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# Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Formative evaluation follow-up study

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This document is also available in Welsh.

# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK - FOLLOW UP: FINAL REPORT

ICF International



Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

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## Glossary

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
AWS	Attendance and Wellbeing Officers
BRAVO	Bridgend College Risk Assessment and Value-added Outcomes
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CAHMS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CAIS	Cyngor Alcohol Information Service
CAP	Common Application Process
CF	Communities First
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CWVYS	Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services
CWW	Careers and the World of Work
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EI	Early Identification
EOTAS	Educated Otherwise than At School
EPCs	Engagement and Progression Coordinators) Local Authority officials who are leading the implementation of the framework
ESF	European Social Fund
FE	Further Education
FIS	Family Information Service
FSM	Free School Meals
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education

GISDA	Grŵp Ieuencid Sengl Digartref Arfon
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
IAG	Information, Advice or Guidance
ICF	Inner City Fund
ISOS	ISOS
ISPs	Information Sharing Protocols
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
JGW	Jobs Growth Wales
KIT	Keeping In Touch
LAs	Local Authorities
LLWR	Lifelong Learning Wales Record
LMI	Labour Market Intelligence. (Quantitative or qualitative facts, analysis or interpretation about the past, present or future structure and workings of the labour market and the factors that influence it.)
LSB	Local Service Board
MIS	Management Information System
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NTfW	National Training Federation for Wales
PEP	Progressive Engagement Pathways
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
PPG	Positive Pathways Group
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit

RAG	Red, Amber, and Green
RPA	Raising the participation age
SAO	Senior Accountable Officer
SEET	Supporting Engagement in Education and Training
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SRO	Senior Responsible Owner
STEM	Standards Training in Electronics Manufacture
TSWs	Transition Support Workers
UKCES	United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills
VCS	Voluntary Community Service
WASPI	Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information
WBL	Work Based Learning
WJEC	Welsh Joint Education Committee
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association
YEPF	Youth Engagement and Progression Framework
YMCA	YMCA Wales Community College
YOTs	Youth Offending Teams

# 1. Introduction

## Purpose of the study

1.1 The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) aims to reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). The YEPF has six components, which are considered to be effective at increasing youth engagement and progression when implemented together as part of a strategy.

These are:

- Early identification;
- Better brokerage and coordination of support;
- Stronger tracking and transition of young people;
- Ensuring provision meets the needs of young people;
- A focus on employability skills and opportunities for employment among young people; and
- Greater accountability.

1.2 Local authorities (LAs) have been charged with the role of leading implementation of the Framework, working closely with Careers Wales, youth services, schools, providers of post-16 education and training, the voluntary sector and other partners.

1.3 ICF and Arad research were appointed to conduct a formative evaluation of the Framework, between the summer of 2014 and the spring of 2015. The report from the formative evaluation was published on the Welsh Government website in August 2015, at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/formative-evaluation-youth-engagement-progression-framework/?lang=en>. This report presents the findings of a follow-up study, which builds on and updates the findings from the earlier formative evaluation, and shows the position with regard to the implementation of the framework in each local authority area by February 2016.

1.4 To achieve this, the specific objectives of the follow-up research were to:

- Identify the progress being made by all partners and LA areas since the previous study on the implementation of the framework. These key areas included:
  - Development and embedding of early identification systems post 16;
  - School engagement in early identification and tracking;
  - Challenges in implementing lead working arrangements,
  - Post 16 tracking. and providers' timely and consistent information sharing;
  - Mapping of provision alongside labour market mapping;
  - Commitment to the Common Area Prospectus;
  - Progress in relation to the employability strand of the framework;
  - Focus on young people in employment but without training; and
  - Consultation with young people;
- Capture the regional approach to early identification, brokerage and tracking in North Wales and the potential benefits of this model;
- Understand how well the data provided by Careers Wales to local authorities and the Welsh Government supports the work of implementing the framework and understanding its impact.;
- Capture the impact of the implementation of the framework at LA level and across Wales from data collected by Statistics Wales and Careers Wales and from the views of LAs, partners, and other stakeholders.

## **Structure of the report**

1.5 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents the key findings, study methodology and methodological weaknesses;
- Chapter 3 presents the status of the framework, policy context and contextual data;
- Chapter 4 provides an overall assessment of progress;
- Chapter 5 sets out the findings on the strategic implementation of framework;
- Chapter 6 explores the operational arrangements for the framework;
- Chapters 7 to 12 presents findings on the implementation of the six components of the YEPF, including a summary of progress against key milestones;
- Chapter 13 presents the North Wales case study ;
- Chapter 14 presents the findings in relation to the usability of Careers Wales database data;
- Chapter 15 sets out recommendations for Welsh Government.

## **2. Key findings**

- 2.1 This section presents the key findings of this report under each of the main elements of the framework.
- 2.2 In summary, progress in relation to early identification, brokerage and tracking has continued to be strong, particularly with regard to young people aged up to 18. Few authorities are developing arrangements that cover the framework as a whole and the employability strand is the most under-developed element.
- 2.3 Also, there has been increased communication and co-ordination between stakeholders as a result of the Framework and partners remain positive about it, though LAs report that funding reductions and re-structuring are challenging progress.

### **Management and implementation of the framework**

- 2.4 All but one LA has strategic groups in place to monitor the progress and implementation of the framework. Broadly, representation and attendance at this group was seen by respondents as appropriate.
- 2.5 In a number of LAs, strategic meetings have become less frequent.
- 2.6 Whilst most strategic groups are monitoring the rates of young people who are NEET, the effectiveness of this monitoring varies across LAs.

### **Operational arrangements**

- 2.7 Operational arrangements are in place across LAs led by Engagement and progression Coordinators (EPCs). EPCs were seen as vital to these arrangements and there was concern from interview respondents, that without further financial assistance from the Welsh Government, the EPC role could be at risk.
- 2.8 Around half LAs had evolved either the composition of their operational group or the focus of the meetings; but, in general, arrangements are now stable. The operational focus remains on early identification, tracking and brokerage with few local authorities developing arrangements that cover the whole framework.

2.9 In the majority of LAs, interview respondents felt data and information sharing has improved, however, in a small minority, difficulties with information sharing protocols (ISPs) still remain.

### **Early Identification**

2.10 All LAs now have an early identification system in place. There is variation, however, in the length of time that these have been in operation, ranging from since before YEPF began in September 2013 to those currently piloting a new model.

2.11 Progress since the last evaluation has meant the expansion of pre-16 early identification systems. Most now include the post 16 age group and have expanded to include more nuanced indicators alongside the core indicators of behaviour, attainment and attendance.

2.12 In at least half of LAs, it was suggested that information sharing amongst colleges or and Work-Based Learning (WBL) providers and the LA was good. However, the follow-up study found that in around two thirds of cases, post-16 providers continued to use individual and differing data collection methods. Specifically the quality of data from colleges was seen as variable across LAs.

2.13 A co-ordinated regional approach to Early Identification is now in place across North Wales. This was seen to be cost effective and allow for consistency across LAs which in turn increases confidence in the accuracy of data.

### **Brokerage**

2.14 Lead working arrangements remain in place across all LAs. Lead worker allocations are generally being decided on an ad-hoc basis within operational groups. Representation of colleges and WBL providers in operational groups was perceived to have led to these organisations increasingly taking on the lead worker role.

2.15 In general, lead working is arranged by Careers Wales tiers<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Careers Wales and other stakeholders use a tier model to identify the level of engagement of a young person and the type of support they might require. More details are available on

- 2.16 Pre- and post-16 brokerage are now established but there remains a gap for the post 18 age group. Only 40 per cent of survey respondents reported that the LA made clear how lead workers (or a similar function) should be allocated to young people.
- 2.17 Across the majority of LAs, there has not been an exercise under YEPF to gather the views of young people.

### **Tracking and transitions of young people**

- 2.18 LAs are using their standardised early identification systems in operational meetings to review the data and update the status of individual young people.
- 2.19 In general, communication between schools and LAs is effective and well-established both pre- and post-16. Lack of buy-in to YEPF from leaders in a small number of schools was still seen as a barrier to tracking arrangements in almost all LAs. Although engagement with post 16 providers was generally seen as positive, there was some variation in the level of engagement between providers.
- 2.20 No LAs had arrangements in place for tracking young people in jobs without training.

### **Provision**

- 2.21 Whilst regional provision mapping has recently been completed in North Wales, only one third of LAs had updated their maps since the launch of the framework.
- 2.22 There were concerns that, with capacity constraints for both EPCs and other LA staff members, updating the provision mapping exercise regularly enough to make them useful posed a challenge.
- 2.23 The **Common Area Prospectus** (CAP) was reported by all LAs as being largely up to date and available to schools. However, schools

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page 29 of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Implementation Plan, published in 2013 and available here; <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/131007-ye-framework-implementation-plan-en.pdf>. A sixth tier (tier 0) was introduced in 2014-15, which was intended to record young people who can't be mapped against a tier (1 to 5) either due to postcode, age or status.

were generally not actively promoting CAP and there was little awareness about it amongst LAs and other stakeholders.

- 2.24 Across LAs, there was little work from schools or LAs to promote the **Youth Guarantee**<sup>2</sup>.

### **Employability**

- 2.25 Participant and stakeholder interviews revealed that the employability strand is felt to be the most underdeveloped element of the framework. However, many LAs mentioned specific programmes, events and workshops that have been undertaken under YEPPF.
- 2.26 No interviewee respondents reported outreach or provision specifically aimed at young people in jobs without training.

### **Accountability**

- 2.27 There is an improved understanding of stakeholder responsibilities and accountability.
- 2.28 There is still a concern amongst some LAs that senior buy-in within the LA remains a challenge, due it is suggested, to the non-statutory nature of the guidance.
- 2.29 Accountability post-18 remains an area requiring more development by LAs. A small number of LAs believe that post-18 provision is not part of the framework and so are not looking at working with this group. Despite challenges securing information sharing protocols(ISPs) with Job Centre Plus (JCP) for the post-18 cohort, there are examples where local arrangements have been made to facilitate communication with JCP. For example, by using information collected by Careers Wales staff seconded to JCP.

### **Careers Wales Database reports**

- 2.30 The Careers Wales database is fundamental to the early identification, brokerage and tracking systems of LAs. In the majority

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<sup>2</sup> The Youth Guarantee is the offer, acceptance and commencement of a suitable place in education or training for a young person making the first time transition from compulsory education at age 16.

of cases, EPCs reported that the LA takes responsibility for cross-checking accuracy and assimilating pre- and post-16 data from providers into the Careers Wales five-tier model. Most LAs received information from the Careers Wales database system.

- 2.31 In strategic meetings, the database was identified as the main source of data for monitoring the progress of the framework as a whole. However, there are some limitations of this data, largely as a result of variation in data collection between LAs that is presented in chapter 14.

## **Methodology**

### *Stage 1: Inception and initial scoping (December 2015)*

- 2.32 The purpose of the scoping stage was to finalise research methods and establish the availability of material to support the research. It included:
- An initial review of documents related to the YEPF. This included internal programme management documentation and minutes of programme board meetings;
  - A scoping interview with three members of Careers Wales staff to further develop our understanding of the Client Information Database (the system which contains the Careers Wales tier data)<sup>3</sup>; focusing, in particular, on the quality and usefulness of the data.

### *Stage 2: Fieldwork (January-February 2015)*

- 2.33 We undertook 44 telephone interviews (at least two in each LA area, one of which was with the designated Engagement and Progression Coordinator (EPC)) to establish the progress made in implementing the YEPF in all LA areas since early 2015. The second interviewee was selected to provide a different perspective and included senior accountable officers, members of other local authority departments and other key stakeholders such as Careers Wales, Communities

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<sup>3</sup> The Careers Wales client information database is also known as the 'IO' database.

First, Job Centre Plus (JCP), and post- 16 providers. Interview respondents are set out in the table below:

**Table 1.1 Interview respondents**

<b>Type of stakeholder</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>
Youth Engagement: EPCs	22
Careers Wales	5
LA Education/ Youth Engagement Services	5
Youth Engagement: Senior Accountable Officers	4
Youth Service	2
FE College	2
WBL Provider	1
LA Family Services	1
Communities First	1
Jobcentre	1

2.34 We undertook eight national stakeholder interviews with Gower College, Coleg Llandrillo Menau, WLGA, CWVYS, NTFW, Colegau Cymru, Careers Wales and JCP. These interviews covered:

- Leadership and management of the YEPF at national level;
- Progress since early 2015 at LA level;
- Action to respond to the CWVYS report and the formative evaluation;
- Impacts of the framework's implementation;
- Areas of success attributable to the framework;
- How the framework could be implemented more successfully.

2.35 The topic guides for interviews are set out in Annex 1.

2.36 We distributed an online survey in English and Welsh to representatives of organisations who expected to have been involved in the implementation of the YEPF. This can be found in Annex 2.

2.37 The survey has provided an update on perceptions of the arrangements in place. It provides quantitative evidence of the

progress made in developing the Framework to complement the qualitative evidence.

