

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 27 JANUARY 2014**

**REPORT ON: SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 48-2014**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report details the progress Dundee has made in increasing the number of young people leaving school and entering a positive destination from August 2012 to July 2013.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the content of the report and the impact of the Integrated Children's Services Post School Strategic Planning Group in supporting the successful transition of young people from school into education, employment or training.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications

## **4.0 MAIN TEXT**

- 4.1 The School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR) is a statistical return undertaken by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on behalf of the Scottish Government. The SLDR is an annual return and is based on the young people who left school between August and July. SDS analyses leaver destinations as of 11th October 2013. This report details the progress Dundee has made in increasing the number of young people leaving school and entering a positive destination from August 2012 to July 2013. The SLDR cohort is followed up again in March and the Scottish Government use the results of the March follow up to report against the National Indicator entitled "Increase the proportion of young people in learning, training or work". This indicator is based on school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools and excludes schools in the independent sector and all special schools. The Scottish Government's Analytical Services Unit will publish the initial destination results at the same time as the follow up results in June 2014.

### **4.2 Positive Destinations**

During the reporting period there were 1,367 leavers from publicly funded secondary schools in Dundee. 1245 (91.1%) of these leavers entered a positive destination; higher education, further education, employment or training. This represents a rise of 1.1% from last year's result.

The majority of school leavers continued with their studies and 437 (32%) of leavers entered higher education and 478 (35%) of leavers entered further education. Whilst there is a rise of 1.7% in the annual rate of those entering higher education, this rate remains 4.5% below the national average. However, Dundee continues to have a higher than national average of leavers entering further education.

Across the city, 217 (15.9%) leavers entered employment which is a rise of 1.6% from last year but still remains 4.5% below the national average.

Dundee retains its above average position in relation to those entering training (6.5%) which is the 8<sup>th</sup> highest level in Scotland.

### 4.3 **Negative Destinations**

It should be noted that every young person in Dundee who left school during the return period was traced and contacted. In addition, the percentage of leavers classed as 'unemployed and seeking employment' reduced by 1.1% to 6.9% and is now 0.2% lower than the national average.

### 4.4 **Trend Information**

In 2003/4 only 77.8% of Dundee's school leavers entered positive destinations compared to 91.1% this year. Dundee has therefore moved from being in the bottom three local authority areas to the mid table point at 19.

In 2003/04 the percentage of leavers in employment was at its highest point at 21.6%. This remained reasonably steady until 2006/07 but due to the effect of the global economic downturn this fell year on year and reached its lowest point in 2009/10 at 11.3%. This year the percentage of leavers in employment is 4.6% higher than the 2009/10 figure.

In 2003/04 the proportion of leavers reported as 'unemployed and seeking' was 17.5%. This had fallen to 10.8% in 2006/07 but rose to reach 15.3% in 2009/10. However, the dramatic reduction in 2010/11 to 9.4% has continued with this year's cohort representing the lowest percentage of 'unemployed and seeking leavers' ever at 6.9%. This is 10.6% lower than the figures for 2003/04.

The number of leavers entering further education has increased from 27.4% in 2003/4 to 35% this year. For those going on to higher education this year's figure of 32% is the highest level ever reported and is 9.2% higher than in 2006/07.

### 4.5 **Partnership Approaches**

The successful rise in destination trends has been achieved due to the work of the Post School Strategic Planning Group which is part of the Integrated Children's Services structure and has been facilitated by Dundee City Council since 2007. The key partners include Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Dundee & Angus College, Third Sector organisations and NHS Tayside.

The group are developing and delivering on joint actions in the key target areas of early identification; transition & support; tracking; employer engagement and developing employment and learning opportunities. In addition, specific initiatives have been developed, such as Activity Agreements and the Family Firm, which provide a high level of targeted support to the most vulnerable groups of young people in Dundee.

## 5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of sustainability, strategic environment assessment, anti-poverty, equality impact assessment and risk management. There are no major issues.

## 6.0 **CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## 7.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Skills Development Scotland: Dundee City Council Community Planning Partnership Report (December 2013)