

Meeting: ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

Portfolio Area: Resources

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**REPORT ON SUB GROUP LOOKING AT THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID -19
PANDEMIC ON YOUNG PEOPLE**

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the report and suggested recommendations of the sub group of of the Environment & Economy Select Committee Scrutiny, looking at the impact of Covid-19 on Young People as part of the Committee's wider review of the economic impact of pandemic on Stevenage and on the Council's response.

2 BACKGROUND & SCRUTINY ISSUE IDENTIFIED

- 2.1 The issue of scrutinising Stevenage's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the local economic impact of the pandemic was agreed by the Select Committee as a scrutiny review item along with other scrutiny items when it met on 22 September 2020.

2.2 Scope and Focus of the sub group for the wider review

- 2.2.1 When the Committee met on 10 October 2020 and agreed a scope for the main review it was also agreed at that meeting to set up a sub group Chaired by Councillor Simon Speller. The sub group would meet informally and gather evidence to report back to the E&E Select Committee. The sub group agreed that it would look at the following issues affecting young people:

- Meet with Schools Head Teachers, North Herts College Principal, HCC YCH Services for Young People and STEMPOINT East
- Find out what are the main challenges to young people regarding Covid-19 in education and employment
- Make recommendations for partners to work together to offer practical help for local young people

2.3 Process of the review

- 2.3.1 The sub group met informally on four occasions in 2021 to undertake their review. The sub group met as follows: On 15 February, 26 February, 16 March and 31

March 2021 and a number of the sub group met with the Leader and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Young People on two further occasions on 8 and 30 March 2021. In total there were six meetings of the sub group which were held virtually on zoom and notes of these meetings are available.

2.3.2 Councillors on the sub group: Cllr Simon Speller, Chair of the sub group, Cllr Michael Downing, Chair of the Environment and Economy Select Committee, Cllr Adam Mitchell, Vice-Chair of the E&E Select Committee, Cllr Sandra Barr, Cllr Maureen McKay.

2.3.3 The sub group were joined by the following people:

- Helen Spencer, STEMPOINT East CE
- Judith Sutton, Area Team Manager for North Herts & Stevenage HCC YCH Services for Young People
- Kit Davies Principal and Chief Executive North Herts College
- Sean Trimble Head Teacher Larwood School Stevenage
- David Pearce Head Teacher Brandles School Baldock
- Mark Lewis Head Teacher Alleyne's Academy

2.3.4 Members on the sub group are indebted to the external partners for their expert opinion and for the amount of time they provided to the groups meetings.

3 THE SUB GROUP'S FINDINGS

3.1 Conclusions of the Environment & Economy Select Committee sub group looking at the economic impact of Covid on young people

3.1.1 Based on the input provided to Members the sub group have made the following conclusions.

3.1.2 Input from HCC YCH Services for Young People

3.1.2.1 The sub group were joined by Judith Sutton HCC YCH Services for Young People focuses on the 16 to 18 age group – School Years 11 & 12. The cohort size for 16 to 18 year olds in Stevenage as of 8 Feb 2021 is 2019 young people (two thousand and nineteen) of this 87 are NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) of this 67 are available for education, employment or training and 20 are unavailable due to medical incapacity etc. Of the 67 21 are aged 16 to 17 and 46 are 17 to 18. NEET per standout wards are 18 in Bedwell, 13 in Shephell and 12 in Martins Wood.

3.1.2.2 Historically the NEET numbers over the past decade has been between 5 and 4% of the cohort population. Overall career planning is going well.

3.1.2.3 There are two main County funded projects that YCH are focussing on to address NEETS– (i) Pathways to Success targeted at NEETS and preNEETS, funded to 2023 providing work experience and (ii) Herts Future Programme – building better futures for YP who are facing significant barriers to employment, education and training.

3.1.2.4 For ages 14 to 16 (School Years 9 & 10) the statutory responsibility for careers advice sits with Schools who buy in HCC services for guidance. All Careers advisers are trained to Level 6 Career Guidance.

3.1.2.5 YCH will be providing a programme of Summer Holiday Activities, this is a more targeted approach around gang and knife crime.

3.1.2.6 Herts HOP (Herts Opportunities Portal) has been considered a success. This had recently launched a support Apprenticeships Campaign for April 2021, over 400 YP applied in one day on the website, so there is clearly a large demand for this type of opportunity for young people.

