as the lead. He explained that his main role was to act as a conduit to bring schools, colleges and employers together to make sure that careers education is high quality and consistent across the region.

Amanda Percy added that the Solent Careers Hub recently went to Miltoncross Academy as part of a pilot programme taking place in 2025 to develop a project week where employers will offer projects where the young people have a project to deliver over five days within school. Kier Construction London & Southern were the first business to sign up to this and they have asked a group of year 10 students to design a new café and classroom. This will involve the architect having a conversation with the young people, someone to talk about green and sustainability and a communications person. At the end they have an immersive day at Bournemouth where Kier is developing a site for a college. They will then be taken to Southampton Solent University to look at some courses available relevant to this project. The aim is to have several employers across different sectors willing to do this so young people get experiences of the world of work, rather than work experience. This was an exciting project, and it was hoped this would go live across the city in 2026. Information interviews, where people have a conversation with someone currently doing a role, are also a valuable tool for a young person to find out about a role.



Amanda Percy said that the next step would be training for employers, so they have the confidence and skills to help support young people in their workplace who are care leavers. Another event is taking place in two weeks to co-produce with young people who are care experienced, to work out the support they need. They have noticed that young people need a lot of support through the early weeks and months as this works. What they really want is for more businesses to ringfence posts for care experienced young people and get involved with the Employability Academy to offer visits, so the young people have a choice.

Kev added the Hub has an initiative asking employers to 'give an hour' and this is for young people to have a workplace encounter. Amanda Percy said this is something that the council could run a campaign on.

#### Supported Internship Programme

Supported Internships provide individuals with a job coach, who teaches young people to undertake the tasks and provides social support. This removes the complexities for managers to be able to support these types of initiatives.

The council recently ran an event with suppliers who are contracted with the council along with beneficiaries and young people, some who have learning disabilities. This was an immense success and welcomed by all of the attendees. The workshop gave the opportunity for young people to talk about the barriers they faced with gaining work experience and employment. Employers who employ young people were able to share their experience with other suppliers about overcoming some of the barriers in terms of recruiting and supporting young people in the workplace. This sharing has resulted in suppliers actively looking to recruit people and participating more widely in the supported internship programme. More work is planned to focus on other groups such as care experienced young people as well as other groups who struggle to gain work experience and employment. The links to suppliers made a huge difference and two of the council's organisations - Voi scooters and Mountjoy - are now on board with this. The council try to focus on those suppliers based in the city. There is a list of all suppliers through procurement and the council have good relationships with all of the contractors so they reach out to them through procurement colleagues.

The Panel learned that some directorates have offered aspirational taster sessions and work experience opportunities. Service partners are also keen to support this and are working directly with Lauren Bumstead, Careers & Progression Team Leader.

#### Shaping Portsmouth

Steff Jones, explained that Shaping Portsmouth is a Community Interest Company, formed and funded by local businesses. There are 70 plus partners, and they have surveyed them as to what they feel are the barriers to employing young people, focussing on the 14-17 year old age groups. Many said that they find the legislation around employing young people confusing and also worry about their capacity and time to train a young person. With regard to CV writing, Shaping Portsmouth have gone out to the businesses again. Biscoes have helped by providing some template CVs on what employers would like to see and these are available as an online resource on their website. Steff agreed that Mountjoy and Commserve are hugely supportive as are Biscoes and Carrington West. They have all supported the

apprenticeship bus programme where apprentices are put on the bus which visits schools and they talk to pupils about to leave school.

#### Sarra Gravestock, Biscoes

Sarra explained that she works closely with care leavers and was asked by Shaping Portsmouth to lead on the care leavers employability programme with the idea being that children's services get the young people ready for employment and the academy work with the businesses to make sure they are care leaver ready. Biscoes are ringfencing a role for a care leaver and encouraging other businesses to do that.

### **Portsmouth City Council Directorates, what are the barriers?**

The Panel heard from most of the directorates within the council about what they perceived to be the barriers for taking on young people for work experience. There were some common themes:

#### Capacity/Financial constraints

Opportunities for work experience are occasionally funded from external sources such as the Arts Council. However, for longer term opportunities there is often not the budget for this. The Panel learned that often a senior member of staff has to be taken off their usual work to support and host a days work experience along with a junior member of staff so the work experience student has someone to interact with. As a result a lot of staff time/production is lost. Holistically this is worth doing however this work will need to still be covered. If they wanted to do more placements, more management capacity would be needed.

The work in some directorates is very deadline orientated with intense activity at various points which would make it hard to support a work experience student.

#### Safeguarding and GDPR

Bringing someone in for a short placement creates the same amount of work as a new member of staff. If they need access to servers to carry out any work, those servers will give them access to information that they may not be allowed to access and there are complicated procedures around that. Whilst these issues are resolvable it is all officer time and cost to the council and is one of the hidden costs that appear in service budgets.

#### Complex needs of some young people

Some managers do not have the necessary training to deal with a young person who may have complex needs which can make them reluctant to take on work experience students. Some of the needs of the care experienced young adults are significant so it was important to look at how they support employers with this alongside them getting the job completed.

#### DBS checks

Any staff undertaking lone working with a young person require DBS checks to be carried out. This can take a considerable amount of time to progress through the system (4-5 weeks lead in time). Enhanced DBS checks take longer. There is a significant backlog which is affecting multiple areas around recruitment. Lauren

Bumstead added that it can be a further issue with those who are care experienced and have moved multiple times to obtain five years of address history with a letter each time and felt that the onboarding process needs to be more flexible for young people.

If the council were to offer short tasters to shadow someone then these checks would not be needed. Amanda Percy said they are looking to put together a package offering support to departments and preparation work such as the young person coming to a session in the Civic where they receive support before coming to do some visits. The representatives from directorates said if there is a co-ordinated process and barriers are removed this would help get staff on board and volunteer their time to help a young person interested in doing work experience with them.

#### Attracting young people to want to work at the council

The other barrier is attracting young people to come and complete work experience in the council as it is not always seen as the most interesting option and people do not always realise what a local authority does. There is therefore work to be done around promoting the vast opportunities within the council. The supply chain opens out the opportunity for work experience across a broader range of areas of work that might be more attractive to young people. She felt that if directorates knew more about the careers that young people are interested in, they could facilitate more opportunities within the council and across the city.

#### Young People

The Panel heard from young people who are care experienced, some of who were now apprentices at the council, as well as from the Chair of the Youth Cabinet. When young people were asked about the challenges they had faced in gaining qualifications or work experience the common themes were:

- Lack of self confidence
- Moving around in different foster homes so difficult to make relationships
- Lack of qualifications and experience
- Emotional stress and having no support or encouragement
- Not knowing what opportunities were available
- Not knowing how to prepare for an interview, how to write a CV or what questions to ask

In terms of what had helped them overcome these challenges and be successful in gaining an apprenticeship the main themes were the support from an understanding manager who understood the challenges they may have faced, and the support of their PA to tell them about opportunities such as the Employability Academy and Youth Employment Programme.

#### Unloc and the Youth Cabinet

Jessi Wilson, Unloc/Shaping Portsmouth explained that Unloc is a social enterprise based in the Guildhall. They have four pillars, one of which is 'Youth Voice' and part of this is facilitating the Portsmouth Youth Cabinet. She has since started as the facilitator and programme lead for the Youth Employment Programme. The Youth Cabinet currently have 21 young people aged between 13-18 years old and several have signed up to the Youth Employment Programme. Unfortunately, the positions

for employment are not available for them currently and many have struggled to find jobs on their own. Unloc have noticed a gap in the skills of young people being able to create a CV, with interview preparation and formal email/telephone communication and they are able to help facilitate with this through some of their programmes.

The Youth Cabinet sent out two surveys within the past year:

- The Council of Portsmouth Students (CoPS) Survey, which had 656 responses from Year 7 - 13 students of students from all schools in Portsmouth:
  - 44.4% of young people said they had little knowledge on careers and the same percentage said they would like to know more.
  - 37.2% of young people said they would be interested in city wide careers fairs to discover the careers available to them.
  - 21.6% said they would attend (these career fairs).
- The second survey sent by the Youth Cabinet had 83 responses from 11 -18 year olds:
  - 91.5% have not had a paid job.
  - 65.4% have wanted a job but have been unable to get one.
  - 91.9% of young people said they would welcome more opportunities for paid employment.

### **What more can be done as a Council to increase the availability and accessibility to a range of opportunities across all directorates**

The Panel heard from Amanda Percy who said she was keen for young people to come into the council to meet with staff to see what they do or have an 'information interview' where they ask a few questions of a manager to find out how they got into the role, what they like and do not like for example. This can sometimes be enough for young people to move on a step and decide if this is a career they want to pursue. The progression advisors have suggested holding an 'experience week' at the council where a group of young people can come in and receive some learning on the first day on protocols and health and safety. They will then spend a phased week with time in every directorate to see what interests them.

The Panel also received some written evidence from a careers and progression advisor who felt the following:

- General lack of opportunities for young people in the city in terms of employment and progression.
- The young people we are working with are becoming more complex and often presenting with lots of barriers around progression such as lack of engagement/attendance in education for significant periods of time.
- Education is not always the appropriate next step for our young people but equally they are not prepared for work or lack experience needed to compete in a competitive employment market.

- Opportunities for work experience are again lacking, with employers not wanting to commit to work experience due to various barriers such as time required, health and safety training, hybrid staffing arrangements.
- As a diverse employer, PCC could offer young people purposeful work experience in a wide range of areas to suit many needs to reinvest back into the city.
- Ideas could include, a rolling programme where all departments have to pledge a number of hours to the service.
- This would improve insight into different roles for young people and provide them with a credible reference to then add to job applications and CV's.
- Consider a pledge from each department to a number of hours per year?
- Young people could be offered an interview to make the process more formal and purposeful also?
- Overseen by the careers and progression team in terms of allocating students for interview and liaising with departments for availability.
- A calendar of three two week blocks over the year - open up to disengaged Year 10?

Several of the witnesses mentioned the main issue was a lack of opportunities and getting businesses on board who understood the prospect of employing young people. It would be great to get a few pilot businesses on board to help with case studies to showcase how simple and effective it can be to promote these young people.