2.38 EPCs were asked to provide contact details of stakeholder in their area (updating the lists they provided in January 2015 for the previous evaluation). The contacts included:

- Secondary schools, special schools and PRUs;
- Colleges;
- WBL providers;
- Voluntary and community sector providers;
- Jobcentre Plus and Careers Wales;
- Employers engaged by LAs in the YEPF (for example, representatives of Local Employment and Skills Boards);
- Local authority departments and services (for example, Youth Services, Communities First, Families First, Youth Offending, Economic Development, looked after children, young people's housing, 14-19 education and training); and
- The Regional Education Consortium.

2.39 CWVYS and NTfW also distributed the survey among their members to encourage participation in the survey from WBL providers and the third sector.

2.40 From a survey population of approximately 1,279 genuine<sup>4</sup> respondents, we received 435 responses (34 per cent response rate). The composition of responses by stakeholder type is shown in Table 1.1. Almost half of respondents were from LAs, 24 per cent from post-16 providers and schools, 14 per cent from the voluntary sector and 8 per cent from Careers Wales.

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<sup>4</sup> Refers to respondents whose role, organisation and email address were confirmed by our contacts as current.

**Table 1.2 Survey respondents**

<b>Type of stakeholder</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>
LA	196	45.1
Voluntary and community sector organisation	62	14.3
Post-16 provider	58	13.3
School	48	11.0
Careers Wales	33	7.6
Employer	8	1.8
Jobcentre Plus	6	1.4
Regional education consortium	1	0.2
Other	2	0.5

Source: Stakeholder survey

Base = all (435) stakeholders surveyed. Respondents were asked 'Please indicate the type of organisation you work in'.

- 2.41 Of the 196 LA respondents, most worked in education or training (60 per cent) or youth services (33 per cent). Of the 58 post-16 provider respondents, 47 per cent worked in colleges, 53 per cent in work-based learning providers and three in another type of provider. Most of the voluntary and community sector respondents worked in voluntary youth work (60 per cent), with the remainder drawn from health, housing, and county voluntary councils. Of the 48 school respondents, 66 per cent worked in a school with an attached sixth form, 17 per cent worked in a special school, and 15 per cent in a school for 11-16 year olds. There were no responses from Pupil Referral Units (PRU).
- 2.42 We undertook a case study focusing on the North Wales Partnership. This included holding a workshop with 6 EPCs and one principal lead worker to discuss their joint process of developing a common approach to early identification, brokerage and tracking. The case study covered:
- Co-ordination of partnership approach to early identification, brokerage and tracking;

- The barriers to implementing a regional approach and how these were overcome; and
- The added value of the partnership agreement and the perceived benefits to date.

2.43 We undertook data analysis of Careers Wales Database data to explore its use within LAs and its limitations.

### **Limitations to the methodology**

2.44 There are some limitations to the analysis as a result of the research completed. These are:

- For the stakeholder survey, we asked LAs to send us the contact details of all stakeholders working in youth engagement, including members of strategic and operational groups established to support implementation of the YEPF. This was to ensure that the survey reached appropriate people (i.e. those with knowledge of LA YEPF processes). As LAs partially defined who their key stakeholders are, organisations that are not well-engaged or informed about the YEPF are unlikely to have been sent a link to the survey unless they were members of CWVYS and NTfW. Therefore, the views of the 435 respondents cannot be generalised to the population of potential stakeholder organisations.
- During the previous evaluation the survey respondent profile largely reflected the composition of the operational and strategic groups within each LA. However, the expansion of the survey to include a much wider group of stakeholders means the profile of respondents are not comparable to those in the previous survey. Judgements made by the wider group about their awareness of the framework, the effectiveness of relationships and communication appeared less positive than in the last survey. Whilst it is not appropriate to conclude that perceptions of the framework have worsened, the fact that the broader sample

were less positive should be taken as an indication that awareness and communication may need further focus.

- Due to the small number of interviews (an average of two within each LA) only limited triangulation and corroboration of views at LA level was possible. This prevented any conclusions being drawn about the effectiveness of processes within individual LAs. To mitigate this, we interviewed individuals within LAs as well as wider stakeholders. Although the second interviewee in each LA area was, in many cases, a stakeholder outside of the LA, they were closely involved in the implementation of the framework and so likely to have a positive view of progress so far.
- There are also limitations to the Careers Wales database, which meant that data could not be used to understand overall trends in this research. See chapter 14 for more details about these limitations.

### **3. Status of the framework**

#### *Policy context*

- 3.1 The YEPF builds on the work of two previous policy initiatives by the Welsh Government designed to support young people's progression and development. The 'Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales' initiative in 2000 committed the Welsh Government to supporting every young person in Wales to maximise their potential in education, training and employment. More recently, the 2011 'Youth Engagement and Employment Action Plan' developed the principles from 'Extending Entitlement', reinforced by an 18-point action plan to reduce the number of young people who are NEET. These actions related to improving provision, ensuring strong brokerage of support for young people, accountability at all levels of the system, and enabling early identification of young people at risk of disengaging.
- 3.2 The YEPF also looks at these areas, and contributes to broader Welsh Government policy aimed at reducing poverty in Wales. Specifically, it supports the 'Tackling Poverty Action Plan 2012-2016' in two of its commitments:
- To reduce the number of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET to 9 per cent by 2017;
  - To reduce the proportion of young people aged 19- 24 who are NEET in Wales relative to the UK as a whole by 2017.
- 3.3 The YEPF has also been important in the development of European Social Fund (ESF) regional bids which have been aligned to the principles of YEPF<sup>5</sup>.

#### *Current NEET data*

- 3.4 The headline measure of young people who are NEET used by the Welsh Government showed that 10.9 per cent (provisional) of those

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<sup>5</sup> A number of consortia have made bids for support from ESF Priority Axis 3: Youth Employment and Attainment; Specific Objective 2 (reducing the number of young people aged 11-24 at highest risk of becoming NEET).

aged 16-18 were NEET at the end of 2014, the same as in 2013. As in 2013, this data shows that males are more likely than females to be NEET (12 per cent compared to 10 per cent). The Annual Population Survey data is reported quarterly but is less statistically robust than the headline measure because of its sample size. It indicated that 9.6 per cent of young people were NEET in the third quarter of 2013. It also showed that, from 2013 Q3 to 2015 Q3, the proportion of young people who are NEET rises with age. At age 16, around 4 per cent of young people are NEET. This rises to around 9 per cent at age 17 and 16.5 per cent at age 18. In this same period, a higher proportion of disabled young people are NEET than non-disabled young people (17.6 per cent vs. 8.8 per cent).

- 3.5 Among those aged 19-24, the headline data showed that just 20 per cent were NEET at the end of 2014, compared with 21.1 per cent at the end of 2013. This data also showed that females are more likely to be NEET at these ages than males (23 per cent compared to 18 per cent). Data from the Annual Population Survey (Q3 2013- Q3 2015) suggests that the proportion NEET rises from 16 per cent at age 19 to an average of 20 per cent from ages 20-21. In total, 42 per cent of those aged 19-24 who are disabled are NEET.
- 3.6 The headline statistic of the proportion of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET has stayed consistent at 10.9 per cent from 2013 to 2014. This follows a period of steady decline since 2008/9 when the proportion was 12 per cent. In the 19-24 age group, 20 per cent were NEET in 2014. This is in keeping with a steady decline in the proportion of young people in this age group who are NEET since 2010 (23%); although figures are yet to fall to the pre-crash levels last seen in 2008 (17 per cent)<sup>6</sup>.
- 3.7 The share of young people aged 16 who are NEET also fell over this time period according to Careers Wales destination data, from 5.7 per

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<sup>6</sup> Welsh government data <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/young-people-not-education-employment-training/?lang=en>

cent in 2009 to 3.1 per cent in 2014. This data is based only on the number of young people leaving year 11 in schools.

- 3.8 The Careers Wales data for LAs shows a considerable variation in trends and fluctuations in the numbers and proportions of young people who are NEET over this period. Flintshire had the lowest proportion of NEETs (1.3 per cent) followed by Gwynedd and Anglesey (both 1.7 per cent). The highest proportion was found in Newport (4.7 per cent), followed by Cardiff (4.3 per cent)<sup>7</sup>. However, all but three LAs also had a lower proportion of NEETs in 2014 than 2011 (19 out of 22).

*Early findings on YEPF*

- 3.9 In June 2015, the main formative evaluation of the YEPF was carried out by ICF International and Arad Research. This assessed the progress made by LAs towards implementing the YEPF, including whether it was necessary to introduce statutory guidance in order ensure the continuing implementation of the framework. The evaluation concluded that most LAs were making progress towards implementing the YEPF and that introducing statutory guidance was not necessary. It was considered that making YEPF statutory might alter the motivations of schools and colleges in providing destination data if it was linked to accountability. Rather, the evaluation suggested that the Welsh Government should provide additional encouragement to facilitate more effective implementation of the framework.
- 3.10 The formative evaluation reported that just over half of the LAs had established early identification, brokerage and tracking systems for pre 16s and 16-18s, while most others had some of these processes in place. Although progress was slower than originally planned in many cases, in general the YEPF had brought about a step change in the way that LAs approached preventing young people from becoming NEET. The evaluation also concluded that, where LAs had

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<sup>7</sup> Careers Wales <http://destinations.careerswales.com/year11Trends.html>

not made any significant progress in the implementation of the YEPF, this could be attributed to a lack of drive by LAs rather than reluctance. Therefore, if encouragement to implement the YEPF was sustained or increased, LAs that were slow to implement would begin to show progress.

- 3.11 At the time of the formative evaluation, a small number of LAs had not made progress towards implementing the YEPF. These LAs did not have strategic steering arrangements or information sharing protocols (ISPs) in place. The evaluation found a clear link between strategic and operational arrangements being in place and progress made by LAs to implement the framework.
- 3.12 The formative evaluation found that the majority of LAs had made progress in early identification activities to reduce the number and proportion of young people who are NEET at age 16, and in implementing EI systems to reduce the number of 17 and 18 year olds becoming NEET. However, it was found that no LAs had a clear plan in relation to the employability strand of the framework.
- 3.13 The evaluation also set out the individual strands of activity that were essential to the smooth implementation of the YEPF. The key success factors in this context were: having ISPs in place; functioning strategic and operational groups; provider engagement; and the development of centralised data systems.
- 3.14 The formative evaluation also set out an evaluation framework for a full impact assessment, and recommended that a final impact evaluation be carried out in late 2016/early 2017. Currently, it remains too early to undertake this impact assessment but there is further discussion of the data which could be used to measure impact in chapter 14.

#### **4. Overview assessment of progress since the main formative evaluation**

4.1 Based on the research undertaken for this follow-up study, the following paragraphs provide an overview of progress since the period covered by the previous, main formative evaluation. This progress is explored in more detail in the remainder of the report.

4.2 In summary, across LAs, almost all interviewees suggested that there had been increased communication and co-ordination between stakeholders as a result of YEPF. Notably in the North Wales case study where LAs have been working closely to further YEPF. This joined up working was seen to benefit all partners:

‘We and our partners now have a better understanding of who these young people that we are discussing actually are and that we’re not discussing a homogenous group of young people’

Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator (EPC)

4.3 Many LAs reported improvements in the number of NEET young people, with total tier 1 and 2<sup>8</sup> figures reducing (14 LAs showed fewer in tier 1 between September 2014 and 2015<sup>9</sup>). Many felt that these could, at least in part, be attributed to YEPF. In some cases LAs highlighted that NEET figures had stayed stable despite challenges related to funding. Several LAs suggested that it was important to consider the complexity of data. For example:

‘LAs have made massive progress in reducing the number of young people who are NEET at the point of first contact, but then you still have an issue of the ongoing picture which isn’t really captured’

(Stakeholder)

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<sup>8</sup> The five-tier model of engagement is described briefly in footnote<sup>1</sup> and in more detail in the the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Implementation Plan, published in 2013 and available here; <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/131007-ye-framework-implementation-plan-en.pdf>. Tier 1 includes young people whose status is unknown, and Tier 2, young people who face significant and/or multiple barriers to engagement.

<sup>9</sup> National Careers Wales Database -Change Sept. (Q3) 14/15 - Sept. (Q3) 15/16. Limitations of this data in Chapter 14

4.4 Most interview respondents suggested that it was too early to see the full impact of YEPF and anecdotal evidence from practitioners suggested that young people are benefiting from more robust early identification and tracking.

4.5 Perceptions of the framework appear to remain positive. However, in general LAs are struggling with funding reductions and restructuring which has been challenging with capacity constraints impacting on internal communication and co-ordination within LAs.

‘The key thing is to continue with it - have some continuity in the midst of change elsewhere’

(EPC)

## **5. Management and implementation of the framework**

5.1 In this section we present findings on how LAs are managing and coordinating implementation of the YEPF and consider what is working well and what the challenges are. We draw on interviews with implementation staff and stakeholders, as well as findings from the survey.

### *What is in place*

5.2 Since the 2014 formative evaluation, all but one LAs have maintained their strategic arrangements to oversee YEPF. All have an appointed Senior Accountable Officer (SAO), the majority of whom were also in post during the previous evaluation. As previously, around half of SAOs are the head of service for education, youth or lifelong learning. In other cases, responsibility for the YEPF is at a more senior level, residing with the chief executive or deputy chief executive. In one case, the SAO role has fallen under the leisure and tourism department within the LA. However, this is an interim measure.