3.1.2.7 YCH stated that they would like to work with SBC over the summer when things open up with play opportunities, to develop plans that complement each other and work together with staff resources where possible. Also there will be a need to address the gaps in fine motor skills and physical therapy that has been limited due to closed pools etc.

3.1.3 Input from STEMPOINT

3.1.3.1 STEMPOINT East an educational charity based at MBDA with over 35 years of experience working with Employers and Young People bringing together the two groups who have a similar goal (seeking employment/and recruiting young people) but who often don't understand each other.

3.1.3.2 Helen Spencer STEMPOINT East CE provided the sub group with the following key input:

- Helen Spencer suggested that the Gatsby benchmark for SEN students at schools should be something that the schools should focus on as this links to their statutory responsibility to provide career advice and the Careers lead at each school is the go to person rather than the subject specialist.
- SPEMPOINT's view from talking to employers is that employers are very unlikely to offer work experience during the 2021 summer given their focus on recovering from the pandemic and with severe financial pressures
- Helen Spencer shared her desire to provide something locally based on the discussion of the sub group, to this end she was interested in promoting and building "science capital" in young people who don't identify themselves as a STEM student by running a few hands on sessions throughout the summer. Perhaps using the STEM Centre at the Air Bus site, NH College PE Department, Canyon's Scout building and the environmental charity Waste Not Want Not. Helen was conscious that there could be a danger in over promising and under delivering and will largely depend on what is allowed regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. Any small scale project would at least show what demand there is. This project could be 4 dates over the summer split up into a number of 2 hour slots during the day.

3.1.4 Input from Special Needs Schools – Larwood and Brandles

3.1.4.1 The sub group received input from the Head Teachers Sean Trimble, Larwood Special Education Primary School based in Stevenage and David Pearce, Brandles a Special Educational Needs Secondary School in Baldock. Larwood Primary School aims to provide a nurturing environment for children with social, emotional and mental health related issues. Brandles School is based in Baldock but has a large cohort of students from Stevenage (70% Stevenage intake). Brandles School is a secondary school that specialises in catering for boys with emotional, behavioural and mental health needs.

- 3.1.4.2 There is a need to change the narrative to a consistent message of hope and positivity. Everyone is aware of the negative outcomes of Covid-19, all that young people are hearing in the media is that they will be the lost generation, that they are going to have to work harder, attend longer school days, shorter summer holidays etc. So many kids in all schools have been working incredibly hard so they need incentivising and positivity and opportunities not messages telling them that it's all doom and gloom, that their exam grades might be devalued and they'll have to work harder to get out of it.
- 3.1.4.3 Schools have been told that they have to submit their own assessed grades by 19 June rather than hold the normal external exams, this provides a long gap between the submission of all assessed course work/internal tests and the end of the school academic year for school leavers in June. The head teacher of Brandles made a request to Members and to all partners to consider a proposal to provide a positive summer experience for all of their school leaver's, including work experience, with 2 or 3 weeks work experience with big local employers to give them a taste of the working world.
- 3.1.4.4 Relationships are key for success with parents of disaffected young people who might be in danger of becoming NEET, using schools to facilitate trust in support where appropriate – Dave Pearce Head Teacher at Brandles gave a good example of them operating a food bank to deliver parcels to families in need, which has given them a way in to talk to the parents who otherwise might be defensive.
- 3.1.5 Input from Kit Davies Principal at North Herts College
- 3.1.5.1 Long term impact of Covid on reluctant learners – Kit Davies gave an insight into the challenges educators face. There is concern amongst all educators and all who work with young people that there could be a long term impact of Covid on young people. There is understandable worry about the fall out and the already hard to reach 5% could be joined by other disengaged YP. There are signs of disengagement from NH College students and the College has had to do interventions to arrest this trend, bringing in students for once a week sessions who are outside the key worker parents category.
- 3.1.5.2 Kit Davies shared with Members that work experience was a key issue that had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Virtual work experiences have been offered but face-to-face work experiences have been knocked back a year if not longer. Kit works closely with Alleyne's Academy who are a Herts Career Hub school. It is important to offer businesses a package regarding work experience that embeds it into a wider offer of Corporate Social Responsibilities and finding the future pipeline of employable individuals.
- 3.1.5.3 Providing a support for the STEM Centre would be important as all emerge from Covid-19 and maximising this as an asset for Stevenage would be key. Airbus STEM Challenge has engaged over a yearlong project with young people who had been identified as being from lower socio economic backgrounds to offer more than a day/week experience to engage these young people in STEM.
- 3.1.5.4 Soft learning opportunities have been lost with no face-to-face engagement over the past year. This is what is currently missing for students, as schools have focused in on curriculum/exam content but lost out on experiential, behavioural, healthy mind set leading to volunteering, which is what employers are looking for as well as the academic qualifications.

