

## 1.0 Background

- Reducing the number of young people aged 16-18 that are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is a key cross-departmental government priority and a Wirral PSA (6.9% by 2010) and Local Area Agreement target. Reducing NEET is reflected as a key priority in the Children and Young People's plan and Integrated Youth Support Strategy.
- The first national performance indicator for reducing NEET was set in 2002 for a 10% reduction in NEET between November 2002 and November 2004. Further targets were then set against 'best ever' performance levels and enshrined within PSA and LAA targets.
- **In 2009 we experienced the impact of the global recession. A number of target areas deemed to be impacted upon by the change in the economic climate were adjusted accordingly. The NEET target was not included amongst those adjusted.**
- To achieve this demanding target and successfully enable the sustained progression of young people in Wirral effective partnership working and 'ownership' of the NEET issue is critical.
- This is detailed within the EET Strategy and action plan which is refreshed each year via the Economic Well Being Strategy Group in consultation with the 14-19 Strategic Partnership.

## 2. NEET levels in Wirral

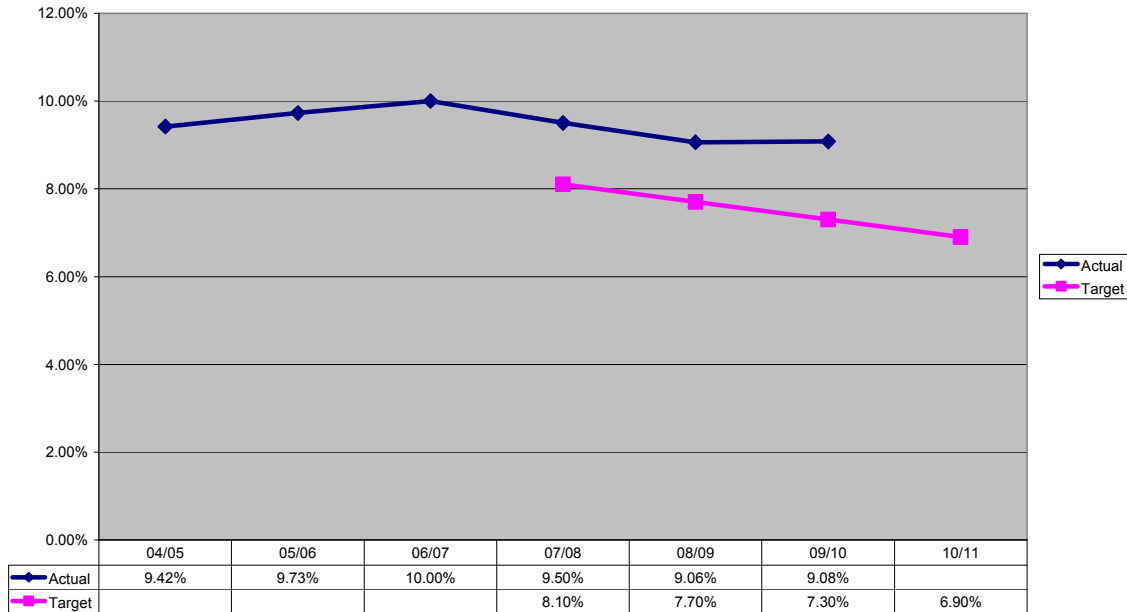
- The Wirral NEET percentage for January 2010 (latest baseline data) is 8.90%

### N.E.E.T. percentage by area at end of January 2010 (G.M.C.P. data).

GMCP DATA	Halton	Knowsley	Liverpool	Sefton	St Helens	Wirral	Company
% Adjusted NEET 2010	10.3	8.93	8.4	6.83	8.95	8.9	8.46
% Adjusted NEET 2009	13.43	12.49	9.98	8.00	9.71	8.89	9.8

- This is a 'standing still' position in a year on year comparison
- The target trajectory for the NEET PSA (7.10%for January) to reach 6.9% by January 2011 has not been met.
- The pace of reduction remains a significant challenge and achievement of the target has been challenged by the economic climate.
- In terms of the age breakdown a significant number of our NEET young people are in the upper age bracket and for **January 2010 15.4% are 16, 34.2% are 17 and 50.3% are 18 years old.**
- The data demonstrates that initial participation by the cohort is possible and a key issue remains one of sustainability.

Wirral PSA Target Trajectory



### 3.0 NEET levels and the challenges ahead

- The impact of recession has meant that there has been fewer employment opportunities for young people. The hardest hit group are 18 year olds with the most significant issues emerging in relation to progression at 18.
- The outcomes for LDD young people continue to worsen though the situation is not as dire as in most areas (England average NEET rates for LDD young people have increased by 20% between 2009 and 2010).
- The NEET rate for the Liverpool City Region is still higher than for the rest of England.
- There are more young people in Wirral continuing in learning beyond Year 11 than ever before. The numbers who are N.E.E.T amongst the Year 11 leaver group has fallen to it's lowest ever level.
- The challenge remains to increase the pace of the reduction in line with the trajectory toward the 2010 PSA target of 6.9% which gives us considerable distance to travel.
- There are also significant priority groups within the NEET group, including those with LDD, care leavers, young offenders and teen mums for whom opportunities often contract more adversely than for their peers at times of economic pressure.

### 4.0 Risks Identified:

- Changes in economic climate impacting on availability of opportunities for the NEET group whilst target levels set before the recession are not adjusted.
- The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act will see the end of Programme-led Apprenticeships (PLAs), an element of the learning offer that the Liverpool City Region has become heavily dependent on in recent years. The transition arrangements between now and 2011 will see a reduction in PLA. The table below highlights the potential impact in Wirral of the withdrawal of Programme-led opportunities.

### **Apprenticeship Opportunities in the Liverpool City Region.**

Area	Total level 2 Apprenticeship starts 2008/9	% PLAs	Number of PLAs.
Halton	306	27.5	84
Knowsley	593	40.5	240
Liverpool	1367	50.3	687
Sefton	628	35.5	223
St Helens	472	29.7	140
Wirral	783	27.3	214
Greater Merseyside	4149	38.27	1588

- The change in the age profile of the NEET group and the challenges presented to Employers and Learning Providers of responding to the needs of the 'older' NEET group.
- Adult employment rates rising.

#### **Recommendations**

- The Borough EET Strategy has been refreshed which outlines partner responsibilities and contributions to achieving the NEET target.
- The Children's Trust are asked to endorse the Strategy.

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