5.3 In all but one LA, a strategic steering group is in place and has continued to oversee the framework. It remains the case that this group is chaired by the SAO or, in some cases, responsibility is delegated to another senior manager or the Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator (EPC). Strategic groups included stakeholders from within the LA (education, youth offending teams, youth services) and a college representative, a school representative and Careers Wales. This indicates a commitment from most LAs to maintain senior involvement in YEPF.

5.4 Most strategic groups appear to be continuing to monitor achievement of the key performance indicator of a reduction in the number of proportion of young people who are NEET at 16-18 and 19-24. Around a quarter are using their strategic groups to set high-level targets within the LA. Around half are setting specific targets relating to elements of the YEPF, which are actioned by the EPC and operational groups. In almost all strategic groups, Careers Wales tier

data is being used to monitor the progress of the framework. However, the robustness of this analysis varies between LAs. Several LAs noted that the data quality meant that it was used as a tool to steer discussion rather than to monitor progress directly. There is more detailed discussion of this in Chapter 14.

*What is working well*

- 5.5 The stakeholder survey indicates overall positive perceptions of leadership of the youth engagement and progression agenda from LAs, although the response is a little more measured than the very high figures in the previous survey<sup>10</sup>. It found that:
- 78 per cent (336 of 433 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that there was effective leadership of the YEPF agenda from the LA;
  - The proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement about effective leadership was 16 per cent (71 respondents); and
  - 6 per cent of respondents responded they did not know about the leadership of the youth engagement and progression agenda from the local authority.
- 5.6 The stakeholder survey suggests that the majority of respondents (76 per cent out of 434 respondents) believe that strategic groups effectively steer services and initiatives related to youth engagement and progression. A similar number (71 per cent out of 433 respondents) believed that all key strategic partners were working collaboratively to support youth engagement and progression.
- 5.7 The regularity of steering group meetings was seen as appropriate amongst the majority of LAs. Around two thirds suggested that the regularity of meetings had decreased over the last year. This reflected a decreased need for strategic guidance for those LAs who felt they were stable in terms of the implementation of YEPF. Decreasing the

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<sup>10</sup> This more measured response is partly due to differences in the sampling frame for the survey in the main formative evaluation study. See paragraph 2.44.

regularity in some cases was seen as important in maintaining attendance where members had limited capacity to attend. However, around a third of LAs were still having difficulties maintaining attendance at steering meetings.

- 5.8 Almost all LAs felt that the representation on this board was appropriate and membership included a suitably wide range of stakeholders. At least half had broadened their membership in the past year, for example, to include more third sector representatives or JCP. It was noted by a small number of LAs that organisations not previously involved in the framework had approached the LA about participating in steering groups. This was seen as a testament to the progress made in raising the framework's profile.

#### *Challenges*

- 5.9 The level of seniority and position of the SAO within the LA is seen to influence their involvement in the framework. In many LAs, senior buy-in was seen to be strong, with the EPC feeling supported in their role. However, there was a group of LAs where a perceived lack of senior-level commitment to the framework remained a barrier. In these cases, there was little monitoring of the framework's progress by senior staff in the LA.
- 5.10 Strategic representation was seen as being good overall. However, it was noted in around a quarter of LAs that increased representation from housing, the third sector or other LA departments, notably Youth Justice and Social Services would be desirable. Third sector engagement was also seen as challenging.
- 5.11 In some cases, monitoring remains operational and focused on activities, without a clear strategic overview of the framework's progress as a whole, its outcomes or impacts. This tended to be apparent in those LAs that were still developing the operational aspects of the framework e.g. early identification systems.
- 5.12 The main formative evaluation report identified some challenges surrounding LA funding and subsequent restructuring. It remained the

case that some interviewees felt that this had an impact on the level of buy-in from senior members of staff who did not view YEPF as a priority. In the main, however, disruptions to attendance and governance arrangements have improved since the previous evaluation.

## 6. Operational arrangements

### *What is in place*

- 6.1 All LAs continue to employ an EPC to coordinate delivery of the framework. The majority of EPCs had remained in post since the previous evaluation. However, there were a small number of new EPCs in post, with the last one starting the role less than 6 months ago. For those LAs who had appointed more than one EPC and split the role this was still the current arrangement.
- 6.2 EPCs remain responsible for all aspects of the framework, although in at least three local authorities there is also a data officer, either part- or full-time, who is responsible for analysing all YEPF-related data.
- 6.3 Around two thirds of LAs noted that the EPC role had expanded over the last year as a result of increased advancement of the framework with larger number of stakeholders to engage. It was also mentioned by EPCs that they had been involved in ESF bids<sup>11</sup> and that, in some cases, this had put pressure on their other commitments surrounding YEPF.
- 6.4 All LAs have an operational group in place. Around half had evolved either the composition of this group or the focus of the meetings; but, in general, arrangements are now stable. This group is usually chaired by the EPC and is typically used to go through tier data, checking the status of individuals, share information and decision-making surrounding lead working arrangements. Some are focussed on meeting specific targets relating to development of the framework that are set by their corresponding strategic group.
- 6.5 Interview respondents suggested that the focus of LAs' operational work remains dependent on LAs individual needs and priorities. Many remain focused on early identification, tracking and brokerage but a few have developed arrangements that cover the whole framework. In

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<sup>11</sup> European Social Funds bids have been written during the evaluation period with LAs applying for funding for projects falling under the remit of YEPF.

general, communications around these areas of the framework are well-established (with a few exceptions).

*What is working well*

- 6.6 The EPC function was universally seen as vital to the strategic, monitoring and operational elements of the framework, although some stakeholders were concerned that the role was taxing for just one individual.
- 6.7 In LAs with data officers, their involvement was seen as key in furthering the implementation of the framework by providing more informed data analysis to feed into both operational and strategic groups.
- 6.8 EPCs and other interviewees suggested that where EPCs have previously worked with and have existing relationships with a certain stakeholder group (e.g. ex-teachers) have been better able to engage these groups, using their previous knowledge to further the framework. In a small number of cases, it was noted that too specific an expertise may have meant some stakeholders may have been less effectively engaged. This was seen to be as a result of EPCs working with those stakeholders they were most familiar with in previous roles.
- 6.9 In the majority of LAs, data and information sharing has improved. Outstanding 'Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information' (WASPI) agreements have mainly been resolved and there has been increased buy-in from the appropriate strategic partners. These included agreements between LA departments, Careers Wales and other delivery partners such as schools, colleges and voluntary sector organisations. This was seen as facilitating open conversation at operational meetings:

'Everybody was out doing their own thing, everybody was working hard; but the framework has put in a formal structure under which people can clearly see what their roles are now, what needs to be done and the outcomes being the best for young people.'

(EPC)

### *Challenges*

- 6.10 Around a quarter of LAs continue to face issues with Information Sharing Protocols (ISPs). One LA is currently not receiving all tier data from Careers Wales and, in at least one LA, organising ISPs with smaller voluntary sector organisations remains a challenge.
- 6.11 In a small number of LAs, lack of senior strategic support had impacted on operational arrangements making it harder for those on the ground to influence the relationships between organisations needed to collect data and co-ordinate provision. In one case, there was a period where an LA did not have an EPC and this was seen to have slowed the implementation of the framework. A new EPC is now in place.
- 6.12 In at least half of the LAs there was direct concern that, without further financial assistance from the Welsh Government, the EPC role could be at risk. A small number of LAs felt that without the funding there would not be an EPC role going forward. Without the role, there was scepticism that the framework would remain on the agenda of LAs.
- 6.13 The quality of the data used at operational meetings was identified by a large number of LAs as variable and this has impacted on the efficiency of the operational groups. Further discussion of this can be found in chapter 14.

## **Implementation of the six components of the Framework**

In this section, we present findings about how LAs are implementing the six components of the YEPF: early identification, brokerage, tracking, provision, employability and accountability. As in the previous section, we draw on interviews with implementation staff, stakeholders and survey results.

### **7. Early Identification**

#### *What is happening*

- 7.1 This component of the YEPF remains a prime focus for most LAs. Interviewees suggested pre-16 systems in most LAs are now well advanced, with greater variation apparent in the stage of implementation at post 16.
- (a) Status pre-16
- 7.2 All LAs now have an early identification system in place, which is being used for year 10 and 11 students. There has been progress in embedding existing early identification systems in those LAs that had systems in place during the last evaluation. Interviewees suggested that around a quarter of LAs who had existing EI systems have extended them to include younger age groups. More than a quarter of LA respondents suggested they have reviewed or modified their existing model to ensure that it more effectively identifies young people at risk.
- 7.3 Over two thirds of LAs have a consistent, standardised system in place. There is variation, however, in the length of time that these have been in operation, ranging from since before YEPF began in September 2013 to those currently piloting a new model. In at least a third of LAs, interviewees suggested schools are collecting early identification data, although this is not necessarily combined to make one data set used by the LA. Instead, schools provide individual data sets, which may use different indicators. These are then used to

facilitate discussions about individual young people at operational meetings.

- 7.4 Of the 39 schools that responded to the online survey, nearly nine tenths agreed or strongly agreed that they are participating in pre-16 early-identification in co-ordination with their LA. However, only 58 per cent of all respondents believed this was the case for every school. Notably, 29 per cent of respondents did not know about the co-ordination between schools and the LA in pre-16 early identification. This is consistent with the qualitative interviews, which suggested that large numbers of schools were participating but that there are still difficulties with individual schools.
- 7.5 Interviewees suggested that where LAs have early identification systems in place they are collecting information based on the core indicators of behaviour, attainment and attendance. Around a quarter of LAs suggested that, in the last year, they had expanded the range of indicators used in their early identification systems. In many cases, the decision to expand the range of indicators came as a result of discussions surrounding the allocation of young people to each category of risk. New indicators often included more nuanced behavioural indicators, such as the level of emotional support needed.
- 7.6 76 per cent (208) of respondents to the stakeholder survey agreed or strongly agreed that the LA they work in/with is effectively coordinating pre-16 early identification processes. The survey also showed:
- The majority, 70 per cent (188), of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was made clear by the LA who was responsible for different elements of the pre-16 early identification;
  - Further, 71 per cent (190) agreed or strongly agreed that the right partners were participating in pre-16 early identification processes.

(b) Status post- 16

- 7.7 Interviewees suggested that the status of post- 16 early identification has progressed in at least a quarter of LAs since the formative evaluation. LAs that had previously established their pre-16 early identification systems have now started to expand early identification to post-16. In all but one LA, Careers Wales tier data (all 5 tiers) is being shared with the LA. In some cases, this is also shared with other partners for cross-referencing purposes. In general, the LA is responsible for co-ordinating data sharing.
- 7.8 In at least one LA, Careers Wales takes responsibility for collecting information from post-16 providers to update the tier data without input from the LA. However, in general LAs and Careers Wales respondents suggested they both receive data from providers, which is used to cross-reference the tier data making sure that all available intelligence is used to update the whereabouts and status of young people. Careers Wales continues to use their partnership working with colleges to facilitate information sharing.
- 7.9 In at least half of LAs, it was suggested by EPCs that information sharing amongst colleges /WBL providers and the LA was good, even in cases where Careers Wales was not directly involved within the provider. In some cases, providers have adapted their existing internal systems to fit with the LA data collection system. However, in around two thirds of cases, post-16 providers continued to use individual and differing data collection methods. These are used in practitioner meetings to update the LA/Careers Wales tier data. It is at these operational meetings that both Careers Wales and LAs are updated on those at risk of disengaging. In at least a quarter of LAs, there remained issues engaging some WBL providers and colleges to provide data.
- 7.10 The quality of data from colleges was seen by interview respondents as variable across LAs, resulting from provider-specific processes being in place. In one LA, it was noted that sometimes data was slow

to reach the LA and that this could be as a result of the size and complexity of colleges' internal early identification systems.

7.11 The regularity of data sharing was seen as good, by interview respondents, across the majority of LAs. In some cases, college data was being updated almost daily; whereas, in at least one LA, there were concerns that delays in receiving timely updates was hindering early identification.

7.12 The stakeholder survey showed that 75 per cent (190 out of 255) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the LA was effectively coordinating early identification processes for 16-18 year olds. It also showed that:

- 66 per cent out of 254 respondents (167) agreed or strongly agreed that all of the right partners were participating in early identification processes for 16-18 year olds.
- 34 per cent out of 255 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that all the right partners were participating in the early identification process for young people aged 19 and over. The same percentage of respondents did not know who the partners were that were participating in the 19+ early identification process. This is consistent with the interviewees' identification that this age group has not yet been fully considered.

#### *What is working well*

##### *(a) Pre-16*

7.13 It appears that pre-16 early identification is now an embedded practice in the majority of LAs. Schools have been effectively engaged in, and are seeing the benefits of engaging in it. Schools are largely providing accurate and timely updates to LAs:

'In the past we would have good one-to-one relationships with some of the schools, who would tell us things to ensure that we had more of a holistic picture of what was happening in a young person's life, but now we hold that information centrally, and are not having to rely on individual schools'

(EPC)

- 7.14 Interviewees suggested that the addition of indicators to the early identification systems has helped to more accurately allocate young people to the correct tier or rag rating. Schools have been flexible in making these changes and, in many cases, were already collecting additional information through their own internal systems.
- 7.15 Some LAs have harmonised their pre- and post-16 systems so that both systems use the Careers Wales tier model to identify young people at risk. This was seen as providing a clear structure and facilitating transition between pre- and post-16.
- 7.16 Discussion of early identification systems in operational and strategic meetings means that the monitoring of the effectiveness of early identification systems has generally taken place on a regular basis. As a result, LAs have been able to adapt data collection according to need.
- 7.17 A co-ordinated regional approach is now in place across North Wales. More information on the benefits of this partnership approach can be found in chapter 13.