Sam Bushby, Deputy Director of Children and Families, said in terms of the companies that the council contract with, more could be done to ensure it is in their contract that they must take on apprenticeships and this is something officers were keen to do. Amanda Percy added that Mountjoy and Commserve are very supportive of the work and have taken on supported interns and apprenticeships.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

An integrated impact assessment would be carried out when the Cabinet makes its decisions based on the recommendations set out in this report.

### Budget and policy implications of the recommendations

The following table highlights the budgetary and policy implications of the recommendations being presented by the Panel:

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
1	That every directorate within the council are made aware of the different options for work experience, internships, traineeships and apprenticeships by officers and are encouraged to offer flexible work experience/taster days/information interviews for young people which could be as little as a weekly two-hour slot. This will inform young people of the opportunities available within the council and give an insight into different roles. Each directorate will be held accountable for this, and officers will prepare a quarterly report to the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education to report on progress.	Amanda Percy/Sarah Daly	EET Strategy being reviewed/no budget	Officer time
2	That directorates nominate a lead contact for work experience opportunities and the leads are supported to attend the Employability Academy so that officers can do some co-ordinated matching with the young people looking for experience and the opportunities available. Directorates should be supported with a 'how to'/crib sheet with what they need to consider when taking on a young person.	Amanda Percy/Lauren Bumstead	EET Strategy being reviewed/no budget	Officer time
3	That all existing and new contractors / partners with the council are encouraged to offer work experience opportunities for young people and this is written into contracts and local agreements. They should also be	Sarah Daly	EET Strategy being reviewed/no budget	Officer time

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Policy Framework</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	encouraged to ring fence several roles for care experienced young adults.			
4	That consideration be given to employing an additional part time member of staff within the council dedicated to helping care experienced and vulnerable young people find work experience both within the council and externally. Opportunities to identify external funding should be sought to fund this post	Sarah Daly/Amada Percy	No budget/policy implications	No impact as external funding will be sought.
5	That young people who have completed an apprenticeship at the council are supported to visit schools and colleges to talk about their experiences and encourage young people to think about starting an apprenticeship. The feedback stories of young people should also be shared more widely to promote the good work the Council are doing to raise aspirations.	Amanda Percy/Lauren Bumstead	EET Strategy being reviewed/no budget	Officer time
6	That the immersive days continue, and young people be given an information pack.	Amanda Percy/Lauren Bumstead	EET Strategy being reviewed/no budget	Officer time
7	That a mapping exercise takes place across the council to establish who is IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) trained who could then assist with undertaking risk assessments for young people working within the council.	Amanda Percy/Sarah Daly	No budget/policy framework implications	Officer time

**Appendices**

**Appendix 1 - Timeline of meetings**

**Appendix 2 - Minutes 12 September 2024**

**Appendix 3 - Scoping Document**

**Appendix 4 - Minutes 26 September 2024**

**Appendix 5 - Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services  
Directorate written submission**

**Appendix 6 - Public Health written submission**

**Appendix 7 - Minutes 17 October 2024**

**Appendix 8 - Minutes 28 November 2024**

**Appendix 1**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
12 September 2024	Lauren Bumstead, Team Leader, Careers and Progression Lisa Morgan, Service Leader, Youth Offending Team Amanda Percy, Post 16 Skills and Campaign Manager Ian Maguire, Assistant Director, Economy Transport and Planning Donna Hoyle, Head of Regulated Services, Adult Social Care
26 September 2024	Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services Claire Watkins, Business Development and Projects Manager Rachel Richardson, Performance and Change Officer Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health Chris Ward, Director of Finance Jo Bennett, Assistant Director Housing Need and Supply
17 October 2024	Young People, Tiffany, Jess, Omar, Kim Adam Murphy, Participation Officer Mackenzie, Portsmouth Youth Cabinet Careers and Progression Advisor (written evidence) Sarah Daly, Director Children, Families, Education Keeley Mitchell. Head of Adolescents and Young People Lauren Bumstead, Careers & Progression Team Leader
28 November 2024	Jessi Wilson, Unloc/Shaping Portsmouth Steff Jones, Shaping Portsmouth Sarrah Gravestock, Biscoes Kev Sadler, Solent Careers Hub
26 February 2025	Sign off meeting



## **EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 12 September 2024 at 5.00 pm in the Executive Meeting Room, Portsmouth Guildhall.

### **Present**

Councillor Hannah Brent (in the Chair)  
Councillors Yinka Adeniran  
Mary Vallely  
Lee Tindall  
Reeder

#### **44. Apologies for absence (AI 1)**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Brian Madgwick and Councillor Leonie Oliver. Apologies also were also received from Rob Sanders, diocese representative, Sarah Daly, Keeley Mitchell and Councillor Horton who was invited as Cabinet Member.

#### **45. Declarations of members' interests (AI 2)**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **46. Minutes of previous meeting (AI 3)**

Councillor Vallely said that she had phoned and given apologies for the meeting on 7 March 2024.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 March 2024 be approved subject to adding Councillor Vallely's apologies.**

#### **47. A review into work experience opportunities for young people/young adults within PCC (AI 4)**

Mike Stoneman summarised the scoping document and the purpose for the review. The panel agreed the scoping document.

The Chair invited Amanda Percy, Post 16 Skills and Campaign Manager, to give some background in the work her and her team does. Amanda explained that she leads the Employability Academy with her colleague Lauren Bumstead, which supports vulnerable young people into employment. There is some very good support developing with internships and apprenticeships, but many of the young people they work with have never had experience of a workplace at all. The Employability Academy looks to give young people the chance to meet people in a working environment, understand the opportunities they have, receive informal mentoring and raise aspirations. It is not always about the traditional two-week work placement; often they are looking for opportunities for a young person to spend some

time in a workplace to build on their confidence, start to develop a knowledge of the workplace and gain skills that might make them employable. A high proportion of the young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) have never had an introduction to employment and these are the ones that we need to support the most.

In response to a question, Ms Percy said that there are approximately 400 vulnerable young adults that they are working with at any one time. For many of the young people, PCC are the ones who have to help them find placements as they don't have the links to find placements. The young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET should be the ones to prioritise. Many of the young people are not in a college placement and school work experience programmes vary.

There is an upcoming placement with the Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services team and they will be offering the supported interns a placement from October to January. These are young people with special educational needs (SEN) or an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and is more of a bespoke programme as it is part of a college course. There are also ongoing conversations about other placement opportunities. Mr Stoneman added that the panel would hear from the Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services directorate at the next meeting so would receive more information then.

Lauren Bumstead, Team Leader, Careers and Progression said it depends on how the young person has been referred to the team and what their current situation is. Care experienced young people are offered help via the Employability Academy which is a new programme and one small cohort has gone through this so far and it is about to be launched again for a second time. This will be a 10 week programme in which they will attend a weekly workshop covering sessions such as CV writing, mock interviews and identifying their skills. Throughout the course they will have pathway discussions to discuss their aspirations, and they will try to match them to a workplace opportunity and support them in the workforce. If they are not successful in that time they will continue to work with one of the advisors who will support them until they are successful in obtaining a placement.

Lauren explained that they are working closely with PCC departments and also Shaping Portsmouth to tie into those companies working with them to see what opportunities are available. These could be a couple of hours a day to start with as some of the young people will not be ready for a full day or week placement. They will then hopefully gain the confidence to work up to more days.

The young people who are NEET they will have an allocated careers advisor who will mentor them through their journey, this might be to return to education. They also work with the HIVE for workplace and volunteering opportunities and work closely with the Prince's Trust who have short programmes to boost young people's employability skills. In response to a question about what is missing from her point of view, Ms Bumstead said it is the opportunities that are missing and the support in the workplace. Some of these young people have had a difficult background so may need extra support and mentoring in the workplace so employers need to be empathetic

and patient with them. Ms Percy said another thing that benefits the young people they work is being paired with a younger member of staff who may have been through similar background and this can have a positive effect on the young people.

In response to a question, Ms Percy said that PCC track every young person who is leaving Year 11 and those who have not made a college placement or a training placement are prioritised and offered support. PCC has a big 'risk of NEET' programme where the risk of NEET indicators is reviewed from year 10. The indicators have just been revised to include some other factors. Her team then talk to the schools to offer support and in year 11 they have a risk of NEET programme which is partly funded by PCC, partly by schools and partly by colleges where they identify those most at risk of becoming NEET and an advisor will work with them from the Spring term in the school and in the Summer term take them to enrolment. Those referred to the team will often need work experience during that time. There is a drop-in service based on the ground floor of the Civic Offices where families and young people can drop in when its right for them and this is making a big difference. Mr Stoneman added that although PCC is very good at tracking these young people, the challenge is that the numbers who are NEET is increasing which is a concern. More placements for the young people would make a big difference but it was also important to be creative with these.

Lisa Morgan, Service Leader, Youth Offending Team, advised that she works with the most vulnerable and often present with challenging behaviour. They often struggle more in the workplace so need the extra support. She agreed that they are not looking for a two-week placement but it is more about showing a young person what a work place looks like and how it feels. This may start off as going in for an hour and then if that works out going in for half a day and building on that. There are more boys than girls in her service and they tend to be more interested in practical trades and sports and leisure. Many also just want a job to earn money but they have never had a job and do not realise what it entails. Sometimes they do complete the Prince's Trust courses as a stepping stone to employment. Ms Bumstead added that sometimes the young people have a fixed idea of what they want to do however if they sat and had a chat with someone doing the role they may decide its not for them and then they can look at other alternatives.

Ms Percy said they are trying to move away from the term 'work experience' to 'experiences of the workplace'. They gave an example of John who now works at PCC in security who had many years of support and training from the team and is doing well and is still being supported.

Sam Bushby, Deputy Director Children and Families added that young people with a variety of needs that need something very different in terms of opportunity. Some other young people are driven into the workplace due to family pressures and they feel they need to be bringing in income.

The Chair said she felt that discussions were needed with employers so that they recognise that with care experienced young adults there can be a lot of trauma so these young people will need extra support.