3.1.6 Input from Mark Lewis Head Teacher at Alleyne's Academy

3.1.6.1 Alleyne's Academy is a Careers Hub School in Herts, Work with the LEP, Stevenage STEM Centre with the Air Bus which engages young people at Key Stage 2 in STEM.

3.1.6.2 Mark Lewis provided Members with an overview of the work as a Herts Careers Hub school, which had provided links with key employers. The best results had come through sustained relationships with the same employers. One such employer was the construction firm Wilmot Dixon who provided taster days working on a homeless hostel. The STEM Discovery Centre at Airbus working with the Alleyne's Academy, North Herts College and Herts LEP had been a very successful collaboration with 16,000 school visitors prior to the Covid pandemic. There was also a more in-depth offer to 20 students over 20 weeks at Airbus, mentoring students to inspire a career in STEM.

3.1.6.3 Soft learning opportunities have been lost with no face-to-face engagement over the past year. This is what is currently missing for students, as schools have focused in on curriculum/exam content but lost out on experiential, behavioural, healthy mind set leading to volunteering, which is what employers are looking for as well as the academic qualifications.

3.1.6.4 Catch up can happen but it doesn't have to happen overnight and isn't all about the academic subjects but it's about building confidence in young people and providing them with opportunities to catch up with lost experiences in the wider curriculum such as team building events, arts, sports, field trips etc. The narrative of "catch up" is damaging, negative and unhelpful. Teachers and schools are aware that there will need to be some catching up but they are confident that they can do this and the chances to do it will vary greatly depending on how long the schools have to do this, a year 7 student will have years to catch up compared to a school leaver who have no chance of catching up.

3.2 Case Studies

3.2.1 Case Study 1 - Waste Not Want Not – Brandles School – Cllr Sandra Barr

Councillor Sandra Barr provided a case study of links between the horticultural/environmental Charity, Waste Not Want Not, who had made links with special educational needs students from Brandles School, Bladock, who have a 70% student intact from Stevenage. The students had a very positive experience and had settled in very well with this charity. The students enjoyed and thrived in the very practical hands on work. Students who completed their garden projects at the charity received a certificate of completion, which, for some, might be the only evidence of achievement that they have whilst at school. Although on a small scale and only involving a few students, this case study shows the potential to unlock the skills and abilities of these students.

A possible recommendation based on this case study could be for all partners including schools, the third/voluntary sector and employers, both large and small, who identify their social responsibility and reach out to these students to provide similar opportunities, which in some cases could lead to employment.

3.2.2 Case Study 2 - Alleyne's Academy work as a Herts Careers Hub School with links to the STEM Centre and Air Bus

The sub group were impressed with the work that Thomas Alleyne had achieved as a Herts Careers Hub School. There was an in-depth offer to 20 students over 20 weeks at Airbus, mentoring students to inspire a career in STEM. This project was building confidence with these young people. A lesson from this work is that the best results had come through sustained relationships with the same employers. Thomas Alleyne were also working with other large local employers such as the construction firm Wilmot Dixon who provided taster days working on a homeless hostel. The STEM Discovery Centre at Airbus working with the Thomas Alleyne Academy, North Herts College and Herts LEP had been a very successful collaboration with 16,000 school visitors prior to the Covid pandemic.

A possible recommendation could be that all partners work together to establish how funding can be found to assist the STEM Centre to reopen successfully and to secure its future.

3.2.3 Case Study 3 - Working in micro areas (sub-neighbourhoods) to reach pre-NEET YP

Judith Sutton Area Team Manager for North Herts & Stevenage HCC YCH Services for Young People is working with a very local sub ward based initiative based in a Community Centre at the Oval with 8 or 9 Young People who would be in danger of becoming NEET. (This project has continued on-line during the various lockdowns but is planned to return to a physical meeting in May, should the Government's timetable for lifting restrictions still be on track by then). Judith works with local Schools who identify young people who would benefit from this type of intervention. There was interest from Helen Spencer at STEMPOINT, and Kit Davies NH College to work with SBC on this project at the Oval and perhaps look at other areas that Members mentioned for other youth outreach opportunities in Bedwell, Shephall and Martins Wood. Looking at working alongside young people and their families to encourage towards careers and employment in general

A possible recommendation linked to partners working in micro areas (sub-neighbourhoods) to reach pre-NEET young people, could be that the AD for Communities meet up with the interested parties from HCC YCH, STEMPOINT and NH College to explore what role SBC could do to roll out to other outreach opportunities as mentioned in the case study and to identify young people/families and possible micro ward areas where further work could be identified. In addition some HCC and SBC Local Community Budget funding could be targeted at a short term project to extend this initiative.