*What is working well*

*(b) Post-16*

- 7.18 There has been progress with early identification systems post-16 since the previous evaluation. ISPs that were outstanding during the previous evaluation are now mostly in place between Careers Wales and other providers. This has enabled open dialogue and for data to be shared with the LA in centralised data sets. Monitoring of the data is generally carried out by Careers Wales and the LA, which facilitates the cross referencing of data from post-16 providers.
- 7.19 LA and Careers Wales staff reported much more commitment from WBL providers in their information sharing. This was seen, in part, as a result of the EPCs working specifically with this group of providers, as well as work done by NTFW. However, some LAs noted that engagement of this group was still a challenge.

## *Challenges*

### *(a) Pre-16*

- 7.20 Although school engagement was seen as positive by EPCs, there were exceptions across LAs where schools were not represented or internal systems were not seen as reliable. Commitment of some schools remains a challenge. In most cases, LAs are aware of specific barriers in schools and are generally taking measures to overcome them. Often, capacity of both the LA and schools internally was cited as the main reason for variation in commitment. This was particularly the case in LAs with a large number of schools.
- 7.21 In cases where there is not standardised early identification data collection in schools, EPCs suggested intelligence was felt to rely on the relationships between the LA and individual members of staff within schools. It was reported that this varied considerably within some LAs.

### *(b) Post-16*

- 7.22 It appears that most post-16 providers have their own early identification systems, although, the interviewee respondents and researcher judgement suggested, robustness of these varies. There are still barriers in some LAs in communication between EPCs, Careers Wales and post-16 providers. In cases where the EPC is not the data holder, there was not always awareness within the LA as to whether data was fully up-to-date and whether it was cross referenced with individual post-16 provider data.
- 7.23 Colleges and large WBL providers that work with multiple LAs reported that having to meet the requirements of several different LA early identification (and brokerage and tracking) systems can be challenging. Larger colleges have allocated different leads for each LA. Although this was thought to work well, it places pressure on resources. Providers reported that the main challenges are finding time to attend multiple steering/operational meetings and in understanding the differences in approach in each LA.

## 8. Brokerage

### *What is happening*

- 8.1 Lead working arrangements remain in place across all LAs. However, interviewees reported that there is still variation in the terminology used across LAs and between providers. Most reported continuing with their previous model for allocating lead workers. This is usually undertaken through discussions in the operational groups and, as such, limited to those organisations attending those groups. It was noted that where operational groups had expanded, this had improved the lead worker co-ordination amongst stakeholders, as well as the offer available to young people. Representation of colleges and WBL providers in operational groups was perceived to have led to these organisations increasingly taking on the lead worker role. This was seen as a positive step, with lead workers ideally being those who have most contact with the young people.
- 8.2 In general, lead working is arranged by Careers Wales tiers. Tier 1 and 2 are generally the responsibility of Social Services/LA outreach workers. Tier 3 generally sits with Careers Wales; while tiers 4 and 5 are usually handled by schools and colleges. There are differing views among LAs, identified through researcher comparison and noted by interviewees, about how best to manage transition between tiers. Some LAs prefer to keep one lead worker throughout, while others choose to change the lead worker as young people move between tiers. Discussions surrounding best practice are on-going within LAs.
- 8.3 Identifying tier 1 young people is a challenge for all LAs. In general, interviewees suggested, Social Services/outreach workers are responsible for identification of this group. They use a variety of methods, primarily visiting their homes, to make contact with tier 1. One LA was using access to its welfare benefits data to identify tier 1 individuals on whom Careers Wales does not hold information. This was seen by the EPC as a creative way to identify the group.

8.4 In general, it remains the case that LAs do not appear to have fully developed plans for case management. This includes:

- when lead worker support should be withdrawn;
- plans for withdrawal;
- appropriate caseloads for lead workers;
- processes for assessing the effectiveness of lead working and any provision brokered for a young person; and
- the most appropriate format for lead workers to provide feedback to EPCs.

In at least two LAs, however, guidance documents had been written to give guidance to stakeholders surrounding lead worker allocation. All interviewees recognised that a consistent, yet flexible, offer of lead working and brokerage is a key component of the YEPF.

8.5 In the majority of LAs, lead workers were explicitly allocated to young people; although in at least one LA, lead workers were not always aware that they were taking on this role. This was as a result of concerns from EPCs that staff would view the role as being 'on top' of their other day-to-day responsibilities. As a result, there are individuals fulfilling the role of the lead worker without knowledge that they are officially taking on the role.

8.6 Interviewees suggested lead worker allocations are generally being decided on an ad-hoc basis within operational groups. Many of these groups have undergone change in the last year, but are now in place and facilitating lead worker discussions. At least one LA mentioned that there were likely to be ongoing changes surrounding its operational group, with the possibility of the creation of separate pre and post-16 operational groups.

8.7 The stakeholder survey showed that 69 per cent of 178 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the LA effectively coordinated processes for pre-16 brokerage

- 8.8 A similar percentage of respondents (71 per cent, 137 out of 194 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that the LA effectively coordinated processes for 16-18 brokerage. However, only half this proportion agreed or strongly agreed this was the same for young people aged 19+ (35 per cent, 68 of 192 individuals).
- 8.9 For 16-18 year-olds, 76 per cent of respondents (147 out of 194 respondents) agreed that the LA had mechanisms to help partners effectively share information about young people in this cohort to ensure that appropriate support is brokered.
- 8.10 The stakeholder survey showed that, in total, 63 per cent (112 out of 195) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the LA is clear about how lead workers (or a similar function) should be allocated to young people under 16.
- 8.11 Despite the initial slow progress with post-16 brokerage, the stakeholder survey shows that a high percentage of respondents (70 per cent out of 195 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that the LA made clear how lead workers (or a similar function) should be allocated to young people aged 16-18. Only 40 per cent thought the same was true of the 19+ arrangements.
- 8.12 Across the majority of LAs, there has not been any exercise to collect feedback from, or seek the views of young people as an exercise under YEPF. However, the proportion of survey respondents who felt that arrangements to seek young people's views were appropriate, was larger than the proportion that felt they weren't. At least half of interview respondents mentioned that information from partners on the views of young people was available. Careers Wales respondents noted that their organisation collects feedback from those using its services in tier 3, which feeds into their service offer. Interview respondents suggested intelligence from Careers Wales is shared informally within steering and operational groups. At least three LAs run annual surveys assessing engagement and satisfaction of young people. LA respondents suggested results are shared and used to

inform practice within LAs more generally. However, this does not specifically relate to lead worker arrangements. In at least one LA, young people's views of lead working arrangements were discussed during provision mapping<sup>12</sup>. This exercise was done as part of initial provision mapping (covered in the previous evaluation).

- 8.13 The stakeholder survey shows that less than half of respondents (44 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that there were appropriate mechanisms in place to seek the views of young people to inform the development and delivery of services). This echoes the qualitative interviews that suggested that little formal feedback has been collected from young people on brokerage arrangements.
- 8.14 Further, a higher proportion of respondents did not know (39 per cent) or disagreed/strongly disagreed (35 per cent) with the statement that there are appropriate mechanisms in place to seek the views of parents in the development and delivery of services. Only just over a quarter of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this claim (26 per cent of 428 respondents).

#### *What is working well*

- 8.15 ISPs between partners are now generally in place between organisations on LA operational groups. This has meant that lead worker arrangements have advanced across LAs. However, in a small number of LAs, information sharing remains a challenge. Stakeholders are now generally coming together to review individual cases and allocate lead workers and packages of support.
- 8.16 Flexibility in providing the right lead worker arrangements for an individual young person was highlighted as being important across LAs. EPCs felt confident that the right groups were involved in lead working arrangements and that operational groups were meeting suitably regularly.

#### *Challenges*

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<sup>12</sup> See PEP project case study in the previous YEPF evaluation.

- 8.17 There remain challenges for EPCs in communicating the role of the lead worker under YEPF. There has been progress made in explaining to stakeholders that the title of 'lead worker' does not need to have an impact upon their responsibilities or current job title. However, in some cases, this perception is hindering the allocation of lead workers, with staff concerned that they do not have capacity to take on responsibility for the role.
- 8.18 The capacity of organisations to undertake the lead worker role is a substantial barrier. This was highlighted by both third sector representatives and LA interviewees. Internal LA funding reductions have affected the ability to provide a suitable number of lead workers in LAs, as social services often take this role. Capacity is a particular problem for the third sector; which remains underrepresented in strategic and operational groups, but which could potentially take more of a role in lead working arrangements.
- 8.19 LA staff suggested delays with ESF funding has meant that, in many LAs, provision and capacity to provide lead workers is limited until programme funding comes through. It was noted by over a quarter of LAs that additional support should be available once these programmes are up and running.
- 8.20 There still remains some tension in a small number of LAs between Careers Wales and other stakeholders in relation to tier 3 young people. Allocation to tiers has resource implications for organisations and negotiation can be a sensitive process. However, these LAs were the exception. Working relationships were mainly described in positive terms.
- 8.21 Nearly half of all respondents to the on-line survey (49% of 428 respondents) did not know if young people are offered the opportunity to have a Welsh-speaking lead worker (or similar function) if they wished to. However, interviewees reported the view that there was adequate Welsh Language provision.

## **9. Tracking and transitions of young people**

### *What is happening*

#### *(a) Pre- 16*

- 9.1 LAs are using their standardised early identification systems in operational meetings to review the data and update the status of individual young people. In cases where schools are not providing data in a standardised form to the LA, meetings are held at least termly with schools to check that individual data sets are correct. In at least two LAs, EPCs felt that meetings with schools could be more regular to ensure that tracking data was kept up-to-date.
- 9.2 In general, communication between schools and LAs is effective and well-established. However, in LAs with large numbers of schools there was not always a clear awareness of individual schools' internal processes.
- 9.3 Lack of buy-in to YEPF from leaders in a small number of schools was still seen as a barrier to tracking arrangements in almost all LAs. However, LAs also reported that there had been considerable improvement in the relationships and buy-in from schools overall since the main formative evaluation.
- 9.4 In the stakeholder survey more than a third of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the LA effectively coordinates processes for tracking the progress of young people at risk of disengaging aged under 16. In total, 35 per cent (78 out of 224 respondents) strongly agreed with this statement, and only 1 person strongly disagreed.
- 9.5 Most respondents (74 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that the LA facilitated sharing of information between relevant partners to ensure effective tracking of progress of under 16s at risk of disengaging.

#### *Post-16*

- 9.6 In the stakeholder survey 72 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the LA facilitates sharing of information between

relevant partners to ensure effective tracking of progress of young people at risk of disengaging aged over 16.

- 9.7 In total, 65 per cent of respondents felt that there is a robust system in place for identifying and reporting to Careers Wales those who have quit or are at risk of doing so.

*Post-18*

- 9.8 Across LAs there were no arrangements in place for tracking young people in jobs without training. See more detail at 11.4.

*What is working well*

- 9.9 Interviewees noted that there was increased engagement from both pre- and post-16 providers and that this had had a positive impact on the LA's ability to track individuals at risk.

*Challenges*

- 9.10 There are still challenges engaging both pre- and post- 16 providers. Information from providers is sometimes not up-to-date and this makes tracking more challenging.
- 9.11 Reductions in funding for social services was said to have led to decreased capacity to identify young people in tier 1. Some LAs, have only one person who works with this group, often alongside their other responsibilities.

## 10. Provision

### *What is happening*

- 10.1 Interviews with EPCs suggested that all LAs undertook provision mapping as part of the implementation of YEPF. However, whilst the YEPF implementation plan set out that provision maps should be reviewed and updated annually<sup>13</sup>, since the last evaluation, only around a third of LAs reported having updated these maps. A few LAs have plans to update provision mapping over the next few months.
- 10.2 The North Wales case study identified, for example, that regional provision mapping has recently been completed. This included the mapping of provision against key employment sectors in the region. It has meant that the LAs are better able to identify provision for young people who live near the boundaries between LA areas.
- 10.3 In general, provision mapping has focused on identifying existing gaps and duplication in provision. In at least a quarter of LAs, labour market requirements have been considered as part of this process. There was a sense amongst EPCs that LAs already had knowledge of labour market requirements and these were informally considered as part of the provision mapping process. Some LAs were aware of work surrounding Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) in other departments or through the Economic Ambition Board, but this was not shared with EPCs.
- 10.4 75 per cent out of 295 respondents to the stakeholder survey agreed or strongly agreed that the LA had worked effectively with all key stakeholders to map the available provision.
- 10.5 Around two thirds (65 per cent out of 293 respondents) agreed or strongly agreed that that the LA effectively analysed information collected as part of any provision mapping after the introduction of the YEPF.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/131007-ye-framework-implementation-plan-en.pdf>, p.43

- 10.6 However, only just over half of all respondents (55 per cent out of 294 respondents) believed that there are processes in place to regularly update provision maps. Notably, a quarter of respondents did not know if there were processes in place to regularly update provision maps.
- 10.7 In total, 64 per cent of 291 individuals also agreed or strongly agreed that the LA had an appropriate forum for making decisions about how provision should be adapted to better meet the needs of young people.