Ian Maguire, Assistant Director Economy, Transport and Planning

Mr Maguire said that the directorate was very varied and one of the more professional parts of the Council with chartered planners, surveyors and engineers and there are also roles in parking and administration and customer service. There are therefore lots of opportunities, however the ones he felt they had seen the best success of taster days was with their contracted partners such as Colas and coastal partners. He felt that this was intrinsic and there was more work to do around that. This is an element of social value which is now part of their procurement. This year Colas have done three placements with Havant and Southdowns College and the Transport team had some T level students in for work experience. Coastal partners have had a week long activity delivering that with local schools so there are lots of opportunities to embed this in their contracting with partners.

In terms of barriers Mr Maguire felt there were two main barriers:

Capacity; a senior member of staff has to be taken off their usual work to support and host a days work experience along with a junior member of staff so the work experience student has someone to interact, with is a lot of FTE production lost. He added that wholistically this is absolutely worth doing however this work will need to still be covered. If they wanted to do more placements, more management capacity would be needed.

Safeguarding and GDPR; bringing someone in for a short placement creates the same amount of work as a new member of staff. If they need access to servers to carry out any work, those serves will give them access to information that they may not be allowed to access and there are complicated procedures around that. These issues are resolvable however it is all officer time and cost to the Council and is one of the hidden costs that appear in service budgets. He added that they had seen some really good results bringing young people into the organisation. A lot of high-level apprenticeships in the directorate are level 6/7 which are delivered by universities and there are some delivered by college such as business administration.

In response to a question about whether a two hour site visit would be possible, Mr Maguire said it would be although there would still be a safeguarding challenge and require co-ordination.

Donna Hoyle, Adult Social Care

Ms Hoyle said that currently they are providing work experience to college students and she has been trying to co-ordinate this more with Portsmouth College. These are usually a two-week placement or longer but they could certainly offer a one day or shorter opportunities as discussed earlier.

In terms of barriers, she felt that these were DBS checks, risk assessments, GDPR and confidentiality generally and mandatory training, however if it was a short taster to look around and shadow someone, these would not be required. Ms Hoyle said she would be keen to explore that further. The usual types of roles they provide work experience in are ancillary roles such as administration or catering although do occasionally offer roles in care work

with supervision. Other options for work experience would be to shadow the activities co-ordinators, entertainers and fitness instructors who visit the care homes.

In response to a question, Ms Hoyle said that DBS checks take months to complete. Ms Bumstead added that they have a young person about to go onto a pre apprenticeship with the DASS service and she has not got the required documents to obtain the DBS so they are in the process of applying for these so that she can they obtain the DBS before she can start the apprenticeship. Due to the wait the young person can start to lose enthusiasm as they want to get started. Enhanced DBS checks take longer, there is a significant backlog which is affecting multiple areas around recruitment. Ms Bumstead added that it can be a further issue with those who are care experienced and have moved multiple times to obtain five years of address history with a letter each time and felt that the onboarding process needs to be more flexible for young people.

Ms Percy said they are looking to put together a package offering support to departments and preparation work such as the young person coming to a session in the Civic where they receive support before coming to do some visits, and asked Mr Maguire and Ms Hoyle if this was something they could facilitate. Ms Hoyle said yes and this is what she does with Portsmouth College, she will visit the college and take some staff along to prepare the young people before they start their placement. Mr Maguire said if there is a co-ordinated process and barriers are removed this would help get staff on board and volunteer their time to help a young person interested in doing work experience with them.

Councillor Vallely said if any of the young people were interested in politics she would be willing for to talk to them and they could shadow her. Ms Percy said they would take her up on the offer. In response to a question officers said that young people were not often interested in working with the police, the same with teaching. They were more interested in hands on or virtual careers rather than the traditional careers unfortunately. Members commented that it was all about exposure, young people need to see what careers are out there and that's why site visits are vital. The team are in close contact with the base and other local businesses about opportunities available.

Ms Bumstead added that some young people were part of the creative arts programme at Bransbury Park and the young people enjoyed being part of it and had a sense of achievement. Ms Percy said that the bespoke programmes work very well as they can be with a group of young people and the arts programme is something that they would like to replicate.

Members noted that they would hear from the remaining directorates at their meeting on 26 September. It was agreed that the meeting after that would be held on 17 October where they would hopefully hear from the Youth Cabinet and young people.

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## Portsmouth City Council Scrutiny Scoping Document

<b>Scrutiny Panel</b>	Education, Children and Young People
<b>Topic</b>	A review into work experience opportunities for young people / young adults within PCC
<b>Purpose of enquiry inc. potential outcomes.</b>  (The remit to be clear and concise as this statement forms the backbone of the enquiry)	<p>This topic was agreed by the Scrutiny Management Panel on 22 July 2024.</p> <p>To review the current extent of work experience opportunities for young people / young adults 14 - 25 within Portsmouth City Council, what the barriers are and what more we can do as a council to increase the availability and accessibility to a range of opportunities across all directorates. The work will extend to other opportunities that can provide a stepping stone to sustainable employment e.g. apprenticeships and internships.</p>
<b>Reason for enquiry</b>	<p>Many of the young people and young adults that we work with are struggling to access work experience opportunities. These include young people with SEND, care experienced young adults, those in the youth justice process; , young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET, children we care for, etc. Work experience opportunities are essential if they are going to progress in education, training and employment.</p> <p>The council already offers work experience opportunities in a variety of guises, but the potential exists to significantly increase the offer.</p>
<b>Enquiry format</b>	<p>Meeting to agree scoping document.</p> <p>Sequence of formal evidence gathering meetings</p> <p>Final meeting to finalise the report; ask any additional questions of officers</p>
<b>Corporate Priority linked to</b>	Lifelong learning
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Cllr Horton, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
<b>Relevant officers</b>	<p>Sarah Daly, Director of Children, Families and Education</p> <p>Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education</p> <p>Sam Bushby, Deputy Director, Children &amp; Families</p> <p>Amanda Percy, Post-16 Skills and Campaigns Manager</p>

	Jane Lamer, Head of Economic Growth and Skills Clare Poyner, Principal Social Worker Lauren Bumstead, Team Leader, Careers & Progression
Consultees & stakeholders	Officer reps from all PCC directorates Post-16 providers Local employers who offer work experience opportunities Young people and young adult representatives (including Portsmouth Youth Cabinet - managed by Unloc)
Start Date	22 July 2024
Target Completion Date	End of November 2024



## EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 26 September 2024 at 5.30 pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

### Present

Councillor Hannah Brent (in the Chair)

Councillors Yinka Adeniran  
Brian Madgwick  
Mary Vallely

#### 48. Apologies for absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Leonie Oliver and Lee Tindal. Apologies were also received from Education Representatives Rob Sanders and Helen Reeder.

#### 49. Declarations of members' interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 50. Review into work experience opportunities for young people within PCC (AI 3)

Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services

Natasha explained that this year the service had recruited 26 new apprentices; this was to young people as well as for existing staff, across 54 different apprenticeship standards. Examples included chartered surveyors, business administration, IT and customer service. They are also working to introduce supported internships, and she is a corporate sponsor for that.

There were some real successes with last year's cohort with going on to secure permanent employment. The service also uses social value policy to extend that to external opportunities with the Council's supply chain. They recently ran an event with suppliers who are contracted with the Council along with beneficiaries and young people, some who have learning disabilities. This was an immense success and welcomed by all of the attendees. The workshop gave the opportunity for young people to talk about the barriers they faced with gaining work experience and employment. Employers who employ young people were able to share their experience with other suppliers about overcoming some of the barriers in terms of recruiting and supporting young people in the workplace. This sharing has resulted suppliers actively looking to recruit people and participating more widely in the supported internship programme. More work is planned to focus on other groups such as care experienced young people as well as other groups who struggle to gain work experience and employment. Amanda Percy, Post 16 Skills and Campaign Manager, added with that the supported internship programme having the

links to suppliers made a huge difference and two of the Council's organisations; Voi scooters and Mountjoy, are now on board with this. The Council try to focus on those suppliers based in the city. There is a list of all suppliers through procurement and the Council have good relationships with all of the contractors so they reach out to them through procurement colleagues. Ms Edmunds said the directorate works with John Attrill the Learning and Disability Champion at the Council to use his contacts to reach out. They also worked with some of the other services they commission such as the Minstead Trust.

The directorate also build into some of the recruitment policies and training, the framework for managers to help them in developing their approach to recruiting young people. Some of the feedback they have received from staff when looking at recruitment systems is the barriers of recruitment for young people and ethnic minority communities. They are working with the Race Equality Network to address these barriers in recruitment for those communities.

In the last year, the directorate have supported two A-level students interested in politics to shadow councillors and she had supported members with this. The service has also previously supported sixth form students to observe the count for the General Election.

#### Barriers

Ms Edmunds felt that these were around the support required for young people, their work readiness and how the organisation supports them. This was one of the successes of the supported internship programme as there are job coaches and people to support them on what to expect in the workplace. Managers in the organisation must balance supporting a young person in the workplace with delivering a service with tight financial constraints and capacity challenges.

In response to a question from the Chair, Amanda Percy said that they were keen for young people to come into the Council to meet with staff to see what they do or have an 'information interview' where they ask a few questions to a manager find out how they got into the role, what they like and do not like for example, this can sometimes be enough for young people to move on a step and decide if this is a career they want to pursue. Ms Edmunds said that this is something the directorate could look at doing. The capacity of the organisation is the biggest barrier to co-ordinate this activity. The other barrier is attracting young people to come and complete work experience in the Council as it is not always seen as the most interesting option and people do not always realise what a local authority does so there is work to be done around promoting the vast opportunities within the Council.

The supply chain opens out the opportunity for work experience across a broader range of areas of work that might be more attractive to young people. She felt that if directorates knew more about the careers that young people are interested in, they could facilitate more opportunities within the Council and across the city. There is already a good link in place with the progression advisors and team leaders. Ms Percy said that one of the things the progression advisors have suggested is to host an 'experience week' at PCC

where a group of young people can come in and receive some learning on the first day on protocols and health and safety. They will then spend a phased week with time in every directorate to see what interests them.

In response to a question, Mr Stoneman said that unfortunately the numbers of young people aged 16-18 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) has increased. The Council does have a strong record of monitoring those young people and each has a progression advisor. Ms Bushby added that children seeking asylum are unable to work until they receive their 'leave to remain' however they can carry out work experience.