3.2.4 Brandles Food Bank – The sub group heard from Brandles School about the way they built relationships with Parents from families that may not respond to the more traditional ways of communications. Dave Pearce Head Teacher at Brandles gave a good example of the school operating a food bank to deliver parcels to families in need, which has given them a way in to talk to the parents who otherwise might be defensive. The example here that could be adopted by the Council and partner organisations is outreach working.

A possible recommendation for the sub group would be to ask the Executive to provide examples of where they are already doing this type of outreach through the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management or other programme or to consider situations where the Council could reach out to vulnerable families to help their young people access services and opportunities.

3.3 Impact of Covid-19 on young people

3.3.1 It has been well reported what the impact of Covid-19 has had on young people, including increased unemployment due to insecure employment status, increases in mental health problems and a less optimistic outlook for the future amongst young people. However, the sub group heard from educators and people working with young people who reported that they needed to hear a positive message for the future not what appears to be a doom laden prospect.

3.3.2 Employment rates for 16 to 24 year olds adversely impacted by Covid-19. Young people have been disproportionately affected as they are often in insecure employment sectors such as retail and hospitality and are just starting out in their careers. Some national data that supports the work that the sub group have been look at is around the impact of unemployment throughout the Covid-19 pandemic that the Resolution Foundation published in April 2021 *“We find that 16-24-year-olds have accounted for a disproportionately large share (57 per cent) of the fall in employment that’s occurred over the past year. But the impact of the Covid-19 crisis is also unequally spread within generations, including among today’s young people. Before the onset of Covid-19 (Q2-Q4 2019), one-in-four (25 per cent) economically active Black 16-24-year-olds were unemployed, compared to one-in-ten (10 per cent) of their White counterparts. By Q2-Q4 2020, the unemployment rate rose to 34 per cent (a 9 percentage point increase) among Black young people and to 13 per cent (a 2 point rise) among White young people.”* So there is an ethnicity and age impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and those who are young and black are affected more than those who are white and older, who would be more likely to be in employment, working from home or furloughed.

3.3.3 Mental health impact – House of Lords study and First Young Minds report

A House of Lords Library study in September 2020 drew together the international data available at that time on the impact of the pandemic on mental health, the study stated that “showed an increase in depressive and anxious symptoms in children as a result of Covid-19. This is likely attributable to a wide range of factors, including:

- social isolation;
- anxiety about illness;

- uncertainty about the future; and
- strained familial relationships.

3.3.4 Increase in NEETS nationally – The Times Education Supplement

<https://www.tes.com/news/covid-youth-unemployment-ons-huge-rise-young-people-classed-neet> By March 2021 the biggest quarterly rise in NEETS has been reported which is directly attributed to the impact of Covid-19, this is up some 39,000 to just under 800,000. However the local position is not so bleak although there has been an increase it should be seen in a County that has relatively low numbers of NEETS see 3.1.3 which shows that there are 67 young people who are not medically incapacitated who are not in full time education, training or employment according to data available for 8 February 2021.

3.3.5 Regarding careers pathways often young people who would become NEET struggle with the decision making and need support and this in turn is not helped by some family backgrounds that do not offer practical help and guidance to their children and Members on the sub group suggested that they wanted the report to reflect this reality.

3.4 Long term impact of Covid-19 on reluctant learners

3.4.1 Kit Davies gave an insight into the challenges educators face. There is concern amongst all educators and all who work with young people that there could be a long term impact of Covid-19 on young people. There is understandable worry about the fall out and the already hard to reach 5% could be joined by other disengaged YP. There are signs of disengagement from NH College students and the College has had to do interventions to arrest this trend, bringing in students for once a week sessions who are outside the key worker parents category.

