

# North Lanarkshire Council

## Report

### Education and Families Committee

approval  noting

Ref JO'N/PO'N

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### Developing the Young Workforce/Employability Pathways Programme (Pilot)

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#### Executive Summary

This report provides a full update on an ambitious 'winter leavers' pilot programme which ran from April 2019 until the present, providing intensive support around curriculum planning, design and delivery for targeted young people who are statutory winter leavers. This includes care experienced young people and young people with multiple barriers to learning. The Pathways Programme successfully provided a curriculum offer which included the development of key employability skills, opportunities aligned to labour market intelligence and extended work-related learning experiences.

This report includes recommendations for how this work might continue with funding recommendations which would support a more sustainable model to improve post-school outcomes for vulnerable groups.

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#### Recommendations

It is recommended the Education and Families Committee:

- 1) Note the content of the report including positive outcomes around initial leaver destinations for all young people young people who were part of the pilot programme and most at risk of entering a negative destination;
- 2) Approve the proposal to continue this work beyond the duration of the pilot.

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#### The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Support all children and young people to realise their full potential

Ambition statement (6) Raise attainment and skills for learning, life, and work to enhance opportunities and choices

## 1. Background

- 1.1 North Lanarkshire Council has a strong track record in supporting young people of school leaving age into a positive post-school destination. In recent years, an increasing percentage of young people are **sustaining** these positive destinations. In session 2017/18, 92.4% of young people were in a **sustained** positive post-school destination when the follow-up data was published nine months after leaving school, compared with 91.3% in the previous year.
- 1.2 However, to ensure no young person is left behind and that there is equity of opportunity, there remains work to be done with those young people facing multiple barriers to learning and employment – and statutory winter leavers fall into this category.
- 1.3 Data analysis highlights that the timing of leaving school has a bigger impact on post-school destinations than living in the most deprived areas in Scotland and that statutory winter leavers tend to have a more disrupted, less stable leaver journey. Statutory winter leavers are three times more likely to enter a negative post-school destination than those pupils who are summer leavers.
- 1.4 As part of the Council's Employability Review, (and aligned to the increased ambition for young people set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire, Education and Families, supported by other council services) partners and employers embarked on an ambitious pilot programme. The Pathways Programme was open to all statutory winter leavers from across all Secondary Schools with the aspiration and ambition to ensure all young people who engaged and participated in the programme would leave school and enter a meaningful, sustainable positive post-school destination of either employment or experiences such as training that would lead to employment. The programme has been exceptionally successful and has exceeded our already ambitious expectations in its positive outcomes for young people.

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## 2. Report

### Pathways Programme (pilot)

- 2.1 The pilot Pathways Programme was approved at Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2019. There then followed a recruitment exercise which saw the appointment of three full-time Pathways Co-ordinators, seconded from May 2019 to 31 March 2020 to support the programme.
  - 2.1.1 By May 2019 work began with 111 statutory winter-leaving young people from all 23 secondary schools. All of these young people faced multiple barriers to learning and employment and were already disengaged or at strong risk of disengaging from school and entering a negative destination that could lead to long term unemployment with its associated challenges. Of the 111 initially recruited, 90 young people engaged with the programme from August-December (and beyond).

### The Ambition

- 2.2 The ambition to guarantee all young people a positive post school destination of employment or a stepping stone that would lead to employment called for a more joined-up, straightforward system which required collective leadership across public, private and third sectors.

- 2.2.1 Planning, designing and building a curriculum that would create clearer pathways into work presented exciting opportunities to 'do things differently', delivering new provision via a system that was flexible enough to provide effective and joined-up support for the young people.
- 2.2.2 The pilot programme allowed us to work collectively and creatively to build a more effective, straightforward and person-centred curriculum.

### **Curriculum Delivery**

- 2.3 The curriculum was delivered in the North, South and Central localities using work-based learning environments rather than classrooms. All three spaces were gifted to us by employers and other council services. From the outset, these spaces provided the young people with an understanding of the expectations and behaviours required in the workplace.
  - 2.3.1 The curriculum was designed and delivered collaboratively. It was led by Education and Families and supported by the council's employability and talent and organisational development teams, ALEO Routes to Work, partner agency Skills Development Scotland, New College Lanarkshire and DYW Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire.
  - 2.3.2 All young people participated in an extended work placement for at least one day per week for the duration of the programme, with seven young people progressing on to work trials leading to employment. Young people also attended New College Lanarkshire for one day per week working on units leading to SQA employability awards. These opportunities allowed the young people to experience both the work place and college environments, thus helping them to make informed decisions about the next steps on their learner journey to employment.
  - 2.3.3 During the time spent on-site in locality venues, Learner Pathway co-ordinators and partners delivered learning activities around personal development, employability skills, CV writing, interviews, job searching, money management, and health and wellbeing, as well as supporting young people to source and apply for jobs, college courses and training provision.
  - 2.3.4 Additional curriculum opportunities linked to labour market intelligence (in particular construction, hospitality and childcare) were offered via training providers and partners.
  - 2.3.5 Young people also benefited from being matched with a mentor and in some cases this relationship proved invaluable in preparing them for a positive post-school destination.

### **Outcomes**

- 2.4 The Service set just one, overarching and highly ambitious outcome: that every young person who engaged with the programme would be offered a positive post-school destination which would lead to sustained employment.

2.4.1 Table 1.1 below outlines the destinations achieved by the 90 young people who sustained their engagement and participation.

Table 1.1

Destination	Number
Employment	10
Modern Apprenticeship	23
Further Education	17
Training (excluding MA)	25
Activity Agreement	3
Continued Support*	8
Family Firm – subsidised work placement	4

\*Continued Support includes young people who are work-ready but have just not secured employment or a Modern Apprenticeship.