Claire Watkins, Business Development and Projects Manager and Rachel Richardson, Performance and Change Officer

Claire Watkins presented the report. She said that the museums collections give an opportunity for young people to explore identity and advocacy, and they have had some successful projects such as the 'I Will Movement' where young people used the D Day collection to explore how they could advocate for themselves. For parks, there is a funded arrangement with the Princes Trust to have opportunities for young people to get involved in the regeneration project at Victoria Park to gain valuable skills.

The apprenticeships they have offered were listed in the report and the directorate are engaging with Amanda Percy on the supported internships piece.

As part of the contractual arrangement with BH live there is a commitment to offer work experience for young people and they have also had apprenticeships that have progressed to permanent employment. Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre have also offered opportunities for work experience as part of the Andrew Simpson foundation.

Ms Richardson said that the Detectives Programme run at the library had some neurodiverse adults who volunteering for this. She had been speaking to Lauren Bumstead about opening this out to care experienced young people for two hours a week. Regulatory Services have said they are keen to hold some inspirational taster sessions for young people, the library and museums services will be offering the same. They can then go on to do work experience in any areas of interest.

#### Barriers

Ms Watkins felt the main barrier was funding. Most of the opportunities so far had been for short term where they had advocated a bid from an external source such as the Arts Council, which has given the funding to enable an outreach worker. She felt they would struggle with longer term work experience opportunities as they would require a member of staff to support the apprentice. The service did offer Kickstarts but there was no social support with it so managers were drawn away from business as usual and services were being affected. Some managers are also nervous on how to deal with young people who may have complex needs. Ms Richardson said it would be useful if there was some training for all managers in the Council on how to support these young people.

Ms Percy said that the Solent Careers Hub which is a partnership between Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight local authorities and they have done immersive days at the port. It would be good to transfer that model to the culture and regulatory services directorate as that brings staff to supervise.

Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health

Ms Atkinson said that there were approximately 60 people in the directorate, 30 of these are in the wellbeing service which is frontline work with residents. They are a formal training site for the Wessex Deanery and Health Education England so there is some NHS funding for training available. Every quarter the directorate takes three F2 doctors from Queen Alexandra Hospital who they train for three months. They also have GP registrars who stay in the directorate for six months as well as public health training posts who come for a year. The directorate must provide educational supervisors for every one of those training posts which can be up to 15 people at one time.

In the last year the directorate received some additional funding and support from the Wessex Deanery for research on social mobility and barriers to careers and they worked with 10 young adults from an ethnic minority group or deprived community about what stops them getting employment. Some useful learning came from this. Most of the people did not want a career in public health but wanted careers in health and care. The directorate then worked with HR and the directorate now attend all the career fairs. As of this year the directorate started supporting students at Havant & Southdowns College doing their T levels in Health and Social Care and they are given the opportunity to carry out work experience with the Wellbeing service. There are also three Community Health and Wellbeing worker apprenticeships for a period of 18 months which are funded by Wessex Deanery. There are a further two graduate trainee posts for two years and they get their practitioner recognition and other qualifications. The service also works closely with the University of Portsmouth with the medical school and dental academy. There are 70 pharmacy students from the university getting work experience coming in to carry out blood pressure checks. The Health Determinants Research funding to ensure the Council becomes a research focussed organisation and enable training of the community to become researchers. Starting in January 2025 there is funding for six undergraduate placements, (two per year or three years).

In response to a question, Ms Atkinson said she would be happy to offer taster days to young people. Ms Bushby said that many of the young people are interested in mental health and this could be an opportunity for work experience. Ms Atkinson said this could be explored and roles could be ringfenced for care experienced young people. Ms Percy added that young people often do not know about the opportunities. Members felt that communications could be used to help promote these opportunities.

Chris Ward, Director of Finance & Resources

Mr Ward explained that in the main the posts are professional occupations however there are many training opportunities available through a particular career pathway. Currently there are six trainee accountants there are also

accounting technicians, procurement and revenue and benefits all completing a professional qualification. He said the Council was atypical for this as most local authorities will recruit to their areas through the market. The graduate trainee programme is very structured and is for three and a half years. This is also offered to existing staff. There are also apprenticeship pathways which are based on turnover as there is limited funding available. When a post becomes vacant the directorate will consider whether an apprentice is an appropriate option. In the last 12 months the directorate have appointed at least two apprentices and all experiences with apprenticeships had been positive ones.

Apprenticeships had been offered in payroll, central financial planning, audit, accountancy. Four apprenticeships had been offered in the past two years and there had been take up of three. There are currently five trainee accountants.

### Barriers

Mr Ward said these are funding as it is limited. Another barrier is that the nature of their work is very deadline orientated with constant cycles where there is intense activity at various times and during these times it is difficult to support an apprentice. This means they need to be selective around timing. There is an embedded training regime that has supervision attached to it.

Mr Ward said what we put out in terms of our contracts and the social value offer, that would be the biggest driver to offer employment to young people. Ms Percy agreed and said it was important not to underestimate the support required for employers to make it work.

In response to statistical neighbours having good practice, Ms Percy said that they talk regularly. Southampton is in a similar position but they have more unknown children and look at Portsmouth and want to do what we do. The traded services with schools and colleges in Portsmouth is also very strong.

In response to a question, Ms Daly said that some of the needs of the care experienced young adults are great and at times the trauma will appear so it was important to look at how they support employers with this alongside them getting the job done. They would like to do more work around this. Some of the progression advisors also work in the traded service and are all qualified to or working towards level 6. There are approximately 5 FTE but at least 3 of these are concentrating their work with the traded service. The professional advisors are partly funded through the cash limit within the Council but a significant amount is through the traded services with the schools and colleges and various grants. Their case loads have doubled due to the increase in NEET numbers so more FTEs would be welcomed to meet the demand. In response to a question Ms Daly said that employer patrons could be something to explore with external partners.

### Jo Bennett, Assistant Director Housing Need and Supply Play and youth service

Jo said she felt the strongest practice in terms of career pathways was in youth and play services and also in building services, where they have focussed hard on creating the professionals needed for the future. Within

youth and play the team have been helping to write a play work apprenticeship programme. There have been four school aged work experience placements in the past two years within youth and play. They are also listed for opportunities on the supported internship programme and they have regular university placements for those studying youth work; there have been approximately 15 in the last two years. As a service they are looking at whether they can offer T levels in childcare. Play and youth have employed one play worker apprentice and have plans to advertise more posts as apprenticeship opportunities when they have capacity. There are currently 10 apprentices, 9 existing staff members and one new apprentice to the service. With regard to university students 20-25 students were offered opportunities within play and youth. One of the barriers can therefore be professional boundaries and the need to consider the appropriateness of a placement. They are also difficult careers to come into at a young age.

#### Housing, Neighbourhoods and Buildings

The team are responsible for all Council buildings, leasehold properties as well as the commercial properties; there are about 18,000 properties. Comserv offer 15 work placements per year, Mountjoy offer four work placements per year and Liberty gas offer two work placements per year. The buildings repair service also offers one placement per year. There are a number of technical professions and one of the things that could be done is to offer a 'look/see' for young people to come into the directorate to see every area and then be told the options you would need to choose to go forward with the career. This is something being looked into.

There are currently 13 building surveyor degree apprentices, two surveying technician apprenticeships, one business administrator apprenticeship and one architect degree apprenticeship. Last year an apprenticeship was created in the homelessness service which has been extremely successful. She felt that the directorate was very good at accommodating young people into posts but felt more could be done in sharing the experiences of the apprentices to encourage more into the service. She felt that the Council could also support young people more in work readiness. There was a piece that one of the contractors had done where the young people were asked just three interview questions and she thought this was a brilliant initiative that the Council could use. She added that the directorate does not have ring fenced placements for care experienced young people but could look at this as well as the 'menu' of options available in the directorate to show young people what is out there.

The meeting concluded at 7.00 pm.

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Councillor Hannah Brent  
Chair

## Education Children & Young People Scrutiny 2024

### Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services Directorate.

1. What you are currently doing with regard to work experience opportunities and other related opportunities for young people / young adults;
2. How many placements have been offered over the last two years and in what type of roles; and
3. What you perceive to be the barriers and opportunities of having a young person / young adult in your directorate doing work experience or other related opportunities.

#### Question 1

#### What are we currently doing with regard to work experience opportunities and other related opportunities for young people?

*'A vibrant cultural ecosystem creates jobs, supports health and wellbeing, enhances learning and opens up opportunities for young people'* - Local Government Association, Cornerstones of Culture, Commission on Culture & Local Government, 2022.

If we are able to encourage young people's participation in culture and leisure activities, this in turn builds the accumulation of cultural and social capital, where activity participation builds social support and confidence. Cultural institutions such as museums, galleries and libraries in particular are well placed to facilitate participation by young people, by leveraging memory, belonging and identity.

#### Supporting Care Experienced Young People

CLRS have offered aspirational taster sessions and work experience opportunities for CEYP in Regulatory Services, Library & Archives Service and Museums service. We have also linked in with our Leisure provision partner, BH Live, who are also keen to support this initiative and are working directly with the project lead, Lauren Bumstead.

#### Museums

Partnership working with Artswork [Our Work With Young People | Artswork](#) enabled 15 young people in care to achieve their bronze arts awards via access to exhibitions and collections. The Museum Service are an ArtsMark partner which means local schools are aware of what we can provide to help young people.

In recent years the Museum Service has also delivered the Whatever Floats Your Boat project which connected the Landing Craft Tank ship and its past life as a nightclub to LGBTQ+ youth and club culture. The museum worked with the 4U Youth Group [LGBTQ+ young people and their families](#) which supports young people 13-19 who identify as LGBTQ+. This involved creating mini LCTs that were decorated by the young people and suspended from LCT 7074.

As part of National Carers Week in 2021, the D Day Story commissioned an artist and film-maker to work with Portsmouth Young Carers on *Push The Boat Out*. This opportunity enabled the young carers to engage in the project to restore and install the Landing Craft Tank 7074. The Young Carers group also worked with the Museum writer in residence (National Lottery funded) to produce a children's story book about Gustav the RAF messenger pigeon.