3.5 The informal partnership between SBC, NH College and the JCP (Job Centre Plus)

3.5.1 This is partners with a common goal who are able to pool resources, funding and work together on ideas to meet common challenges. Kit sees that partners could work together to replicate the successes of the Adult back to work model with Young People. This could combine with very local sub-neighbourhood working to provide intervention to the young people in an area. To this end Cllr Simon Speller suggested that it would be good to get Rob Gregory SBC Assistant Director Communities to work with the sub-group on these ideas and see how this could tie in with the Council's co-operative Neighbourhood Management model

3.6 Plethora of Government schemes – the challenge is looking for the 'Venn overlap'

3.6.1 There are a lot of Government schemes, ranging from the Department of Works & Pension, Education Department and the LEP, to name but a few, which are all responding to same or overlapping priorities with a scatter gun approach. These schemes all have the same goal so this is having an effect of replicating the same initiatives. Finding the 'Venn overlap' in the Venn diagram is the challenge and partners should be looking to do this where possible. Small local initiatives that can tap into larger projects (SG1 and example) are where the opportunities can be found.

3.7 Digital Poverty

- 3.7.1 As part of the review the sub group were keen to find out what the local levels of digital poverty were. Members realised that this would be difficult to determine with no easy way of gauging this measure. Anecdotally, Members via their Local Community Budgets have supported young people who are in digital poverty from March 2020 with the first Covid-19 lockdown to the end of the 2020-21 Municipal Year, with a total of £6,376 (just under 6.5% of the total annual LCB budget) LCB funding towards Schools/pupils digital poverty projects. This isn't a definitive measure of the local digital poverty levels but these discretionary awards of Local Community Budgets shows that there is clearly digital poverty in Stevenage for pupils from families who do not have access to technology at home and suffer from digital poverty.
- 3.7.2 It is worth noting that from the input received from the head teachers interviewed that there is a mixed picture with digital poverty/digital divide and the impact this is having on young people, as some students specifically struggle studying if there home environment is not conducive to online studying but some students have thrived an prefer this way of learning.

3.8 Work Experience

- 3.8.1 From an early stage in the sub groups meetings the education partners who joined the sub group suggested that a recommendation of the group should be to encourage partners to provide a work experience for young people in Stevenage. Historically work experience has been difficult for young people to arrange if they do not have social networks to draw upon and schools have found it hard to make the links to local employers leaving the students and their families to make this connection. The head teachers who spoke to the sub group and an ex teacher on the sub group attested that it couldn't be overstated the benefits and positive experience that a good work experience placement can make to a young person. In particular, good work experience for students that struggle academically was vital. The outcomes for the most vulnerable students are often very positive if they are able to get onto a week's work experience that suits their skills. The head teachers suggested that if the Council and partners could help assist students by linking them to local employers this would be a positive experience for them to counter the negative narrative of Covid-19.
- 3.8.2 Initially the sub group were pushing this opportunity as an early recommendation and to this end sought an early meeting with the Executive Portfolio Holder for Young People and with the Leader to see if this could be initiated as a project for the summer of 2021. During these discussions it became clear that this was a larger project in both logistics and manpower and financial resources than the Council could manage in its current circumstances, in addition STEMPOINT suggested that based on their discussions that they have had with local employers, employers will not be in a position this summer to offer work experience placements as they are focusing on their core business recovering from the pandemic, but this should go forward as a recommendation for the Executive to consider for 2022, where external funding can be sought along with Council pump prime funding and a project lead identified.

3.9 Summer of positive experiences 2021

- 3.9.1 An initiative that the sub group were very keen to promote as a recommendation was to provide a summer of positive experiences for young people. This was to act

as a counter point to the negative narrative that young people are being presented with regarding their future prospects.

- 3.9.2 It was noted that the work experience proposal was not a viable option for this summer.
- 3.9.3 The STEMPOINT East CE Helen Spencer expressed her desire to provide something locally based on the discussion of the sub group, to this end she was interested in promoting and building “science capital” in young people who don’t identify themselves as a STEM student by running a few hands on sessions throughout the summer. Perhaps using the STEM Centre at the Air Bus site, NH College PE Department, Canyon’s Scout building and the environmental charity Waste Not Want Not. Helen was conscious that there could be a danger in over promising and under delivering and will largely depend on what is allowed regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. Any small scale project would at least show what demand there is. This project could be 4 dates over the summer split up into a number of 2 hour slots during the day.
- 3.10 In addition members should note that Stevenage has a disproportionately high Special Needs student population compared to the rest of the County so the Council should continue to work with the County Council regarding education provision and Children’s services as well as the relevant Government office to make the case for a greater share of resources to support these vulnerable young people.
- 3.11 Equalities & Diversity issues
- 3.11.1 The principle equalities and diversity issue for the sub groups report is age and socio economic backgrounds. The International Labour Organisation has reported in June 2021 that “the unemployment rate among young people was 14.6% in 2020, according to the ILO.” BBC News 9 June 2021. This is for the 15 to 24 year old age range.
- 3.11.2 The report of the sub group has shown that young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to find the transition into further education, work experience or employment harder to negotiate than young people from high socio-economic backgrounds.
- 3.11.3 The report did not focus on gender, wider physical disabilities or ethnicity issues but there has been nationally recognised studies that have highlighted the unequal way they pandemic is affecting people from these groups.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Environment & Economy Select Committee considers the findings of the sub group, contained within this report and the recommendations below be adopted by the Committee and in due course be presented to the Leader and the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, Leisure and Culture and the Executive Portfolio Holders for Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council and Communities, Community Safety and Equalities and Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport and the Assistant Director Stevenage Direct Services, Steve Dupoy and Strategic Director, Tom Pike and that a response be provided from these and any other named officers and partners within two months of the publishing of this report.