*What is working well*

- 10.8 LAs that had updated their mapping said they had done so because they had seen the benefits of undertaking the exercise. Some LAs used the intelligence gained to tailor their provision and remove duplication.
- 10.9 The further mapping exercise<sup>14</sup>, led by CWVYS, to look specifically at voluntary sector provision across Wales was welcomed. At least two LAs noted that understanding voluntary sector provision was particularly difficult, as a result of a large number of smaller providers. CYVWS was positive that greater knowledge of the sector, through provision mapping, is likely to encourage engagement with the voluntary sector.

*Challenges*

- 10.10 Some LA interview respondents did not appear to understand the purpose of provision mapping and how it might influence provision. This was highlighted in the previous report and remains the case. The majority of LAs could not refer to specific actions or examples of changes made as a result of updated provision mapping.
- 10.11 There were concerns that, with capacity constraints for both EPCs and other LA staff members, updating the provision mapping exercise regularly enough to make them useful posed a challenge.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.cwvys.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/YEPF-report-English.pdf>

## *CAP*

- 10.12 The Common Area Prospectus (CAP) was reported by all LAs as being largely up to date and available to schools. However, in at least three quarters of cases, LAs suggested that schools were not actively promoting CAP.
- 10.13 At least two LAs were keen to use this tool and felt that it could be extremely beneficial to young people. Consequently, these LAs had made action plans to roll out both the Common Application Process and Common Area Prospectus together. However, the Common Application Process was withdrawn<sup>15</sup>, these action plans did not go ahead and CAP was no longer seen as a priority.

## *Challenges*

- 10.14 In the LAs involved in the CAP pilot, where schools trialled a centralised application process, there was a feeling that schools had found the application process difficult to use and that this had put them off the idea of CAP in general. At least one interviewee suggested that, without the application process, they did not feel that CAP added much value.
- 10.15 There was little awareness surrounding CAP both from LAs and other stakeholders. Most suggested that, since the pilot period, there had been little conversation about the tool and schools were limited in their use of it.
- 10.16 Both LA and provider staff suggested that the competitive nature of post-16 provision is perceived to be a barrier to the engagement with CAP. At least four LAs suggested reluctance from some schools to take up CAP because those with sixth forms had little motivation to encourage pupils to move to other post-16 providers (potentially reducing their own post-16 funding).

## *Youth Guarantee*

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<sup>15</sup> Welsh Government took a decision to halt the development of the Common Application Process facility, due to technical issues involved in the creation of a common application platform across all provision and areas. As application processes already existed, the Common Application Process facility ceased to be a priority.

10.17 The Youth Guarantee is the offer, acceptance and commencement of a suitable place in education or training for a young person making the first time transition from compulsory education at age 16. Across LAs, there was little work from schools or LAs to promote the Youth Guarantee. Around a third of LAs suggested that this was happening to some degree within schools. However, the majority of LAs said that the Youth Guarantee did not come up in meetings with schools and that the term was not frequently used. Promotion of the Youth Guarantee from LAs was either not apparent or very minimal.

### *Challenges*

10.18 Ownership in terms of the Youth Guarantee is not well understood. There appears to be little or no awareness of what promotion of the Youth Guarantee would look like from schools. It was suggested that this was a result of a lack advice and guidance regarding the Guarantee itself, as well as the prioritisation of other aspects of the framework by LAs.

10.19 There was a view among a small number of LAs that the Youth Guarantee was being promoted, but not explicitly named as such. They felt that it was implicit in the work schools are already doing. It was also noted, that with considerable capacity restraints, the lack of push from WG has meant that this area has not been prioritised by LAs.

## **11. Employability**

### *What is happening*

- 11.1 Participant and stakeholder interviews revealed that the employability strand remains the most underdeveloped element of the framework. The focus of LAs remains on early identification, brokerage and tracking. The delays in ESF funding have also affected this strand of work, with many LAs reporting that they are waiting for the additional resource to address this area of the framework.
- 11.2 There has, however, been progress over the last year. A small number of LAs reported that they now have a strategic group looking at employability or have an EPC who sits on the group within the LA that works in employment and skills. It remains the case that in at least a third of LAs strategic arrangements for this element of work are not in place.
- 11.3 Many LAs mentioned specific programmes, events and workshops that have been undertaken under YEPF. Rhondda, Cynon, Taff (RCT) Council, for example, continues to run its 'Your Future First' pre-employment programme, which the EPC reported has now been better tailored to meet local employer needs. Success rates were reportedly high, with 74% of participants moving into secure employment after completion of the programme according to the LA.
- 11.4 No interviewee respondents reported outreach or provision specifically aimed at young people in jobs without training. Many LAs suggested that this was not a group that they had considered in their work and many seemed unsure if this group fell under the remit of YEPF. At least two LAs had discussed this group in strategic meetings, but no action was taken.
- 11.5 LA respondents suggested that funding changes affecting Careers Wales over the last year mean that it no longer has funding or a database for the provision of work placements. In some LAs, EPCs suggested this has meant that there are no longer compulsory work placements in secondary schools through either LAs or Careers

Wales. It was suggested by LA respondents that this means work experience is now not available, and schools are unable to take on the extra responsibility of organising and tracking placements. In at least two LAs, interviewees suggested ESF funding may be able to support work experience within the LA.

- 11.6 For those LAs with centralised post-16 tracking, traineeships, apprenticeships and other employability programmes are captured through these systems. As such, LAs can assess levels of participation in these schemes. There was little evidence to suggest that participation in work experience and placements had been assessed or been used to inform practice. However, levels of participation in these schemes was discussed as part of operational meetings more generally. EPCs suggested that employability schemes are tracked as part of LA early identification and tracking systems in co-ordination with WBL providers and colleges.

*What is working well*

- 11.7 There is evidence of progress with this element of the framework, with some LAs working more strategically. ESF funding is seen as key to furthering the success of this element of the framework and the bidding process has meant considerable planning and capacity has been dedicated to decision making.
- 11.8 43 per cent of respondents to the on-line survey agreed or strongly agreed that the LA led a strategic approach to volunteering and work experience opportunities for young people.

*Challenges*

- 11.9 It was reported by LA interviewees that within LAs, responsibility for the employability element of the framework is often dispersed between departments and, in many cases, the links with appropriate employability and skills strategic groups have not been made. In some cases, as a result of capacity difficulties, has resulted in little or no work experience provision being available.

- 11.10 In the stakeholder survey 67 per cent of respondents (out of 292) agreed or strongly agreed that all key partners were working collaboratively to support improved employability skills among young people. This suggests positive work is being undertaken but that there remains room for improvement. Only 42 per cent of 290 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the LA effectively engaged employers to improve the employability skills of young people. Interview respondents suggested this remained an area where there was more work to be done.
- 11.11 A significant proportion of individuals responded with 'don't know' to questions about employability. For example, 26 per cent of respondents did not know whether the LA effectively engaged employers and 21 per cent of respondents did not know whether the LA led a strategic approach to volunteering and work experience opportunities for young people.
- 11.12 Interviews suggested that LAs have generally not considered outreach or provision for young people in jobs, but without training. For many this was seen as beyond the remit of the EPC or practically too difficult to consider. This cohort may be particularly hard to engage as there may not be an incentive for them to co-operate with services if they are employed. Although LAs are working to engage employers, EPCs suggested there is still work to be done in this area and communication is not currently at the level which would enable the LA to reach those in jobs but without training.

## 12. Accountability

### *What is happening*

- 12.1 At least three quarters of LAs suggested that there was an improved understanding of stakeholder responsibilities and accountability within the framework. This can be seen as a result of the establishment of strategic and operational groups, which are active and meeting regularly.
- 12.2 National stakeholders (such as the WLGA, NTFW and Colegau Cymru) remain engaged and feedback from regional meetings showed that these are seen as positive and productive. Increased engagement with the third sector was seen as particularly positive.
- 12.3 In the stakeholder survey, 68 per cent of 433 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there was good sharing of information between partners after the introduction of the framework.
- 12.4 Accountability post-18 remains an area requiring more development by LAs. A small number of LAs believe that post-18 provision is not part of the framework and so are not looking at working with this group. The majority of LAs however, see this as an on-going area of work on which they will be able to focus more once the work pre-18 is further embedded.

### *What is working well*

- 12.5 Many LA officers and partners felt that there had been improved accountability for young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming so. Over the last year strategic governance structures have evolved and it was felt by most that the right partners were taking responsibility for the implementation of the framework:

‘it is clear who is responsible for what... the LA clearly take the lead and other providers are generally comfortable to find solutions between us’

*(EPC)*

12.6 Despite challenges surrounding ISPs with Job Centre Plus (JCP) for the post-18 cohort, there are examples where local arrangements have been made to facilitate communication with JCP. In at least two LAs, members of staff from Careers Wales had been seconded, at least part-time, to work in JCP. Through these members of staff the LA has been able to update the data and monitor the status of these individuals in contact with JCP.

### *Challenges*

12.7 There is still a concern amongst some LAs that senior buy-in within the LA remains a challenge and that the non-statutory nature of the guidance has resulted in a weakening of commitment from senior management over time.

12.8 There is considerable variation in the accountability mechanisms within LAs. Interviewees with LA staff suggested that at least a third of LAs do not have any formal reporting mechanisms, while others have regular and robust mechanisms to monitor progress. There was a view amongst at least three LAs that clearer guidance from WG on reporting methods could improve accountability.

12.9 60 per cent of 430 respondents to the on-line survey agreed or strongly agreed that LAs shared evidence on progress with all key stakeholders after the introduction of the YEPF. This highlights a need for LAs to ensure communication of progress to stakeholders.

### **13. North Wales case study**

#### *Background to the partnership*

- 13.1 Engagement and Progression Coordinators (EPCs) from the six North Wales local authorities established a regional EPC group in June 2014. With the relatively recent introduction of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF), the EPCs felt that it would be useful for them to meet as a group to share practice while implementing the framework. Interviewees suggested there was also a political will towards regional working in north Wales, with key strategic groups such as the North Wales Economic Ambitions Board in place and a regional ESF project in development.
- 13.2 The local authorities were all at different stages in implementation and the EPCs themselves came from a variety of backgrounds (for instance, youth work and education). The group was seen as a way of sharing experience and good practice.
- 13.3 The North Wales (NW) Partnership was initially intended, by the EPCs in the group, to be fairly operational, but it has since developed to include more strategic work. The group was set up on a fairly informal basis at the start, but has developed to include monthly meetings, terms of reference and specific agendas. The administration of the group is funded by Gwynedd Council. As part of the agreement for the secondment of the Gwynedd EPC from Careers Wales, the EPC was to develop any regional work within the YEPF. The Gwynedd EPC felt able to both lead on a strategic level and work on an operational level, also having enough capacity to take the regional lead. Gwynedd also leads on a regional level with regard to the skills agenda and the North Wales Economic Ambitions Board.
- 13.4 The group faced a potential initial challenge in co-ordination as all local authorities had implemented the framework slightly differently. However, the EPCs feel that:

‘It was the situation in our individual local authorities which was the challenge and the group was the way in which we overcame these challenges.’

*Elements of the framework*

- 13.5 The EPC group has adopted a regional approach to pre-16 early identification, primarily through the regional commissioning of the Learner Profile Tool, an early identification tool developed with CAPITA. This was based on an initial tool commissioned from Cynnal by Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils.
- 13.6 The regional tool was funded by all six local authorities, but from various funds within each authority depending on resource availability. Denbighshire Council coordinated payment for the tool.
- 13.7 To develop a regional approach, the group first mapped what each local authority already had in place, for instance from where data was gathered and which key indicators were used. They then gathered all relevant data officers together and established the key requirements for a regional tool. EPCs then developed the tool with CAPITA by using a set of key indicators that are included in the YEPF Early Identification Guidance and from national research. The tool is informed by data that is already available through SIMS<sup>16</sup> and imported into the PRIME ONE local authority Management Information System (MIS) across all six local authorities. Each indicator has a weighting. The tool utilises a scoring system and places learners into colour coded “bands”.
- 13.8 EPCs emphasise that this regional process was difficult at times, since each local authority already had early identification processes in place. As such, each local authority needed to compromise and collaborate with the others to blend important aspects of their own early identification systems into the new tool. For instance, Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils were already using their original Cynnal tool and had to make a significant investment in regional working to switch

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<sup>16</sup> The school information management system. SIMS is a Capita product in use in many schools in Wales. Many local authorities also use Capita’s One and Prime products to exchange data with local authorities.

to a new regional system. It has taken at least 12 months of workshops and meetings to coordinate data input processes and key indicators in order to develop the tool.

13.9 The early identification tool aims to:

- identify learners who are at risk of disengaging;
- identify learners for the regional 11-24 TRAC project<sup>17</sup>;
- support the prioritisation of appropriate resources and support for identified learners;
- support allocation of a Lead Worker;
- support the identification of gaps in provision/support;
- target support within specific indicators e.g. attendance;
- track the progress of learners who receive support / provision and measure the impact against indicators;
- ensure consistency in how learners are identified;
- provide consistent data for referring learners to moderation panels.