External project funding also enabled for a Youth Engagement Officer to be recruited for a fixed term in 2023 to work with young people, as part of the I Will Movement [Youth Action: UK Youth Charity Empowering 10-25 Year Olds \(iwill.org.uk\)](#). More details about this project are found here: [Update on Youth Engagement project from The D-Day Story.pdf \(portsmouth.gov.uk\)](#).

We have recruited a number of young adults as volunteers for our Engagement Team and Natural History team.

### **Libraries**

Each year the Libraries Service organises and provides the Summer Reading Challenge to address the reading 'dip' over the school holidays. The service recruits young people (aged 12 to 24) as volunteers to listen to the young children talk about the books they have read. Last year 85% of volunteers were aged between 12 and 24. The volunteering helps young people with their CVs and also contributes towards the volunteering element of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Many young people then go on to volunteer with the library to gain work experience.

The service also has regular school / college / work experience placements that typically last a week.

Occasional placements are linked to Job Centre Plus - these can last up to eight weeks and our first cohort was in 2013.

Central Library also accommodates Minstead Trust and their café, Lily & Lime, provides training to young people via a contract with Adult Social Care.



Funded projects like the *Doyle Detectives* have also given volunteering opportunities to over 30 young people and vulnerable adults, many of whom are still volunteering for libraries after the project has concluded.

## **Parks**

The Portsmouth Interaction Service, which supports individuals with mental health conditions, has for some years referred a group to Hilsea Lines (Countryside Team) for outdoor experience. There is a group comprising individuals with neurodiversity needs, who volunteer at the site. Both groups comprise young people for the most part, who have an interest in the site and can be active in a supportive environment.

The Countryside Team also provide placements for local school and college students, including from the Alternative Provision scheme.

Practical work and field trips are also provided for young people.

## **Victoria Park 'People's Park' project**

National Lottery Heritage funding has enabled a large-scale regeneration project to be undertaken at Victoria Park.

The new community building, The Green House, has been built intentionally as a community space, to facilitate activities and outreach. This has included the following opportunities for young people:

- Delivery of training sessions under Society of St. James (SSJ) to support people recovering from addiction back into employment. A significant group of these attendees have been under 25.
- A regular LGBTQ+ support group on Friday afternoons, to support those recovering from addiction back into employment, predominantly attended by under 25s.
- Unloc hired The Green House to unveil 'A Better Life' sculpture and host a celebratory event for the young people involved in this social action project. This provided opportunities for the young people to practice public speaking and presentation to an audience of 30. The project was funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

When the Victoria Park project was in delivery stage, external project funding towards young people included collaborative working between young people and artists to co-create a welcoming murals entrance to the park from the Commercial Road entrance.

Future plans include working with local primary and secondary schools to use the space as an outdoor classroom opportunity.

## **King George V (KGV) Football Complex**

The KGV football complex is a large-scale Council capital project that completed in Spring 2024. Operation of the site has now been handed over under contract to Hampshire Football Association.

The complex is ideally situated to undertake outreach and detached youth work with the young people who use the site and local area. As such, Youth Investment Funding grant monies have enabled the Council to source a youth provider, Motiv8, who will hold youth hub delivery during evenings at the site, together with detached youth sessions. Youth hub activity will be free to attend and offered on an open access voluntary basis.

The youth hub sessions will provide opportunities for young people (8 - 19 years old and up to 25 for those with learning difficulties and disabilities) to explore their identity, experience decision making, increase confidence, develop interpersonal skills and think through consequences of actions to lead to improved outcomes for young people. Engagement techniques will include health and wellbeing, sport, art and cultural activities.

## **Seafront**

The service are working with young people to provide work experience opportunities at the Waterfront Café.

## **Sport**

The contract between the Council and the sports provider, BH Live, provides for a dedicated sports development team, including a lead for young people. This has included intervention activities such as offering free access to leisure activities for young people who have offended. Future opportunities include collaboration with local partners via multi-agency delivery to tackle anti-social behaviour across sites.

BH Live are also developing a young person talent pathway to support sports engagement in young people.

They also work with local colleges and schools that use the facilities to offer Front Of House work experience and/or lifeguard shadowing as part of a work experience package. Lifeguarding work areas tend to comprise a younger workforce therefore this works well. It can also result in individuals proceeding to take the National Pool Lifeguarding Qualification (NPLQ), which can result in employment with BH Live.

## **Andrew Simpson Foundation**

The Andrew Simpson Centre, situated on the Eastern Road, is under a service agreement with the Council. The Centre is the delivery mechanism for the Andrew

Simpson Foundation, whose mission is to provide opportunities for hard-to-reach communities of young people.

Work has included successful charitable bids for funding, to provide opportunities for young people to try watersports and develop skills and qualifications. Some of these young people have gone on to become instructors and coaches, entering employment pathways.

The Foundation works closely with around 60 schools (half of which are Portsmouth schools). This includes provision of work experience placements and Duke of Edinburgh activities. Placements are provided for up to 4 students at a time. Outside of formal work experience, volunteering opportunities are provided for young people aged 14+. Many of these volunteers are able to progress to instructing qualifications and paid work.

### **Performance Venues & revenue clients**

Within our directorate we have a Commissioning and Partnership Service. The service manager oversees an annual budget for our revenue clients. These clients comprise performance and artistic venues, where the Council provides seed funding, to enable them to make applications for large funding for cultural activity.

In return for the funding, the clients commit to a service level agreement (SLA), which commits them to certain metrics, for example social value, equality and diversity, etc.

The manager will review the wording within the existing SLAs to see if there is an option to have any opportunities for young people included in the organisations' offer, to be complied with in the reporting summary which is provided to the Council at the end of the financial year.

Revenue clients: Case studies:

#### **Portsmouth Creates**

The We Shine festival provides opportunity for young people to engage in arts and culture in an accessible way. In 2022 this included light media and dance workshops amongst the activities. This year, the *Doyle Detectives* project will be involved in the We Shine event organisation within Central Library. Opportunities for our care experienced young people are also being explored presently to volunteer with the *Doyle Detectives*.

#### **Aspex Portsmouth**

- Engaged with 13 schools, colleges and universities in 2022

- 4 x Kickstart placements
- 1 x Young Person placement (SEN)
- Young Curators programme (14-19s) launched in October 2021, providing opportunities to plan and commission exhibitions.

Aspex' work programme for young people is supported by Arts Council England funding.

## Question 2

### **How many placements have been offered over the past 2 years and in what type of roles?**

The directorate has offered various placements over the past 2 years, including:

#### Pre-Apprenticeship placement

The Museums Service supported a care experienced young person in a pre-apprenticeship work placement.

#### Apprenticeships

The directorate has provided the following:

- Regulatory Compliance Level 4 ( x2)
- Business Administration Level 3 ( x1)
- Business & Professional Administration Level 4 ( x1)
- Horticulture Operations Level 2 ( x3)
- Masters in Business Administration (MBA) Strategy & Leadership, Level 7 ( x1)
- Archives and Modern Records Level ( x2)

#### Kickstarts

This government scheme was available to young people aged 16-24 at risk of long-term unemployment. The directorate offered the following placements:

- Seafront, 2 x placements (Waterfront Tea Rooms)
- Events, 1 x placement
- Hotwalls, 1 x placement
- Museums:
  - Southsea Castle & Cumberland House, 4 x placements
  - Portsmouth Museum, 2 x placements
  - D Day Story, 6 x placements
- Libraries, 2 x placements
- Parks Grounds Maintenance, 2 x placements

#### **Supported Internships**

CLRS are keen to continue to support the Supported Internships initiative and have 3 placements about to join our Parks and Open Spaces team.

### Sports

Our contracted sports provider, BH Live, has offered up to 20 placements in the last two years across front of house and lifeguarding roles.

They have also provided 2 apprenticeships for the Community Activator Coach Level 2. One postholder has successfully completed and one is 7 months into her apprenticeship.

The postholder who completed her apprenticeship was then able to secure a permanent role as Junior Activities Co-ordinator and has since progressed to a further role within local government.

### Andrew Simpson Centre

In the last couple of years the centre has accommodated:

- 14 diploma students (NCFE Diploma in Sports and Physical Activities (Outdoors) 2 year course which equips young people with instructor qualifications.
- 40 School work experience placements
- 12 Kickstart placements
- 6 Multi-Activity Leadership Programme (this scheme, similar to Kickstart, was run by the Andrew Simpson Centre using government funding once the Kickstart scheme had closed).
- 50 volunteer placements

### Victoria Park

The project is working closely with the University of Portsmouth to advertise placement opportunities to students. 5 students in the last 6 months have gained work experience by volunteering in roles including horticulture, events, social media and digital marketing.

The Prince's Trust programme (shortly to be known as King's Trust), which targets unemployed 16-25 year old cohort is also engaged. One of their programmes is located in Portsmouth and will take place at Victoria Park. This will be an opportunity for young people to take part in a transformation project to upgrade the parks operatives mess room. The Trust's programme will support them to gain skills in painting, decoration and renovation.

### Libraries

In the last couple of years the service have accommodated

- 56 Summer Reading Challenge volunteers aged 12-24 in our libraries;
- 28 School/College work experience placements;
- 1 Job Centre placement; and
- 11 young people building up volunteer hours for a Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The young people have been attending the following schools and colleges:

- Admiral Lord Nelson School
- Ark Charter Academy
- HDSC
- Horndean Technology College
- Oaklands Catholic School
- Portsmouth Academy
- Swanmore College
- Trafalgar School

Many of those on library placement have used the opportunity as a CV builder as they move on to further education or the workplace and the service are approached for references on occasion. One of our original cohorts of Job Centre Plus candidates undertook his work placement at Southsea Library and shortly after finishing, obtained paid employment as a secondary school librarian.

### Seafront

3 young people appointed on a casual (seasonal) basis at the Waterfront Café.