Near Horizon Recommendations

- 4.2 That the Executive support, with whatever means are at its disposal (in kind buildings/officer time/ promote via LCB funding), the efforts of STEMPOINT East to provide some hands on events (This project could be 4 dates over the summer split up into a number of 2 hour slots during the day.) of STEM sessions looking to promote and build “science capital” in young people. These events would not be billed as STEM, but aimed at young people who don’t identify themselves as a STEM student. Possible venues could be perhaps using the STEM Centre at the Air Bus site, NH College PE Department, Canyon’s Scout building and the environmental charity Waste Not Want Not. Any small scale project would at least show what demand there is for a larger scale repeat later in the year or in 2022.
- 4.3 A recommendation linked to the case study of partners working in micro areas (sub-neighbourhoods) to reach pre-NEET young people, could be that the AD for Communities meet up with the interested parties from HCC YCH, STEMPOINT and NH College to explore what role SBC could do to roll out to other outreach opportunities as mentioned in the case study and to identify young people/families and possible micro ward areas where further work could be identified. In addition some HCC and SBC Local Community Budget funding could be targeted at a short term project to extend this initiative.
- 4.4 A recommendation linked to the case study of Brandles School example of their foodbank outreach to vulnerable families. Scrutiny could ask the Executive to provide examples of where they are already doing this type of outreach through the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management or other programme or to consider situations where the Council could reach out to vulnerable families to help their young people access services and opportunities.
- 4.5 Working in micro areas (sub-neighbourhoods) to reach pre-NEET young people. During the sub group meetings there was interest from Helen, Judith and Kit to work with SBC on a very local sub ward based initiative based in a Community Centre, building on the work that Judith is already doing at the Oval project with 8 or 9 Young People who would be in danger of becoming NEET. (This project has continued on-line during the various lockdowns but is planned to return to a physical meeting in April, should restrictions be lifted by then). Judith works with local Schools who identify young people who would benefit from this type of intervention. Members mentioned other youth outreach opportunities in Bedwell, Shephall and Martins Wood. Look at family encouragement towards careers and employment in general. The sub group see this as a very good initiative and would like the Executive and the Assistant Director Communities to meet up with the interested parties mentioned to further develop this project.

Far Horizon Recommendations

- 4.6 A recommendation that the Executive should work with partners, including schools, the third/voluntary sector and employers, both large and small, who identify their social responsibility, seek funding sources and a project lead/project manager to establish a local work experience project for Stevenage school leavers in 2022 to enable them to find local employers who can offer work experience. As detailed in the report this is of great value to young people who often struggle to find good work experience opportunities and when done successfully like the Brandles Waste Not Want Not case study, gives students who struggle at school an invaluable

confidence boost and in some cases could lead to employment. This should go forward as a recommendation for the Executive to consider for 2022, with initially Council pump prime funding and external funding identified along and a project lead.

- 4.7 A recommendation linked to the case study of Herts Careers School Hub that all partners work together to establish how funding can be found to assist the STEM Centre to reopen successfully and to secure its future.

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications in this report. Any funding for the near horizon recommendations would need to be covered within Members Local Community Budgets and for far horizon recommendations then funding bids would need to be submitted into the budget process.

5.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications for this report.

5.3 Equalities Implications

The Equalities implications have been addressed within the report at paragraph 3.11.1; 3.11.2. and 3.11.3 There are no further direct equalities implications for this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

APPENDICES - None

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS – Notes of the sub group:

1. 15 02 21
2. 26 02 21
3. 08 03 21
4. 16 03 21
5. 30 03 21
6. 31 03 21