13.10 The tool is now in place and test scenarios are being run. The main benefits of this approach are twofold. First, the local authorities have collectively funded the tool and this has proved more cost-effective than if each local authority had developed a separate tool. Second, early identification data will now be consistent. Data is collected using the same methods and presented consistently, meaning that those working within the YEPF can monitor changes in data across the whole region and respond accordingly. This increases confidence in the accuracy of the data. Schools have also responded positively to this new regional approach:

‘All the local authorities had some early identification system before, but now you don’t need to go into individual schools for data, you can get regional information at the click of a button.’

(EPC)

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<sup>17</sup> TRAC project, funded by European Structural Fund, was a project aimed at 11-24 year olds to identify training and skills providers to work with young people who might otherwise be in danger of becoming NEET.

- 13.11 A regional approach to post-16 early identification has not yet fully developed, but the group is encouraging colleges to use a formal, regional post-16 early identification tool and are having some success in this area. Grŵp Llandrillo Menai is leading on this work and the tool is in very early stages, with the first meeting held in October 2015 to agree the key indicators in principle. This work is on-going and the group has presented this regional approach to Welsh Government to gain its support in fully developing the tool.
- 13.12 The group has also developed a regional approach to pre-16 brokerage. The group has developed a standard regional design for brokerage panels, providing guidance on the multi-agency composition of the panels, how they respond to early identification data and how they allocate lead workers. This regional design therefore ensures an element of standardisation across the region, since each local authority can replicate the panels on an individual local authority basis. The group therefore aims to standardise the brokerage process across the region, while continuing to implement the process at LA level. This system was adopted through compromise and adjustment of individual local authority processes.
- 13.13 The benefits of this approach are that it provides a regional brokerage framework without being too prescriptive and that decisions are made consistently across the region. As with early identification of post 16s, the group currently has limited access to post-16 data and responsibility for brokerage is allocated to Careers Wales.
- 13.14 Through the Learner Profile Tool, the group has a consistent approach to pre-16 tracking. The group has not yet progressed to regionalising their approach to post-16 tracking and local authorities are therefore continuing with their existing system of responding to monthly Careers Wales data through regular panels.
- 13.15 The group has been engaging with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) with regard to tracking those aged 18+ and, as a result, DWP is planning to provide the region with a member of staff

for each local authority to support them with post-18 tracking. This regional approach is still in development.

- 13.16 Working as a group has also enabled the EPCs to develop a complete regional map of provision. The North Wales Economic Ambitions Board supported a regional approach by providing an intern to support the mapping. The benefits of this approach are that each local authority now works from the same provision map, that each local authority now knows what is available across borders and they are able to provide a wider range of provision for their young people. No other major work with regard to mapping provision has been undertaken on a regional basis, although each LA has continued its own work (for instance planning to upload mapping information online).

*Outcomes and additionality*

- 13.17 Participants suggested that adopting this regional approach to coordinating aspects of the YEPF has provided a range of benefits, including providing added value to work at an individual authority level.
- 13.18 Adopting a regional approach builds a consistent support for young people. It ensures that young people get the same quality of support in each LA, that they do not come into contact with an excessive range of support agencies and that they have access to provision across local authority boundaries.

‘I think we’ve made a big difference to tier 1 young people, who have been found and placed on a pathway.’

(Stakeholder)

- 13.19 The regional approach also allows the EPCs to share good practice, ideas and experiences with each other. The EPCs all bring ideas and suggestions to the meetings and all have different career backgrounds. For example, one EPC was mostly desk-based and had not been working directly with young people for years. This EPC therefore visited tier 1 and 2 young people with officers from Flintshire Council in order to broaden their understanding of the needs of these

young people. The Gwynedd EPC is also on secondment from Careers Wales, so provides a valuable link for the other EPCs with Careers Wales.

- 13.20 This sharing of expertise is helpful in terms of guiding work within each local authority and providing EPCs with the most effective ideas for implementing each aspect of the YEPF (*“I came in late as an EPC and this group has been a lifeline”*). Significantly, this sharing of good practice also avoids duplication of work and resources, ensuring that the YEPF is implemented in a resource-efficient manner:

‘The group has really provided value for money in terms of outcomes, I wouldn’t have done half as much work [in my local authority] if it wasn’t for this group.’

(EPC)

‘The group reduced duplication of work, if we’re having to introduce something new we can come back and share what did and didn’t work.’

(EPC)

- 13.21 The group feels that a major benefit of adopting a regional approach to implementing the YEPF has been to provide EPCs with strength, influence and leverage. Working on a regional basis has allowed the EPCs to speak with a collective voice and therefore have more influence on the development of relevant local projects and policies, as well as ensuring collective decisions are adopted as serious policies within their individual local authorities.
- 13.22 For example, the work of the group has influenced the development of the new TRAC project and has steered work in the regional 14-19 partnership. The group has also been able to engage better with the work of the North Wales Economic Ambitions Board and, as a result, the board had plans to showcase the group’s regional approach during its skills and employability conference in March 2016 and have invited a member of the group to sit on the Board. The group has also been able to approach Welsh Government with their potential regional post-16 early identification tool as a model for a national approach.

'Now that we're established, people know they need to come to this meeting to get things done.'

(EPC)

*Next steps*

- 13.23 The group is now looking to adopt further regional approaches to the implementation of the YEPF. Firstly, they are looking to consolidate their achievements so far, ensuring that the regional approach is embedded across all local authorities and relevant partners. The group then wishes to work on post-16 identification and tracking, planning to find a regional approach to include colleges and Careers Wales. Finally, the group plans to turn its attention to developing a regional approach to the employability strand of the YEPF.

## **14. Careers Wales Database**

14.1 This section presents some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Careers Wales Database data, which is used by LAs to monitor their NEET figures. This data, collected by Careers Wales and shared with LAs, tracks individual young people and their status in relation to the five-tier model. The Welsh Government receives aggregated quarterly data at the beginning and end of each quarter, as well as recording movements between tiers and time spent in each tier. LAs receive monthly data sets.

### *Strengths*

14.2 The Careers Wales data is fundamental to the early identification, brokerage and tracking systems of LAs. In around a quarter of LAs, the five tier model is used both pre- and post-16 to identify young people at risk.

14.3 In the majority of cases, EPCs reported that the LA takes responsibility for cross-checking accuracy and assimilating pre- and post-16 data from providers into the database. Most LAs had direct access to the data and could alter individual level reports. However, it was reported by interview respondents that in a small number of LAs, Careers Wales take sole responsibility for this task which makes it difficult for LAs to take ownership of this data set or be clear how up to date information was.

14.4 Those LAs who have members of staff seconded from Careers Wales noted that this arrangement had a positive impact on the data collection and monitoring. In the small number of LAs who had a dedicated officers to work with the Careers Wales data this was seen by EPCs as beneficial to LAs understanding of this data.

14.5 The data is typically discussed at both operational and strategic meetings. Operational meetings are generally focused on this data, looking at individual cases and ensuring that data is up to date. At least two thirds of interviewees noted that the data was often out of

date at the point at which it was discussed, and that operational meetings were vital in identifying individuals' status.

- 14.6 In strategic meetings, analysing trends in data was identified as the main tool in monitoring the progress of the framework as a whole. The data gives LAs a sense of progress and identifies any major changes within an LA. Interviewees suggested that, in general, strategic groups were aware of the particular strengths and weaknesses of the data collection within each individual LA. This meant that, in many cases, data was used more as a system to flag changes in numbers and time spent within each tier. LA staff suggested that increases or drops in numbers of young people in each tier are then discussed and action is taken accordingly.

#### *Challenges*

- 14.7 A decision was made not to present an analysis of data from the Careers Wales database in this report and although it has been used for monitoring within LAs and by Welsh Government it's coherence as a Wales-wide dataset has not been established..
- 14.8 There are a number of key issues which impact on the presentation of data.
- 14.9 Between quarters 2 (July-September) and 3 (October to December) of 2014<sup>18</sup>, the criteria for inclusion in the cohort recorded in the Careers Wales database was changed. Previously individuals' status was recorded until they reached their 18th birthday, since Q3 2014 individuals are included past their 18th birthday until their school year cohort reaches the end of year 13 (regardless of whether the individual has left education).
- 14.10 This cohort change means that the data before and after this change is not comparable, as it is based on different populations. In the previous data collection methodology, the number of individuals

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<sup>18</sup> Data referred to in this evaluation covers is summarised for each of the following time periods. Quarter 1 (April-June) 2014-15, Quarter 2 (July –Sept) 2014-15, Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec), Quarter 4 (Jan- March) 2014-15, Quarter 1 (April- June) 2015-16 and Quarter 2 (July-Sept) 2015-16

included in the data dropped off steadily throughout the year until the new cohort was added in September; whereas now, the number of individuals stays stable throughout the year. This means it is not possible to compare Q1 or Q2 2014-15 to Q1 or Q2 2015-16.

- 14.11 The seasonal nature (the large influx of young people in September and drop out after Christmas for example) of young people's engagement with education and training means that it is not possible to compare figures from different quarters across the same year without comparing to previous years. This is because the changes across the year are based on the academic cycle rather than only showing changes as a result of other interventions. The proportion of young people who are NEET increases steadily from September throughout the year, with a noticeable spike over the summer. This is followed by a steep drop in September when young people start new courses.
- 14.12 During the research process, several LAs reported issues relating to individuals being in the wrong tier. This could be due to incorrect data in schools or colleges, or a more systematic issue where schools and colleges are interpreting the tiers in different ways and allocating individuals incorrectly. In order to facilitate future comparison, it should be ensured that schools and colleges receive consistent guidance.
- 14.13 Similarly, researcher judgment and interviewees suggested the quality of the data collected by LAs is likely to vary. As it is provided by the schools and colleges, it is subject to variance in understanding and the motivation to record accurately. As providers become more accustomed to the process of data collection, this is likely to improve. Furthermore, LAs and providers differ in the frequency with which they collect this data. This means that movements between tiers may be recorded more faithfully by some LAs than others, as well as affecting the overall accuracy of the data.

- 14.14 As LAs vary widely in terms of their populations, the only meaningful way to compare LA performance, researcher judgement suggests, is by analysing the percentage of young people in each tier. This is currently not possible as not all tier 5 data is available. Without the inclusion of total numbers in tier 5 in each LA, it is not possible to know the size of the total population of young people (included in the tier system) in the LA.
- 14.15 The introduction of Tier 0 between the Q2 and Q3 of 2014-15 introduced a further challenge as it became clear during the research process that LAs have different interpretations of the definition and scope of this tier. For example, one LA thought that Tier 0 was comprised of deceased individuals; whereas another thought that it categorised those hardest to reach and therefore most at risk. Each LA shows a similar pattern of a seasonal influx of individuals placed in Tier 0 in September. However, it is clear that there is a high variance in figures in Tier 0 between LAs which could impact on the percentages in each tier across LAs.
- 14.16 There is currently a lack of benchmarking of the national data which could be utilised to assess LAs' performance. It is unclear what would constitute progress or adequate progress. Clarifying this would contribute to the LAs recording the data in a consistent fashion across Wales, in part through a better understanding of the measures. Careers Wales indicated in interviews that it has developed its own benchmarking for tier 3 and reported this to the Welsh Government.
- 14.17 There is variation between LAs in what tier data is shared with them by Careers Wales. In at least one LA, Careers Wales does not share data on tier 3-5 with the LA. Where the LA is not directly involved in data collection, EPCs suggested it is difficult for it to take responsibility for its quality and accuracy, or understand any issues which may have impacted on collection.
- 14.18 Ideally, for it to be used to assess the effectiveness of the framework, the following aspects of the IO data would need be scrutinised:

- Improved identification of those at risk: *This is measured by increased share of young people in tiers 3-5, and reduced share in tiers 1 and 2.* This will only be possible to assess when the new data collection method has been in place for at least a year. However, in order to confidently use this data for evaluative purposes, the discrepancies in data collection also need to be addressed.
- Better support: *This is measured by less time spent by young people in tiers 2 and 3, and reduced percentage share of young people in tiers 1 and 2.* At the moment LAs, are collecting data with varying regularity. More regular and consistent data collection may capture more movement within the time period (for example, young people who move into a new tier and back again within a quarter).
- Better response to NEETs: *This is measured by less time spent by young people in tier 1.* Again, it is not possible to assess this at this juncture due to differing collection methods between the LAs.

## 15. Recommendations

### *LA management of the YEPP*

#### 15.1 The Welsh Government should:

- Continue to monitor the strategic arrangements within LAs and encourage SAOs to take an active role in the framework. In LAs where temporary SAOs are in place, work to support them to establish a permanent arrangement;
- Ensure that funding is available to maintain the EPC in each LA.

### *Early identification*

- Ensure that LAs without central, standardised post-16 identification systems focus on this as a priority.
- Ensure that LAs alongside Careers Wales are working towards more consistent co-operation between all schools, colleges and WBL providers in providing information to monitor all those aged 16-18.

### *Brokerage and tracking*

- Encourage LAs to communicate the role of lead workers to all stakeholders and facilitate transparent lead working arrangements;
- Encourage LAs to continue to form strong relationships with the third sector;
- Encourage wider sharing between stakeholders of best practice regarding consultation with young people.