### **Question 3**

**What you perceive to be the barriers and opportunities of having a young person / young adult in your directorate doing work experience or other related opportunities.**

The barriers can be summarised as follows and are explored further below:

Limited capacity for cover for apprentice training (when apprentice is on 'off the job' training)	Deletion of posts in environment of budget cuts has reduced staff capacity to train and supervise trainee/apprenticeship roles.	No progression route due to flat organisational structures	Social support requirements
External funding dependent but short term only	Placement may have limited value due to job role	Safeguarding	IT access & equipment

## **Budget & training**

Apprenticeships require 20% off the job training - this is difficult to accommodate in small teams where there is limited capacity to provide cover.

Regulatory services have collaborated with other Local Authorities and training providers to create an apprenticeship standard for the role of Regulatory Compliance Officer (Level 4), creating an opportunity for us to “grow our own”, to address medium to long term succession planning. However, in recent times when a member of staff has left, the post (which would be allocated as the apprentice development post) has been deleted to meet budget cuts. Even when a vacancy does occur that could be filled with an apprentice, there is limited capacity within the team to support the person in post.

There is a risk that budget restrictions mean that senior posts are not available, so there is no progression route and the postholder leaves the Council.

With the Kickstart placements, the government did not provide support to address absence management issues and behavioural and social challenges. A high degree of social support was required for this scheme but did not form part of the government design scope.

Volunteers or those on placement with complex needs are better accommodated by funded projects where it has been possible to recruit to specific support.

Supported Internships provide individuals with a job coach, who teaches them to undertake the tasks and provides social support. This removes the complexities for our managers to be able to support these types of initiatives.

As with Apprenticeships, there was no budget available for the Kickstart placements to become permanent, however they did help with seasonal recruitment demands.

Work experience has taken place at the seafront via a partnership with a local school. However, the primary time for the seafront business operation was at the weekend, which made it difficult for the school to support the young people working.

In Libraries, challenging customer behaviours can arise from library users which can have a significant impact on a young person volunteering or on placement.

## **External funding**

There is no shortage of opportunities for the engagement of young people, however with the current staffing budget there is a requirement for a funding allocation to facilitate the work. In some circumstances, this has been made possible via Arts

Council funding, for example the autumn gallery exhibition (Museums Service) has an accompanying programme of intervention work which is funded by the Arts Council.

With facilitation of opportunities being made possible by time limited external funding pots, there is a risk of disjointed relationships and a hindered ability to plan for the long term.

Further funding could enable our services to develop more intentional youth offers, with the right supervisory support. For example, funding for an Engagement Officer on a permanent basis could enable co-production opportunities for young people to be engaged in experience with culture and leisure services. The majority of our services across the directorate are comprised of small staff teams, with the majority of staff customer facing. There is therefore limited resource based on current budgeted structures to support work experience opportunities.

### **Safeguarding and IT**

Capacity to provide a consistent and interesting work experience offer can be a challenge, especially with safeguarding concerns. Not all our staff have DBS checks and this may restrict the opportunities for young people.

Any staff undertaking lone working with a young person require DBS checks to be carried out. This can take a considerable amount of time to progress through the system (4-5 weeks lead in time).

Depending on the placement concerned, some opportunities may need IT access. Consideration needs to be given Council wide to IT provision for work experience opportunities, for roles that would require IT access, as pool laptops are no longer available.



## **Opportunities**

Experience with young volunteers and placements has been mostly positive. Many of them can use the opportunities as a CV builder to enable them to move onto further education or the workplace.

Should the right support and budget be available, then departments will be able to utilise opportunities for young people to help towards workforce planning.

Several placements have progressed to permanent roles:

- Libraries: one of the Job Centre Plus candidates undertook their work placement at Southsea Library. Shortly after placement conclusion, they obtained paid employment as a secondary school librarian.
- Parks: one of our horticulture apprentices, upon finishing their Level 2 apprenticeship, was successful in securing a permanent grounds maintenance role.
- BH Live: an apprentice (Community Activator Coach Level 2) secured a permanent role as Junior Activities Coordinator.

### **Comments from external providers:**

BH Live: line management resourcing is a challenge, to ensure that the young people on placements get good value from the experience. We are mindful with how busy the centres can be at times.

There is also some limitation around what the placements can do, as they are not permitted to carry out the cleaning or working with chemicals, which forms a significant part of the roles concerned.

Andrew Simpson Centre: Barriers can include transport to the site and perceived lack of experience (but this is not the problem that the young people perceive it is).

Opportunities include the chance for young people to increase their skills and gain qualifications, contributing to opportunities for them when they are older.

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**Public Health Directorate response to the Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel request work experience opportunities for young people / young adults (aged 14 to 25)**

Question	Response
<p>What you are currently doing with regard to work experience opportunities and other related opportunities for young people / young adults;</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Over the past three years our directorate has looked at social mobility and barriers to employment in public health at both a local and system level. The research we have undertaken with Health Education England funding looked at 'how' a young person could get into a public health career. As a directorate we are working to implement the research findings across our team in recent and future recruitment. We will be attending future careers fayres in the City to highlight a career in public health as a potential option as one of the recommendations was to improve the public health profile locally with further and adult educators in the City.</li> <li>2. Nationally there is a now a clear pathway into a public health career with the recent implementation of a level 6 integrated degree apprenticeship to support traditional registration with the United Kingdom Public Health Register (UKPHR), at an earlier entry point in careers (college leavers).</li> <li>3. Historically registration at practitioner level is a retrospective process which lends itself to development - many members of our team, and other teams in the council, have worked to achieve registration, several of these individuals have come from apprentices employed by the Wellbeing Service in PH. We have members of the team who started with us in training roles as their first employment at 18/19, who are now in permanent roles with the opportunity to develop further skills and knowledge.</li> <li>4. At present we have three Community Health and Wellbeing Worker Apprentices (Level 3 - 18 month) these roles are a great opportunity for young people with limited experience within the PH field. We actively look for key traits/attributes and not experience. We develop the level 3 apprentices providing them opportunities to study, gain skills and knowledge and prepare for practitioner registration with the UKPHR</li> <li>5. Our Band 5 Tobacco Dependency Advisor roles and Band 6 Practitioner role job descriptions are open to those with customer service experience and not solely 3 years' experience of working within the public health field which is commonplace for such roles. We also cater to shadowing days to students, in particular student midwives.</li> <li>6. Every 2 years we run the Community Safety Survey, a face to face survey of around 1,000 Portsmouth residents. We recruit (predominantly) students from UoP to carry out the fieldwork. This is a paid role but gives them valuable work experience.</li> <li>7. In 2024 we have supported students from South Downs College doing their T levels in health &amp; social care, providing opportunities to support community groups and activities attended by our Wellbeing Service and Community Champions in the city. The students were with members of the team for a week. The students were able to gain experience in this essential area of health and care - this is something we are working with both Portsmouth College and Havant &amp; Southdown's Colleges in 2025 further highlighting a path into public health careers</li> </ol>

	<p>8. Through our Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) starting Jan 2025 we have included funding for 6 undergraduate placements (2 per year for 3 years). These will be paid roles for 9 months for students undertaking a relevant degree at the University of Portsmouth to get involved in local research addressing health inequalities. This will give them valuable experience for a future career in research, hopefully within the local system. It will also provide us with learning about how we can support similar opportunities for young people in future. We are also exploring how we can support young people to take advantage of the 'community researcher' roles we are planning through the HDRC.</p>
<p>How many placements have been offered over the last two years and in what type of roles;</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As mentioned above we have <b>three</b> Community Health and Wellbeing Worker Apprentices (Level 3 - 18 month) these roles are a great opportunity for young people with limited experience within the PH field and are recruited from the Portsmouth area.</li> <li>2. With funding from the Wessex School of Public Health, we have recruited <b>two</b> Public Health Graduate Trainees, who started in September 2023. The posts were highly sought after, with 120 applicants. We were able to recruit two young graduates from the local area each with a Masters degree in a subject relevant to public health. Over 2 and a half years, these post holders will complete public health projects and a learning portfolio enabling them to register as Public Health Practitioners with the UKPHR, a nationally recognised qualification/registration. Public Health Graduate Trainee candidates were deliberately recruited from the local area, they offer great opportunities for individuals interested in developing their technical public health skills but were not experienced in the work place. Through these early career posts we hope to develop a strong skill base and career development opportunities for local young adults in the public health team in Portsmouth.</li> <li>3. Public Health also host between <b>6 to 9</b> Foundation Year 2 doctors every year, doctors who have completed their medical degree and are in the second year of work. Placements are linked to Portsmouth University Hospital Trust, are 4 months long, and tend to be split with general practice training (GPs) . It gives junior doctors a great foundation and insight into public health principles and practice, that informs their understanding of prevention, tackling health inequalities and good quality community medicine.</li> <li>4. Public Health have worked in partnership with the University of Portsmouth (UoP) and the integrated Care Board (ICB) in the last year with pharmacy undergraduate students. We worked with over <b>70</b> students in 2023 to prepare them for working in pharmacy or community settings. Public health do not host the placements but we have had a substantial role in creating the opportunity. The work is directly linked to inspiring the future pharmacy workforce which is a priority for Health and Care Portsmouth. We have trained all the students in Making Every Contact Count (MECC) and how to undertake blood pressure checks which they have done in community settings (food bank, sparks etc) as well as in the Civic Offices for staff. There will be another cohort of students repeating the project later this year. While some of these young people are unlikely to be from Portsmouth, we hope that this inspires the future pharmacy workforce to view Portsmouth as a good place to work when they finish their training.</li> </ol>

<p>What you perceive to be the barriers and opportunities of having a young person / young adult in your directorate doing work experience or other related opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Apprentice roles require large investment in training and mentoring however the return on investment is worth it, enabling younger people to learn and develop and build a passion in helping people within health and care related areas of work is very rewarding for them and us. This impact could have a long-lasting positive effect throughout the healthcare system in Portsmouth if everyone provided these opportunities.</li><li>2. In the case of training posts, these roles require substantial support and guidance from more senior members of the team. For doctors in training, this requires us to have qualified and registered educational supervisors who are our Consultants/Assistant Directors in PH.</li><li>3. The main barrier to offering work experience or placements in the Intelligence team in PH is that alot of the work is technically challenging and difficult to get someone to do in a meaningful way without considerable investment of time and training.</li></ol>

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## **EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 17 October 2024 at 5.00 pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Hannah Brent (in the Chair)

Councillors Brian Madgwick  
Mary Vallely  
Lee Tindall

#### **51. Apologies for absence (AI 1)**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Adeniran, Councillor Oliver and Rob Sanders (diocese representative).

