

**Creating a world-class education system through excellence and equity:
Participation measure update****Report by Dr Grace Vickers, Head of Education****1. Purpose of Report**

Committed to the creation of a world-class education system through excellence and equity, the purpose of this report is to inform Midlothian Council that 93.6% of young adults aged 16 to 19 years have secured and sustained a positive destination.

This is the highest recorded figure that Midlothian has ever achieved and is 4.9% higher than the previous year. When comparing with the national average, Midlothian is now performing 2.5% higher than the national average. As agreed by Scottish Ministers, from August 2017, the Annual Participation Measure will be adopted within the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, published on 29th August 2017. It provides information on Participation Measure and outlines the performance across the 32 local authorities with Midlothian moving from 27th place to 7th place.

2. Background**2.1 Positive Destinations in Midlothian**

This report marks the third release of statistics on the participation of 16-19 year olds at a national and local authority level, and is the second year using the annual participation measure reporting methodology. The annual participation measure takes account of all status for individuals over the whole year (1st April – 31st March) as opposed to focusing on an individual's status on a single day, as adopted by the 2015 snapshot methodology. For each of the individuals included within the annual measure cohort, the headline participation classification (participating, not participating and unconfirmed) is based on the headline classification with the highest number of days.

The Annual Participation Measure report published by Skills Development Scotland on 29th August 2017 confirmed that Midlothian Council has significantly improved sustained positive destinations. A copy of this report is included as appendix 1. We are delighted to report that we have a continued pattern of improvement, and that 93.6% of our young adults have now secured a positive destination, this is up 4.9% on last year. This improvement pattern is important because in 2014/15 only 85.3% of young adults aged 16 to 19 years were in a positive destination, thus showing an 8.3% improvement over the three year period 2014/15-2016/17. The Participation Measure is now 2.5% higher in Midlothian than the national average with Midlothian Local Authority area ranking 7th place when comparing the 32 local authorities in Scotland.

Securing sustained positive destinations is a core priority of our world-class aspiration and this significant and continued improvement has been achieved through the dedication and persistence of staff from Lifelong Learning & Employability, Skills Development Scotland, Developing Midlothian's Young

Workforce partners and through effective partnership working with public agencies and third sector.

Although we have exceeded our target, work associated with positive destinations remains a priority for Midlothian Council and we have an ethical duty to support 100% of young people to achieve and sustain a positive destination. We continue to work closely with all our partner agencies to ensure positive destinations for all our young adults.

This includes:

- Supporting young people at risk of negative destinations through Activity Agreements and one to one support.
- Using Data Hub information to target resources on a weekly basis
- Increasing vocational pathways in the senior phase and post school.
- Strengthening school/college partnerships
- Improving young people's employability skills
- Expanding the work placement offers
- Introducing foundation apprenticeships in schools/colleges
- Promoting pathways in science, technology, engineering and maths
- Strengthening school-business partnerships
- Expanding use of the new online market place and guarantee for those in Midlothian.
- Focusing on key groups of young people who require targeted support.
- Working closer with employers to create school business partnerships

3. Report Implications

3.1 Resource

We now have had confirmation of external funding from Scottish Government for youth activity agreement funding £102,248 which will assist us in maintaining these key services for 17/18.

3.2 Risk

Whilst we are ambitious that all young people secure a positive destination we cannot take for granted the sustained effort and resources that are required to achieve this.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☒ Community safety
- ☒ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Positive Destinations

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

This work is a key priority for Midlothian Community Planning Partnership and the statistical evidence shows year on year improvement. The individual impact stories of those young people who have received support illustrates the life changing impacts our work.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Key elements of our current and future approaches for Developing the Young Work Force are to work with younger students including nursery and primary and families to assist them to be ambitious and make positive transitions in a preventative manner.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Involving all sectors of our communities in support of young people and involving young people in designing and coproducing our approach and future opportunities is vital to continued success.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

The approach undertaken will continue to target those at risk of not achieving a positive destination from identified equalities groups and ensure individual needs are proactively taken into account when supports and opportunities are developed.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

This positive three year trend of young adults sustaining a positive destination enables young people to actively contribute to the economy of Midlothian.

3.10 IT Issues

None

4 Recommendations

Midlothian Council is recommended to:

- Congratulate our young adults on positively securing their future.
- Thank staff, partners and the third sector for their continued hard work and commitment; ensuring that young people continue to maintain their positive destinations.
- Note the positive trend over time and the impact on positive destinations which has had life changing impacts for Midlothian's Young Adults.

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Appendix 1 – Annual Participation Measure