### *Provision*

- Encourage LAs to better co-ordinate with other departments working in employment and skills/Local Economic Ambition Boards to enable use of labour market intelligence to be utilised in provision mapping;
- Provide clear guidance to schools and LAs about the status of the Common Area Prospectus and how it should be used. Particular targeting of schools with sixth forms may be

necessary. Encourage parental engagement and awareness of CAP.

- Provide clear guidance about the Youth Guarantee with practical advice on what promotion of this would look like for schools and LAs.

#### *Employability*

- Continue to use the regional working groups to promote the development of the employability strand of the framework.
- Encourage communication internally within LAs to facilitate joined up working related to employability.
- Encourage LAs to share best practice around facilitating and assessing levels of participation in employability, work experience and placements.
- Identify how the Welsh Government and Careers Wales can better support the transition and provision at age 19 plus. This could be done during regional working groups where LAs collaborating with JCP share best practice.

#### *Accountability*

- Clear guidance should be provided about what best practice looks like in terms of monitoring the progress of the framework. Guidance on suitable reporting mechanisms both internally within LAs and to the Welsh Government.
- Encourage LAs to consider the development of benchmarking as part of their analysis of Careers Wales database data.

## Annex 1 - Topic guides

Topic guide for interviews with implementation staff (within the LA or key partners)

This could include EPCs, SROs, Careers Wales, or other stakeholder as appropriate.

### ***Introduction***

Explain that ICF and ARAD have been appointed to evaluate the implementation and early impact of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF). A comprehensive evaluation of the framework was carried out in 2014-15, during its implementation phase. The evaluation report was published in August 2015 on the Welsh Government website. This interview is part of a follow up study to the evaluation and aims to track progress. During the interview, we would like to explore:

- Management and leadership of the framework
- Progress in delivering the action plan, including their views on what has been working well and what are the challenges; and
- Their views on key achievements to date and any emerging outcomes

**Explain that we have reviewed all the information from the last stage of the evaluation – we want to know about how things have moved on from there and to take the story forward.**

Explain that responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Individuals will not be named although the type of organisation you work for and regional location may be revealed. Answers, however, will not be reported to anyone in any way that will allow you to be identified. Ask if they are happy to be quoted in the report.

The interview will take around one hour.

Ask if they have any questions about the evaluation.

### ***The action plan for interviewer***

*Discuss each component of the framework in turn. **For each aspect of implementation listed below explore:***

- **The timeframe for delivery** and progress to date
- **What has enabled progress? What has hampered progress? How have challenges been overcome?**
- **What modifications have been made to initial plans and since the previous interview and why?**
- Explore whether a plan that has been documented and shared with partners is in place to continue the implementation of each element of YEPF

- Is a clear plan that has been documented and shared with partners in place with actions and responsibilities going forward; Who is involved in planning
- Explore key actions listed
- Explore processes for monitoring and review of the plan; Who does this; What has the result of monitoring been

*It is not expected that each of the questions below will be covered with each interviewee. The researcher will tailor the topic guide according to the role of the interviewee and also to fill gaps in what is known already from desk research.*

### **Role of the interview**

- Confirm role of the interviewee in developing and/or delivering the LA's YEPF action plan
- What are their main responsibilities
- Length of time in post

### **Management arrangements**

*Explore views on management and leadership within local authorities focusing on any changes since the last interview.*

- Explore what **strategic steering arrangements** are in place across each area of the framework
  - What groups are in place? Do they cover all areas of the framework?
  - **How regularly are groups meeting?**
  - Have there been any changes to strategic steering arrangements? If so, why? Have there been any challenges?
  - Explore views on whether current arrangements are appropriate. How can they be improved?
- Have all **key strategic partners been effectively engaged?** If not, why not?
  - Are there any stakeholders who should be engaged who are currently not involved in strategic arrangements?
- Are **strategic groups monitoring progress** with the implementation of the framework?
  - If so, how? What use is being made of monitoring information in steering implementation of the framework?
  - If not, why not?
  - What role has the EPC played in monitoring the progress with each element of the framework?

- What has the role of **senior accountable officers** been? Are senior accountable officers committed to the implementation of the framework? Have they been effective in their role
- What has the **role of the EPC** been since we last spoke?
  - Has the role changed? If so how? Why?
  - Has the focus of the implementation of the framework changed? If so how? Why? What affect has this had on the EPCs role?

### ***Early identification of young people most at risk of disengagement***

- Explore the status of central, standardised **pre 16 early identification** systems
  - Have there been any changes to the status of pre 16 EI since we last spoke? If so, what? Why were changes made? If not, why not?
  - Who is engaged in pre 16 identification? What has enabled buy in? Have there been any barriers?
  - How **have schools responded to LA early identification** systems? Do schools routinely identify young people at risk and record their concerns? Are these concerns routinely addressed?
- Explore the status of **post 16 providers internal systems** for early identification
  - What kind of early identification systems are used internally by post 16 providers
  - How do these fit with those of the LA
  - Do post 16 providers routinely identify young people at risk and record their concerns? Are these concerns routinely addressed?
  - What barriers remain? What have been the key enablers?
- Explore steps taken to **review the precision of procedures**
  - Explore quality assurance processes to make comparisons between LA and school level data (for example); Are early identification systems effective in identifying young people who are at risk? Are young people being missed?
  - Explore how the process is integrated with other early identification systems (such as those used in Families First, SEN services, early years)
  - Explore any **modifications made to procedures as a result of feedback**
  - What works well and what could be improved

### ***Better brokerage and coordination of support***

- Explore progress with development of **lead workers**
  - What processes for allocating a lead worker have been **agreed between stakeholders**? Is there clear protocol, agreed by all stakeholders, on how lead workers are allocated?
  - What processes for sharing information and data have been agreed among stakeholders (including **WBL providers**); and to what extent are these routinely practiced?
  - How do lead working arrangements differ pre- and post- 16?
  - Are the right stakeholders involved and actively participating? Have there been any changes to these?
  - Are appropriate professionals taking on the role of lead worker? Why/why not?
  - Are young people offered the opportunity to have a Welsh-speaking lead worker if they wish?
  - Are EPCs effectively managing the process for allocating lead workers and reviewing allocations? Why/why not?
  - Are lead workers successfully coordinating a package of support for young people?
  - Is there a system in place for **collecting feedback from young people**? How is feedback reviewed and used? Has feedback collected to date informed practice?

### ***Tracking and transitions of young people***

- Explore **stage of implementation in pre 16 provision**;
  - What are the working arrangements with schools to **track those at risk of disengagement**? Have there been any issues / challenges?
  - **What processes exist to identify Tier 1 young people**? How effective are they?
  - **Are all schools providing regular tracking data**? If so, to whom?. Is this data being sent to Careers Wales and incorporated within the IO system?
  - Are **meetings taking place between the EPC** and schools to discuss progress of young people? How regular are they, and is this sufficiently regular? How effective are these meetings in helping to track young people?
  - What is the level of commitment from schools in engaging in LA tracking arrangements? Explore reasons for any differences in commitment to tracking. What more can be done to improve engagement among those schools not engaging?

- Are schools using tracking data to provide differentiated/individualised teaching and support to learners?
- Explore stage of implementation **in post 16 provision**;
  - What working arrangements are colleges and post-16 training providers using to track those at risk of disengagement? Have there been any issues / challenges?
  - What processes exist to identify **Tier 1 young people**? How effective are they?
  - How regularly are **post-16 providers giving regular updates to Careers Wales** and the local authority (EPC) on young people's attendance? **Ask for proportion**
  - Are there agreed processes in place for analysing data about young people enrolled with post-16 providers; who is responsible and what analysis will be undertaken?
  - Are post 16 providers using tracking data to provide differentiated/individualised teaching and support to learners?
  - What arrangements do LAs and Careers Wales have to track young people **in jobs without training**? Have there been any issues / challenges surrounding this? How could tracking of this group be improved?

### **Provision**

- Explore **progress with development of the provision map**
  - Have key stakeholders been engaged in providing information for the provision mapping exercise/ updating it? Any organisations it is has been difficult to engage, why?
  - Has the provision mapping exercise included a focus on mapping provision available in the Welsh-language? What is being done to identify and address the need for Welsh medium provision, to provide sufficient opportunities that utilise Welsh Language skills and to support continuity of Welsh language skills development?
  - **To what extent have labour market requirements been considered in the development of provision maps?** How has this information been used? Any barriers?
  - **To what extent have young people's needs been taken into account in the development of provision maps?** How has this information been used? Any barriers?

- Explore the **process for using the provision map**
  - **To what extent are schools committed to using the Common Area Prospectus (CAP)? Any barriers?**
  - How are schools promoting the **Youth Guarantee**?
  - How is the provision map being used by local authorities/how will it be used when ready? Has the provision mapping led to any adapted referral mechanisms/thresholds?
  - Has the exercise identified any gaps in provision? Or any duplication? And what is being/ has been done to address this?
- **Explore plans for maintaining the provision map**
  - Explore processes in place for reviewing and updating the provision mapping; has this already been done? if so, explore this process.

### ***Employability***

- Explore the **status of the employability strand**
  - Have outreach and provision for young people in jobs without training been reviewed?
  - If so, who was involved in this? Are they fit for purpose? Could there be any improvements?
  - If not, what barriers have there been?
- Explore the **use of evidence** in shaping the actions in relation to employability?
  - Explore whether the strengths/weaknesses/effectiveness of existing employability initiatives been assessed?
  - What steps have been taken to assess levels of **participation in employability, work experience and placements**?
  - If steps have been taken, how was this done? **What has the information been used for?**
  - If steps have not been taken, what have the barriers been?
- Explore what **activities have taken place/ are planned** in relation to employability?
  - Explore whether the different funding streams that can support work in relation to employability have been scoped
  - Any new partnership working arrangements?
  - Explore any scoping/work to ensure strategic mapping of young people's Welsh language skills against employment opportunities?

**Accountability** (*this may have been discussed previously but please make sure each of the below have been covered*)

- **Explore partnership arrangements**
  - Are **roles and responsibilities clear**; who is responsible?
  - Explore **accountability post 18**; who is responsible; is this clear?
- Explore any processes in place to support accountability to the local community
  - Any processes in place to share evidence of progress with local communities and seek views from young people?

### ***Views on support and guidance received***

- Is there any **support that needs to be provided nationally to support implementation of the framework**? Explore views on why this is required and how it could be best delivered
- What would facilitate future commitments of LA resources towards the implementation of the framework? What are the barriers to this?

### ***Monitoring and review***

- Explore whether there have been any opportunities, beyond the regional working groups, to share learning and benefit from the experiences of other local authorities.

### ***Emerging outcomes***

- Explore views on **outcomes achieved** so far as a result of implementing the framework. In particular explore views in relation to progress towards:
  - Improving early identification of young people
  - Improved provision that better respond to the needs of young people (including improved progression pathways)
  - Reducing the number of young people who are not participating pre- 16
  - Reducing disengagement post-16
  - Greater accountability post 18
  - Improved behaviour, attendance and attainment
  - Increased in numbers of young people moving into skilled employment
  - Increased numbers of young people in sustained employment

Ask if they have any questions about the evaluation

## ***Topic guide for interviews with stakeholders***

This topic guide will be tailored according to the role of the interviewee. If interviewees are not familiar with on the ground arrangements for implementation of the framework, interviews will focus on the national context.

Interviewers should review the previous write-ups with stakeholders who were interviewed in the last round of research.

### ***Introduction***

Explain that ICF and ARAD have been appointed to evaluate the implementation and early impact of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF).

A comprehensive evaluation of the framework was carried out in 2014-15, during its implementation phase. The evaluation report was published in August 2015 on the Welsh Government website.

This interview is part of a follow up study to the evaluation and aims to track progress. It will explore their views on:

- Management and leadership of the programme
- Operational arrangements (including cooperation and collaboration between partners)
- Progress on each element (where relevant to the interviewee's role), including challenges that have been overcome and any barriers which need to be addressed nationally
- Overall perceptions of the framework and its impact

Explain that responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Individuals will not be named although the type of organisation you work for and regional location may be revealed. Answers, however, will not be reported to anyone in any way that will allow you to be identified. Ask if they are happy to be quoted in the report.

The interview will take around 45- 60 minutes.

Ask if they have any questions about the evaluation

### ***Role of the interviewee***

Confirm role of the interviewee in developing and/or delivering the LA's YEPF action plan and role in support and guidance for local authorities and key partners

What are their main responsibilities?

Length of time in post

### ***Management and leadership of the YEPF***

Explore views on **management and leadership** within local authorities focusing on any changes since the last interview.

Explore views on whether or not appropriate strategic steering arrangements are in place? If so, why? If not, why not?

Have key strategic partners been effectively engaged? Why? Why, why not?

- How regularly are groups meeting? Is this seen as appropriate?

Are groups monitoring their progress? If so, how? If not, why not?

Have senior responsible officers remained committed to the implementation of the framework?

### ***Operational arrangements***

Explore views on **operational arrangements** in the local authority focusing on any changes since the last interview:

- Explore views on coordination arrangements? Are they working well or not? Why?
- Explore views on the effectiveness of the EPC function
- Have key operational partners been effectively engaged or not? Have there been changes in the level of engagement? Why?
- Are partners cooperating and collaborating effectively? Explore in relation to each component of the YEPF as relevant).
- Are some elements of the framework being developed more than others?
- Have adequate arrangements been made for those wishing to access services through the medium of Welsh?
- What is working well? Why?
- What could be improved? How? Why?