#### **52. Declarations of members' interests (AI 2)**

There were no declarations of members' interests.

#### **53. Minutes of previous meetings (AI 3)**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meetings held on 12 September 2024 and 26 September 2024 be approved as a correct record.**

#### **54. A review into work experience opportunities for young people within PCC (AI 4)**

##### Tiffany

She said in terms of challenges she had found it hard to access some qualifications which had held her back in being able to undertake new opportunities. She had dealt with a lot of emotional stress in her life having to act as a carer for three siblings and had little self-confidence. She had found it hard accessing work experience opportunities due to the lack of qualifications and experience.

Tiffany is now a Participation apprentice at Portsmouth City Council studying Customer Services level 2 and said that she was very grateful for this opportunity. She would like to work her way up to become a social worker. She felt that having more apprenticeship opportunities available would help other young people in the same position gain valuable work experience and skills to be able to progress.

In response to a question regarding what had held her back, she said that she felt that she had not been supported very well emotionally and if someone was there to recognise her small achievements and encourage her it would have helped massively. In addition she said she had not know what

opportunities are available and being independent she had not wanted to reach out for help.

Tiffany also said she had found it difficult to know how to prepare for an interview; knowing what to expect and what questions to ask. Her personal advisor (PA) advised her about the Employability Hub and she did seek help from them and felt the staff there really supported her and guided her in the right direction. She was with them for three or four months and they helped advise on clothes for the interview.

In response to a question about PAs, Keeley Mitchell, Head of Adolescents and Young people said a care experienced young person will be allocated a PA from the age of 16 and have access to them until the age of 25, unless at 21 they choose not to have one anymore and the Council agrees to this. This is a statutory duty. Between the ages of 16 and 18 the PAs will focus on growing the young persons independence and will then identify a pathway plan for them. Officers said they felt it was the opportunities available for young people is what is lacking. Ms Bushby added that the team does a lot of support young people but there is more that can be done to look at opportunities outside of PCC and a lot of this is about awareness of what is out there. Adam Murphy added that the ages of 16-18 are a very difficult transition period for young people and it can be difficult to focus primarily on education or employment when they also have to look at their housing and other areas.

Sarah Daly said Children's Services offer apprenticeships to young people with various backgrounds and have had fantastic experiences with this and the young people have taught the team various new skills and been a fantastic asset. It was hoped that other directorates within PCC would offer more apprenticeships to young people who may have had a more challenging background.

Written information from a careers and progression advisor:

- General lack of opportunities for young people in the city in terms of employment and progression.
- The young people we are working with are becoming more complex and often presenting with lots of barriers around progression such as lack of engagement/attendance in education for significant periods of time.
- Education is not always the appropriate next step for our young people but equally they are not prepared for work or lack experience needed to compete in a competitive employment market.
- Opportunities for work experience are again lacking, with employers not wanting to commit to work experience due to various barriers such as time required, health and safety training, hybrid staffing arrangements.
- As a diverse employer, PCC could offer young people purposeful work experience in a wide range of areas to suit many needs to reinvest back into the city.
- Ideas could include, a rolling programme where all departments have to pledge a number of hours to the service.



- This would improve insight into different roles for young people and provide them with a credible reference to then add to job applications and CV's.
- Consider a pledge from each department to a number of hours per year?
- Young people could be offered an interview to make the process more formal and purposeful also?
- Overseen by the careers and progression team in terms of allocating students for interview and liaising with departments for availability.
- Could also have a calendar of three two week blocks over the year - open up to disengaged Year 10?

#### Jess

Jess said that she had moved around various different foster homes which had made it difficult to make relationships. She had no qualifications and had no support in finding work experience. She was referred to the hub by her social worker and was lucky to get an apprenticeship with the council and alongside this she is studying for her Maths and English qualifications. She felt that more social workers needed to be aware of the Employability Hub.

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#### Mackenzie

Mackenzie is the chair of the Portsmouth Youth Cabinet and was representing the views of the young people.

She explained that the youth Cabinet have sent out two surveys within the last year:

- The Council of Portsmouth Students (CoPS) Survey, which had 656 responses from Year 7 - 13 students of students from all schools in Portsmouth:
  - 44.4% of young people said they had little knowledge on careers and the same percentage said they would like to know more.
  - 37.2% of young people said they would be interested in city wide careers fairs to discover the careers available to them.
  - 21.6% said they would attend (these career fairs).
- The second survey sent by the Youth cabinet had 83 responses from 11 -18 year olds:
  - 91.5% have not have a paid job.
  - 65.4% have wanted a job but have been unable to get one.
  - 91.9% of young people said they would welcome more opportunities for paid employment.

Shaping Portsmouth have recently launched a Youth Employment Programme to tackle the barriers young people face with employment. One applicant said they applied because they have not had the chance to do work experience as their school doesn't offer it until the end of year 10. Another applicant said they think work experience in Portsmouth is wide and varied but very hard to access as people do not know how to find out about

work experience. Mackenzie said she had been lucky enough to have had multiple work experience placements,

Last December, Motiv8 set up interviews and skill workshops at Gunwharf, it was through this in which Mackenzie got her first job. However, this has been the only one which has taken place. She had been on work experience with both Motiv8 and Shaping Portsmouth. She felt that the time she had spent with these organisations have been beneficial to me and my journey towards her career. Young people want to work, develop skills, earn money and be in the real world, but the opportunities for them to do so are few and far between.

With regard to the Youth Employment Programme, there is a website, and they will match a young person to a job. The young person will create a CV listing their skills and education and they will then be linked to a job. Mackenzie felt the biggest barrier was that businesses are not confident in hiring young people. In response to a question the panel Jessi Wilson from Unloc thought that only two businesses had signed up so far since the programme was launched in March. The panel felt it would be useful to hear from one of the businesses at the next meeting.

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- Omar

Omar said he was studying mechanics at college then decided it was not for him and decided he wanted to work in construction but found it very difficult to get a job due to having no experience. Once he left college he asked his personal advisor for help and he is now doing a customer service apprenticeship in customer service at PCC.

Sam Bushby said that the service had developed greatly since Omar started.

Lauren Bumstead said the council had recently purchased a digital badge system where young people are awarded a badge for achievements and to show that young people have been engaged with them. These can be added onto their email signature, social media or CV. It was hoped that some businesses would sponsor these badges in the future.

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- Kim

Kim moved into care a week before her GCSEs which meant that she did not get very good grades. She started college but was lacking motivation and felt she had no support from the college so ended up leaving. She attends the Corporate Parenting Board meetings at PCC and also the Children in Care Council meetings which she enjoys contributing to. Sam Bushby added that Kim had sat on numerous interview panels for social workers and the young people on the panels can ask their own interview questions.

Adam Murphy then read out some quotes:

Apprentice in seafront services:

"When I completed my apprenticeship with Portsmouth City Council I felt really proud of my achievement, but without the support from my manager to help me get through the bad days, the days I wake up thinking about my life and getting out of bed can be a really big struggle. It was always my manager and the team that helped and supported me in lots of what probably seemed like odd ways to most normal people, for example phoning me and picking me up some days to encourage me, I was send home a couple of times to have a shower and get better prepared for the day. All of this support came with no expectation and I was not made to feel like a failure, and it is so important when supporting care leavers not to add to their feeling of already being worthless. I hope that the people that supported me got something out of it and not just me, but I can assure you as my first real job I could not have had a better introduction to working"

Former Participation apprentice:

"The support I was given by Karley and Adam during my apprenticeship was second to none, I often find myself in my current work looking back to that support in great envy, if only I had made more of it. Unfortunately I did not complete my apprenticeship, fortunately I managed to get my maths qualification that has turned out much more helpful than I imagined, at the time of taking part in the apprenticeship I did not really know what I wanted to even where I wanted to be, but even though I probably made Karley and Adam work harder they kept the support up and never gave up. Now I may muffed up that chance but today living in with my 2 children and with a full time job, it was what I learnt from my job at Portsmouth that gave me the knowledge so when I was really ready for work I knew how to pull it off. The support has also kept up only a couple of months ago I contacted Adam as I was struggling in my job due to my dyslexia and he send me over the software that we used when I worked for him. So my message is probably that even when it looks like its not going well, the care leavers will value and appreciate that you stuck with them and it will help them in their lives."

Adam said that care experienced young people come to them with a variety of qualifications and backgrounds and for the roles in his team the primary quality is their lived experience. The qualifications they do are tailored around them, rather than the role

The panel thanked all the young people for attending today and felt they had done very well in putting forward the voices of young people.

The meeting concluded at 6.30 pm.

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Councillor Hannah Brent  
Chair



## **EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 28 November 2024 at 5.00 pm in the Executive Meeting Room, Guildhall.

### **Present**

Councillor Hannah Brent (in the Chair)  
Councillors Yinka Adeniran  
Brian Madgwick  
Mary Vallely  
Lee Tindall  
Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE

#### **55. Apologies for absence (AI 1)**

Apologies had been received from Rob Sanders and Helen Reeder (education representatives) also Councillor Horton and Sarah Daly, Director of Children, Families and Education.

#### **56. Declaration of members' interests (AI 2)**

Councillor Vernon-Jackson declared a personal interest in that he is the Deputy Chair of the LGA Children and Young Person Board. Councillor Brent declared a personal interest as she works at the City of Portsmouth College.

#### **57. Minutes of previous meeting (AI 3)**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 October 2024 be approved as a correct record.**

#### **58. A review into work experience opportunities for young people within PCC (AI 4)**

Jessi Wilson, Unloc/Shaping Portsmouth

Jessi explained that Unloc is a social enterprise based in the Guildhall. They have four pillars, one of which is 'Youth Voice' and part of this is facilitating the Portsmouth Youth Cabinet. She has since started as the facilitator and programme lead for the Youth Employment Programme. The Youth Cabinet currently have 21 young people aged between 13-18 years old and several have signed up to the Youth Employment Programme. Unfortunately, the positions for work experience are not available for them currently and many have struggled to find placements on their own. Unloc have noticed a gap in skills of young people being able to create a CV, with interview preparation and formal email/telephone communication and they are able to help facilitate with this through some of their programmes.