They will remain on the programme (and the school roll) until such times as they have secured a job.

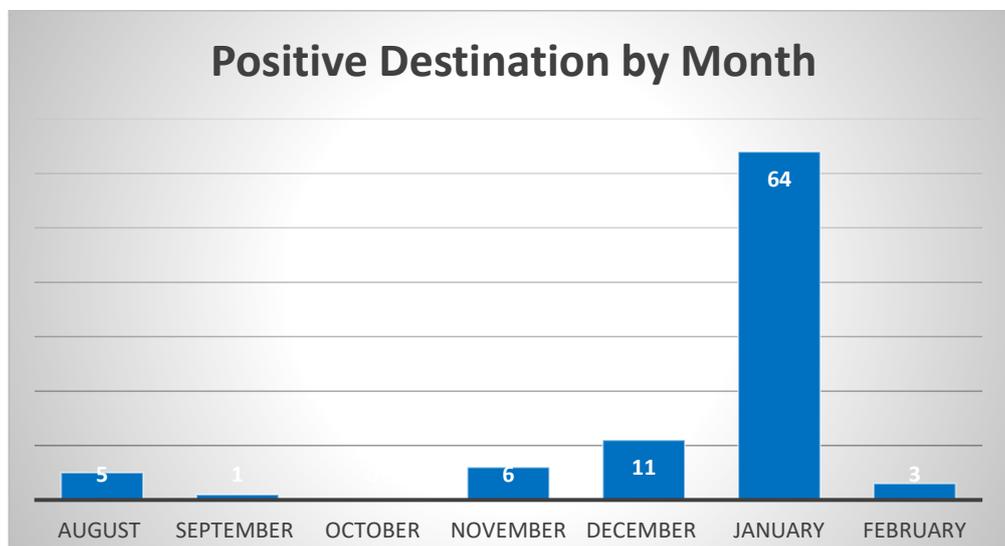
Table 1.2 breaks down by sector the post-school destinations of the young people.

Table 1.2

Sector	Employment	MA	FE	Training (inc AA and CS)	Family Firm
Construction	4	13	3	12	0
EY and Childcare	0	2	0	5	0
Automotive	0	0	2	0	1
Hair and Beauty	1	4	2	3	0
Bus Admin	1	1	0	0	0
Hospitality	1	3	2	0	0
Health and S/C	0	0	3	0	0
Other	3	0	5	16	3

All of the young people will benefit from six months follow up support from the Learner Journey Co-ordinators and Routes to Work and Skills Development Scotland. This in-work support is a key component of the programme to ensure progression and sustained destinations.

The chart below illustrates the point within their learner journey when young people made the transition to a positive post-school destination.



- 2.4.2 The programme has been value engineered to reduce costs from the original estimate of £478,000 to £355,000 whilst at the same time supporting a higher number of young people than anticipated. This was due to in-kind support provided by partners and other council services as well as external funding enabling the involvement of the Arms Length External Organisation – Routes to Work.

### **Future Developments/Expansion**

- 2.5 An extensive evaluation conducted by the Psychological Services Team, coupled with the team's ongoing evaluations highlighted the unexpectedly high level of demand from schools, young people and their families combined with the exceptionally high retention rate and a recognition of the complexities and challenges facing each of the young people.

This has led to the following recommendations:

- The programme should continue to run and should extend beyond statutory winter leavers to include support for those young people who will leave at the end of S4 who are at risk of entering a negative post-school destination;
- A strengthening of links with schools, the Virtual School, Family Firm and the council's Modern Apprenticeship Team, and the Restorative Justice Team to ensure a more holistic, joined-up approach to working;
- Increased staffing levels with a support worker (NLC 7) allocated to work alongside each of the three Learner Journey Co-ordinators to assist with co-ordination and delivery of the programme;
- The Pathways Programme will enhance and improve the council's resource base by contributing more strategically to the workforce development pipeline.

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### **3. Equality and Diversity**

#### 3.1 Fairer Scotland Duty

This work directly addresses recommendations 4 and 6 set out in the Council's Fairness Commission Report.

#### 3.2 Equality Impact Assessment

This work is focused entirely on advancing equalities for young people with barriers to learning and employment.

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### **4. Implications**

#### 4.1 Financial Impact

The forecast annual cost of the programme is £355,000 per annum. In addition, in-kind support will be provided via other council services and partners including NL Industries. The Service intends to fund this programme for the next two financial years through an allocation of £220,000 from the Scottish Attainment Challenge, coupled with a £135,000 contribution from secondary schools.

Members will be aware the Scottish Attainment Challenge Funding is currently only committed until March 2022. As a consequence, if there are any changes to the funding model for the Winter Leavers Programme following this date, then this information will be incorporated into a future budget monitoring report.

#### 4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

Statutory winter leavers are young people in the final year of compulsory schooling, whose birthdays fall from October 1<sup>st</sup> onwards and who cannot therefore leave school until the final day of term in December.

#### 4.3 Environmental Impact

N/A

#### 4.4 Risk Impact

Without a curriculum like the one described in this report, there is a high risk of these young people entering a negative post-school destination which may lead to long term unemployment and the associated risks.

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### **5. Measures of success**

#### 5.1 All young people who attend and engage with the programme will leave school and enter employment, a Modern Apprenticeship or a relevant post-school pathway which will lead to employment.

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6. **Supporting documents**

**Education Working for All! Developing Scotland's Young Workforce**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/education-working-commission-developing-scotlands-young-workforce-final-report/>

**15-24 Learner Journey Review**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/15-24-learner-journey-review-9781788518741/>

**No One Left Behind – Review of Employability Services**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/one-left-behind-review-employability-services/>

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