### ***Progress in implementing the YEPF***

For each of the six components of the YEPF (early identification; brokerage; tracking; provision; employability; and accountability) explore:

- Progress since the last evaluation: what are the key steps/actions that have been completed or are planned?
- As part of this discussion, explore if the need for Welsh language provision has been adequately scoped for each of the six components. Are needs being met? How?

### **Early identification:**

- What is the status of post 16 early identification systems?
- What steps have been taken to review the precision of procedures? What has enabled this change? What would enable further improvement?

### **Brokerage and co-ordination:**

- What is the status of lead working arrangements pre or post 16? Have these changed? If so why?
- How is case management organised? What works well? What are the barriers?
- Have there been steps to assess the level of satisfaction of young people and the support they've been given?

### **Tracking and Transition**

- What is the level of commitment from schools in terms of tracking those at risk? Is this information shared with other stakeholders?
- Are Careers Wales being updated on the status of young people?
- How are tier 1 identified? What works well/less well here?
- How are those in jobs but without training tracked?

### **Provision**

- Have labour market requirements and young people's needs been taken into account in the development of provision maps?
- Are schools promoting CAP and the Youth Guarantee?

### **Employability**

- Explore provision for those young people in jobs without training. Have there been any changes to provision? Are they fit for purpose?
- Have steps been taken to assess levels of participation in employability, work experience and placements? Has this information been useful in practice?

### **Accountability**

- Is data being used to monitor? How useful is this? What is it used for? What could be improved?
- What information is available to you about the progress of individuals? How useful is this? What is the quality of information?
- What information is available to you about the progress young people in general in the areas you work in? How useful is this? What is the quality of information?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders clear? (ask particularly about post 18)

What has **worked well** in relation to implementation?

What have been the **main barriers** to progress? How have these been overcome?

What could have improved the progress so far?

### **Final thoughts**

Overall what impact is the framework having on NEETs and Youth Engagement?

What more could the Welsh Government be doing to support further implementation of the framework?

## **Annex 2 - YEPF Stakeholder Survey**

Your opinion as a key stakeholder is very important. The views and comments that you provide in this survey will help to shape and improve ongoing implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF). Information about the content of the framework can be found.

A comprehensive evaluation of the framework was carried out in 2014-15, during its implementation phase. The evaluation report was published in August 2015 on the Welsh Government website. This survey is part of a follow up study to the evaluation and aims to track progress.

The survey will take between 10 and 20 minutes to complete depending on your involvement has been. Whilst many stakeholders will have completed a similar survey last year, it is important to collect information about your experiences now, to allow us to gather an up-to-date picture of progress.

Your responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Individuals will not be named although the type of organisation you work for and regional location may be revealed. Your answers, however, will not be reported to anyone in any way that will allow you to be identified.

Thank you very much for your contribution.

Please use the buttons below (not those in your browser) to navigate through the survey. If you make a mistake you can change your answers on each page by pressing the reset button.

### ***Introduction***

#### **1. Please indicate the type of employer you work for?**

- Local Authority
- Careers Wales
- Post-16 provider
- School
- Voluntary and community sector organisation
- Employer offering opportunities to young people
- Employer representative organisation
- Jobcentre Plus
- Regional Education Consortium
- Other

**2. Please state which service area you work in:**

- Education or training
- Youth
- Adult
- Housing
- Economic Regeneration and Development
- Other

**If other, please specify:**

**3. Please select which type of post-16 provider from the following options:**

- Further Education Institution
- Work-based learning provider
- Other

**If other, please specify:**

**4. Please select which type of school from the following options:**

- 11-16
- 11-18
- Special
- Pupil Referral Unit
- Other

**If other, please specify:**

**5. Please select which type of voluntary and community sector organisations from the following options:**

- Youth Work
- Health
- Housing
- Disability

Other

**If other, please specify:**

**6. Which local authorities do you work in/with? (Tick all that apply)**

- All local authorities
- Blaenau Gwent
- Bridgend
- Caerphilly
- Cardiff
- Carmarthenshire
- Ceredigion
- Conwy
- Denbighshire
- Flintshire
- Gwynedd
- Isle of Anglesey
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Monmouthshire
- Neath Port Talbot
- Newport
- Pembrokeshire
- Powys
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Swansea
- Vale of Glamorgan
- Torfaen
- Wrexham

**7. If you work with more than one local authority, please choose the authority that you are most familiar with. Later you will be asked about your views of your local authority. Please answer these Questions for the authority you select below.**

- Blaenau Gwent
- Bridgend
- Caerphilly
- Cardiff
- Carmarthenshire
- Ceredigion
- Conwy
- Denbighshire
- Flintshire
- Gwynedd
- Isle of Anglesey
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Monmouthshire
- Neath Port Talbot
- Newport
- Pembrokeshire
- Powys
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Swansea
- Vale of Glamorgan
- Torfaen
- Wrexham

### ***Introduction***

**8. Have you participated in any of the following SINCE the launch of the YEPP in October 2013?**

Member of a NEET/youth engagement and progression strategic steering group

Member of a NEET/youth engagement and progression operational group

Member of a local authority working group/task and finish group responsible for developing and trialling new systems

- Providing information to Careers Wales and/or the local authority for early identification of young people at risk of disengaging [ ]
- Member of a multiagency group responsible for allocating lead workers, reviewing progress and risks [ ]
- Member of a group with responsibility for reviewing and revising provision [ ]
- Acting as a lead worker for young people at risk of disengaging [ ]
- Providing information to support tracking of young people's progress [ ]
- Contributing information for the provision mapping exercise [ ]
- Providing opinions to the local authority on the processes related to youth engagement and progression as part of formal or informal consultation processes [ ]
- Other [ ]
- None [ ]

**If other, please specify:**

**9. Do you consider that you understand your role and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the YEPF?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**Views on strategic leadership**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**10. There is effective leadership of the youth engagement and progression agenda from the local authority....**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]

Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**11. There is a strategic group that effectively steered services and initiatives related to youth engagement and progression...**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**12. All key strategic partners are working collaboratively to support youth engagement and progression...**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**13. There is effective monitoring of progress with regard to the framework activities....**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**Your views on the different components of the YEPF**

**14. Please tell us which of the following you have played a part in and/or have an interest in:**

Please select all that apply

Pre-16 early identification [ ]

Post-16 early identification [ ]

Pre-16 brokerage (Brokerage is ensuring young people have access to an individual who can provide consistent support and

- help coordinate support from different services  
(often called a 'lead worker')
- Post-16 brokerage (Brokerage is ensuring  
young people have access to an individual  
who can provide consistent support and  
help coordinate support from different services  
(often called a 'lead worker')
- Tracking those identified as being at risk pre-16
- Tracking those identified as being at risk post-16
- Provision mapping
- Work related to the Youth Guarantee
- Making decisions about how provision needs to  
be adapted to better meet needs of young people
- Improving employability skills of young people
- None

***Pre-16 early identification***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**15. The local authority is effectively coordinating pre-16 early identification processes.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

**16. It is made clear by the local authority who was responsible for different elements of the pre-16 early identification process.**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Don't Know

**17. The right partners are participating in pre-16 early identification processes.**

- |                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly Disagree | [ ] |
| Disagree          | [ ] |
| Agree             | [ ] |
| Strongly Agree    | [ ] |
| Don't Know        | [ ] |

**18. The school is participating in early identification in co-ordination with the LA.**

- |                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly Disagree | [ ] |
| Disagree          | [ ] |
| Agree             | [ ] |
| Strongly Agree    | [ ] |
| Don't Know        | [ ] |

**19. All schools are participating in early identification in co-ordination with the LA.**

- |                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly Disagree | [ ] |
| Disagree          | [ ] |
| Agree             | [ ] |
| Strongly Agree    | [ ] |
| Don't Know        | [ ] |

***Post-16 early identification***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**20. The local authority is effectively coordinating early identification processes for 16-18 year olds.**

- |                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly Disagree | [ ] |
| Disagree          | [ ] |
| Agree             | [ ] |
| Strongly Agree    | [ ] |
| Don't Know        | [ ] |

**21. The local authority is effectively coordinating early identification processes for young people aged over 19.**

- |                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Strongly Disagree | [ ] |
| Disagree          | [ ] |
| Agree             | [ ] |
| Strongly Agree    | [ ] |
| Don't Know        | [ ] |

**22. All the right partners are participating in early identification processes for 16-18 year olds.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Strongly Agree [ ]
- Don't Know [ ]

**23. All the right partners are participating in early identification processes for young people aged 19+.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Strongly Agree [ ]
- Don't Know [ ]

***Pre-16 brokerage***

**Brokerage is ensuring young people have access to an individual who can provide consistent support and help coordinate support from different services (often called a 'lead worker')**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**24. The local authority is effectively coordinating processes for pre-16 brokerage.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Strongly Agree [ ]
- Don't Know [ ]

**25. The local authority has made clear how lead workers (or a similar function) should be allocated to young people under 16.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Strongly Agree [ ]
- Don't Know [ ]

**Post-16 brokerage**

**Brokerage is ensuring young people have access to an individual who can provide consistent support and help coordinate support from different services (often called a 'lead worker')**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**26. The local authority has made clear how lead workers (or a similar function) should be allocated to young people aged 16-18.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Strongly Agree [ ]
- Don't Know [ ]

**27. The local authority has made clear how lead workers (or a similar function) should be allocated to young people aged 19+.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Strongly Agree [ ]
- Don't Know [ ]

**28. The local authority is effectively coordinating processes for brokerage for 16-18 year olds.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]
- Strongly Agree [ ]
- Don't Know [ ]

**29. The local authority is effectively coordinating processes for brokerage for young people over 19.**

- Strongly Disagree [ ]
- Disagree [ ]
- Agree [ ]

Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**30. The local authority has mechanisms to help partners effectively share information about young people aged 16+ to ensure appropriate support is brokered.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

***Tracking those identified as being at risk pre-16***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**31. The local authority is effectively coordinating processes for tracking progress of young people at risk of disengaging pre-16.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**32. The local authority is facilitating the sharing of information between relevant partners to ensure effective tracking of progress of young people at risk of disengaging under 16.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

***Tracking those identified as being at risk post-16***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**33. The local authority is effectively coordinating processes for tracking progress of young people at risk of disengaging aged 16-18.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]

Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**34. The local authority is effectively coordinating processes for tracking progress of young people aged 19+ at risk of disengaging.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**35. The local authority is facilitating sharing of information between relevant partners to ensure effective tracking of progress of young people at risk of disengaging aged 16-18.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**36. The local authority is facilitating sharing of information between relevant partners to ensure effective tracking of progress of young people at risk of disengaging aged over 19.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**37. There is a robust system in place for identifying and reporting to Careers Wales those who have quit or are at risk of doing so.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]

Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

***Provision***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**38. The local authority is working effectively with all key stakeholders to map available provision.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**39. The local authority is effectively analysing information collected as part of any provision mapping.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**40. The local authority has an appropriate forum for making decisions about how provision should be adapted to better meet needs of young people.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**41. There are processes in place to regularly update provision maps.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]

Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

### ***Employability***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**42. All key partners are working collaboratively to support improved employability skills among young people.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**43. The local authority is effectively engaging employers to improve the employability skills of young people.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

**44. The local authority is leading a strategic approach to volunteering and work experience opportunities for young people.**

Strongly Disagree [ ]  
Disagree [ ]  
Agree [ ]  
Strongly Agree [ ]  
Don't Know [ ]

## ***Accountability***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

**45. There are appropriate mechanisms in place to seek views of young people to inform development and delivery of services.**

Strongly Disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Strongly Agree	[ ]
Don't Know	[ ]

**46. There are appropriate mechanisms in place to seek views of parents in the development and delivery of services.**

Strongly Disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Strongly Agree	[ ]
Don't Know	[ ]

**47. There is good sharing of information between partners.**

Strongly Disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Strongly Agree	[ ]
Don't Know	[ ]

**48. Local authorities are sharing evidence on progress with all key stakeholders.**

Strongly Disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Strongly Agree	[ ]
Don't Know	[ ]

***Views on Welsh language issues***

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

- 49. Young people are offered the opportunity to have a Welsh speaking lead worker (or similar function) if they wish.**

Strongly Disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Strongly Agree	[ ]
Don't Know	[ ]

- 50. Provision mapping includes sufficient focus on mapping provision available in the Welsh language.**

Strongly Disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Strongly Agree	[ ]
Don't Know	[ ]

- 51. The local authority is effectively taking action to meet any identified needs for Welsh medium provision.**

Strongly Disagree	[ ]
Disagree	[ ]
Agree	[ ]
Strongly Agree	[ ]
Don't Know	[ ]

***Overall views on progress with implementation***

**If you work in more than one local authority, please consider progress in all the LAs you work in when answering this final question.**

**52. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
All key partners are aware of local YEPF action plans	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
All key partners understand their roles and responsibilities for implementing the YEPF	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
The EPC function is effectively coordinating operational arrangements for implementing the YEPF	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
The EPC function is effectively coordinating inputs of all key partners	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

**Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to this survey; your response is important to us.**

**Please press 'submit' below.**