In response to questions, Jessi said that:

- They were targeting the 13–16 year-olds with helping with CVs as this age group had not had the skills to do this previously.
- One of the other pillars of Unloc is looking at careers specifically so some of Jessi's colleagues have done careers based skills, but it is usually determined by the schools and colleges, who may not realise there is a gap there. Amanda Percy, Post 16 Skills and Campaign Manager, added that there is good uptake from schools. Schools have other offers where they can look at CVs, but they do like the offer from Unloc. It was key to match the right offer to the right schools.

The Solent Careers Hub is new to Portsmouth which consists of Portsmouth, Southampton and IoW local authorities, with Portsmouth as the lead. Within PCC there is the careers service which goes into schools as a traded service and is a free service to any young person who is NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. All schools opt into the service for young people at risk of NEET. Schools also have a careers lead who work on the careers education programmes and link with the Solent Careers Hub, but do not deliver careers guidance.

In terms of how the panel could help, Jessi said helping to support the young people with those skills such as CV writing, but she felt the businesses being on board and understanding the prospect of employing young people was what was missing. It would be great to get a few pilot businesses on board to help with case studies to showcase how simple and effective it can be to promote these young people.

Sam Bushby, Deputy Director of Children and Families, said in terms of the companies that the Council contract with, more could be done to ensure it is in their contract that they must take on apprenticeships and this is something officers were keen to do. Amanda Percy added that Mountjoy and Commserve are very supportive of the work and have taken on supported interns and apprenticeships. A question was asked about whether the Port could offer apprenticeships, and it was noted that part of the issue is the level of physical danger with the jobs there. Amanda Percy added that through the Solent Careers Hub the Port offers fantastic immersive days which work well.

#### Steff Jones, Shaping Portsmouth

Steff explained that Shaping Portsmouth is a Community Interest Company, formed and funded by local businesses. There are 70 plus partners, and they have surveyed them as to what they feel are the barriers to employing young people, focussing on the 14-17 year old age groups. Many said that they find the legislation around employing young people confusing and also worry about their capacity and time to train a young person. With regard to CV writing, Shaping Portsmouth have gone out to the businesses again. Biscoes have helped by providing some template CVs on what employers would like to see and these are available as an online resource on their website. Steff agreed that Mountjoy and Commserve are hugely supportive as are Biscoes and Carrington West. They have all supported the apprenticeship bus programme where apprentices are put on the bus which visits schools and they talk to pupils about to leave school. This is a partnership between ??? They are still looking for certain sectors to be involved with this, such as

animal care and the creative industries where students want to find a placement.

In response to questions, Steff said:

- In terms of barriers, he felt this was access to information and how easy it is to understand, also safeguarding and resources. Amanda Percy added that the Safeguarding department at PCC do offer a lot of help with work experience. Supporting safeguarding of employment is more complex.
- The bus visits 10 schools between PO1 and PO6 but they are working on including more. The UTC is not included in this as they have relevant programmes of their own.
- Shaping Portsmouth have no partners in the care sector however they try and sell themselves to every industry in the city.
- The number of partners has remained constant over the past two years. More business means more funding and therefore more social value, therefore the more businesses who join the better.

#### Sarra Gravestock, Biscoes

She explained that she is a solicitor and the head of the Care and Adoption team. She works closely with care leavers and was asked by Shaping Portsmouth to lead on the care leavers employability programme. This has dovetailed in with Portsmouth Employability Academy, with the idea being that children's services get the young people ready for employment and the academy work with the businesses to make sure they are care leaver ready. Biscoes are ringfencing a role for a care leaver and encouraging other businesses to do that. This role will likely either be front of house or an operations assistant role. They are also looking to hold aspirational visits at Biscoes; there are various roles within the company including HR, finance and marketing that are not legal, which young people may not be aware of.

In response to questions, Sarra explained:

- The Employability Academy have worked with PMC Construction and also with the HAHA Hair Salon and training.
- Barriers include businesses not knowing what to expect from young care leavers; they can present with very different problems so employers need to have more understanding and flexibility whilst maintaining the business needs.
- They have been looking at work experience and ways to make this more meaningful for the young person, as well as for the business.
- Biscoes have just recruited several trainees and two came from the University of Portsmouth.

Councillor Vernon-Jackson said that he was aware that Whites Motors on St Pauls Road were wanting apprentices and Amanda Percy said she would be grateful for their details.

#### Kev Sadler, Solent Careers Hub Lead

He explained that his main role was to act as a conduit to bring schools, colleges and employers together to make sure that careers education is high quality and consistent across the region. Schools and colleges have a

responsibility to produce good careers guidance and have benchmarks that assist with that. Two of these are Gatsby Benchmark 5, 'Encounters with Employers and Employees' and Gatsby Benchmark 6 'Experiences of the Workplace'. Kev advised that his team speak to lots of employers to get them to engage with the schools and colleges, this could be attending a careers fair, supporting mock interviews, helping with CVs and work experience.

The Careers and Enterprise Company are trialing some flexible work experience models rather than the traditional two solid weeks of work experience. The new trial means that work experience can start any time from year 7 and can span through to year 11 and this is something that will be rolled out further. The Careers and Enterprise Company are also working on a diagnostic tool to see what the local situation is in the region to see what schools are doing work experience, what time of year and pulling all this information together. An action plan will be created from this information.

Amanda Percy added that the Solent Careers Hub recently went to Miltoncross Academy as part of a pilot programme taking place in 2025 to look at how to develop this. They are developing a project week where employers will offer projects where the young people have a project to deliver over five days within school. Kier Construction London & Southern were the first business to sign up to this and they have asked a group of year 10 students to design a new café and classroom. This will involve the architect having a conversation with the young people, someone to talk about green and sustainability and a communications person. At the end they have an immerse day at Bournemouth where Kier are developing a site for a college, they will then be taken to Southampton Solent University to look at some courses available relevant to this project. The aim is to have several employers across different sectors willing to do this so young people get experiences of the world of work, rather than work experience. This was an exciting project, and it was hoped this would go live in 2026 across the city. Information interviews, where people have a conversation with someone currently doing a role, are also a valuable tool for a young person to find out about a role.

Amanda Percy said that the next step would be training for employers, so they have the confidence and skills to help support young people in their workplace who are care leavers. Another event is taking place in two weeks to co-produce with young people who are care experienced to work out the support they need. They have noticed that young people need a lot of support through the early weeks and months as this works. What they really want is for more businesses to ringfence posts for care experienced young people and get involved with the Employability Academy to offer visits, so the young people to have choice.

Kev added the hub have an initiative asking employers to 'give an hour' and this is for young people to have a workplace encounter. Amanda Percy said this is something that PCC could run a campaign on.

In response to questions officers advised:



- The Employability Academy work with those young people on alternative provision and they are looking to expand the programme to include the youth offending team. There is a programme starting in February which is a Kings Trust programme for young people on the edge of knife crime who are interested in construction to get them a CSCS card so they can work in construction.
- Officers are keen to get a version of the Employability Academy into the Harbour School to get employers involved to work in the school. It was hoped that some funding could be obtained through the careers hub.

Councillor Vernon-Jackson said he was Deputy Lord Mayor and he felt there was an opportunity for young people to have work experience in the hospitality industry for the various Lord Mayor hosted events, and he would look into this, officers said that would be very welcomed.

Members said they all had networks of people who own businesses, and it would be helpful to have an email from the Employability Academy to say what they are looking for and members could forward this on to increase the number of employers. Amanda Percy said she would be very grateful and action this. She added that since the review started, more directorates at PCC are coming forward offering placements. The supported internship has been very successful and part of this is because there was more choice.

The Panel thanked all the witnesses for attending today and felt this had been a very refreshing and positive meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.10 pm.

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Councillor Hannah Brent  
Chair

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# Agenda Item 5

## Portsmouth City Council Scrutiny Scoping Document

<b>Scrutiny Panel</b>	Education, Children and Young People
<b>Topic</b>	A review into Elective Home Education
<b>Purpose of enquiry inc. potential outcomes.</b>  (The remit to be clear and concise as this statement forms the backbone of the enquiry)	This topic was agreed by the Scrutiny Management Panel on 22 July 2024.
<b>Reason for enquiry</b>	<p>The number of parents / carers choosing to home educate their children is significantly rising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The latest national data available from the Department for Education show that as many as 92,000 children were taught from home at the date of the census in England in autumn 2023. This is an increase from an estimated 80,900 in the previous autumn term. It also represents a 67% increase to the estimated 55,000 highlighted in the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) 2019 Elective Home Education Survey.</li> <li>• In Portsmouth the numbers of children who are electively home educated continue to rise (to over 300). Over a hundred more children are now electively home educated than at the same point two years ago</li> </ul> <p>20% of children who are deregistered from school and are then home educated, return to school within 6 months.</p> <p>The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill includes a focus on EHE and specifically proposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Councils to maintain “children not at school” registers</b> with a duty to support parents on their registers</li> <li>• <b>Some parents will need council consent to home educate their child</b> – it will apply to those with children subject to protection orders, on a protection plan or at a special school under arrangements made by the local authority. Local authorities can also compel home educated children on protection orders to attend school</li> <li>• School attendance orders will be standardised nationally, with <b>councils compelled to check whether</b></li> </ul>

	<b>the home learning environment for a child is suitable</b>
Enquiry format	Meeting to agree scoping document.
Corporate Priority linked to	Lifelong learning
Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
Relevant officers	Sarah Daly, Director of Children, Families and Education Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director, Education
Consultees & stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Inclusion and Service Manager for Admissions, Attendance, Exclusions and Re-integration, PCC</li> <li>• PCC's School Attendance Team and officers who are responsible for determining if the education provided is suitable</li> <li>• Primary, Secondary and Special Schools</li> <li>• Parents who electively home educate / Portsmouth Home Education Group</li> <li>• Portsmouth Safeguarding Children's Partnership</li> </ul>
Start Date	February 2025
Target Completion Date	