

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014/2015 REPORT NO.

**ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNDER
DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

PORTFOLIO DECISION OF:
Cabinet Member for Economic
Development

REPORT OF:
Director – Regeneration &
Environment

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| Agenda – Part: 1 | KD Num: N/A |
| Subject: The 2012 Worklessness Commission and related research summary | |
| Wards: All | |

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The findings of the Worklessness Commission, set up in 2012 to explore the causes of economic inactivity in Enfield in more detail, produced a research summary highlighting specific groups more likely to be impacted by worklessness as well as existing and recommended interventions to address the barriers.
- 1.2 This report recommends that the Worklessness Commission research summary be reviewed in the context of current work to address worklessness.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet Member for Economic Development agrees to review the Worklessness Commission research summary produced and note its contents within the context of when it was produced.
- 2.2 Cabinet Member for Economic Development agrees that the AD for Economic Development reviews and updates where appropriate the strategy for addressing worklessness by incorporating relevant findings into current work.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In early 2012, a report was submitted to Cabinet to recommend setting up a Commission to investigate the causes and impact of economic inactivity in Enfield. The Worklessness Commission, as it was called, was tasked with making full recommendations within 9 months of its set up, to be presented to the Employment and Enterprise Board initially.
- 3.2 The Commission comprised two majority members and one opposition member, the JCP Divisional Manager at that time with the Director of Regeneration, Leisure and Culture who was the relevant Lead Officer at that time. The Commission was supported by the Business and Economic Development Service. It was considered to be a unique opportunity for the key strategic partners in the borough to explore in detail the causes of worklessness and chart a way forward for the Employment and Enterprise Board.
- 3.3 The Commission met six times between April 2012 and October 2012. Members were invited to consider several pieces of research and come up with some recommendations as to what strategies should be adopted to address specific issues raised.
- 3.4 Although a final report with recommendations was not completed, the research summary (attached as a Background paper to this report) pinpointed 5 key groups most likely to be affected by unemployment. It focused on the barriers facing each, and summarised activities and projects which directly addressed the issues faced by this cohort. Some of these were funded interventions which have come to an end as well as generic programmes which are still being delivered.
- 3.5 The current context of worklessness has changed since the Worklessness Commission was established. Changes to the Benefits system in the context of the government's Welfare Reform agenda, the Council's Employment and Skills Strategy and the joint Partnership Agreement with JCP which is accountable to the Employment and Enterprise Thematic Action Group have all given worklessness an even sharper focus for the Council and its strategic partners.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Worklessness remains a key issue in Enfield and is a major draw on the public purse as well as contributing to a number of undesirable health and social problems. The alternative to considering this agenda would put a heavier burden on other agencies in supporting local residents to access and sustain employment.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Working in conjunction with a range of services across the council to continue to understand and address the causes and effects of

worklessness will support the Council and ultimately save money, and enable the local economy to flourish.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES, AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

6.1.1 There are no financial implications associated with noting the contents of this report.

6.1.2 Any future proposals arising with cost implications would need to be subject to separate reports and full financial appraisal.

6.2 Legal Implications

By incorporating the findings of the research summary into current work, the Council will be complying with its ongoing duty under the Equality Act to have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and consider how its decisions will contribute towards meeting this duty.

6.3 Property Implications

There are no property implications associated with noting the contents of this report.

7. KEY RISKS

No risks at this stage.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All

Agreement to incorporate the Worklessness Commission research into current activity addressing worklessness will help to redress the balance for people who have had fewer opportunities and have experienced more barriers in accessing employment than others.

8.2 Growth and Sustainability

Agreement to incorporate the Worklessness Commission research into current activity addressing worklessness will support officers' understanding of worklessness and reliance on out-of-work benefits through its focus on moving economically inactive people into employment thereby improving the sustainability and growth of the local economy.

8.3 Strong Communities

Agreement to incorporate the Worklessness Commission research into current activity addressing worklessness will support officers' understanding of how people who are economically inactive may experience exclusion from fully participating in their local community.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

The Worklessness Commission research illustrates that certain groups are disproportionately represented in the labour market, eg women, people with low/no skills, BAME communities and specifically people experiencing mental health problems and other disabilities. These findings and recommended actions will enable officers to better determine in detail what kinds of interventions are likely to be most effective with specifically disadvantaged groups and the outcomes will be measured to ensure that the Council is supporting those areas of the community most in need.

10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

None.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None.

12. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Worklessness has a direct impact on health particularly mental health so it is important that the fine-grained analysis from the Worklessness Commission is included in current initiatives to support the health and well-being agenda.

Background Papers

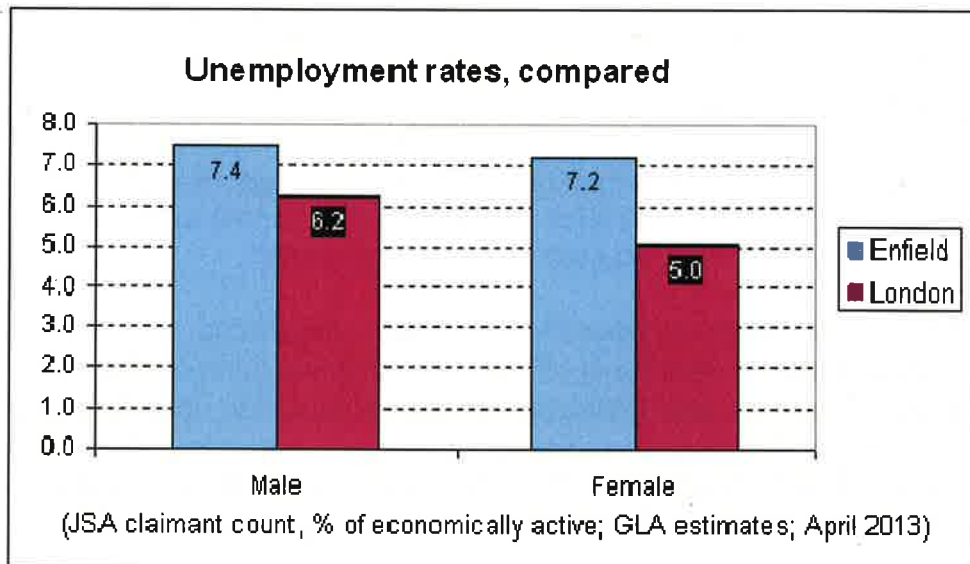
Research Summary from Worklessness Commission

RESEARCH SUMMARY FOR FINAL REPORT

Group 1 – Women, including Mothers returning to work

Prevalence

- As at February 2012, there were 18,900 women claiming out of work benefits. This represents 19.3% of the working age population, which is above the borough wide working age average of 18%
- Of the 18,900 women claiming out of work benefits, just under half (9,120) had dependent children living at home.
- According to the 2010 annual population survey, 39% of working age women in Enfield were not working
- As at February 2012, DWP statistics recorded Enfield as having the 5th highest percentage of Female Benefit Claimants among the 33 London Boroughs.
- As at February 2012, DWP statistics recorded Enfield as having the 4th highest proportion of mothers claiming benefits in England



Trend

- Over a 5 year period up to February 2012, DWP data shows that the number of female benefit claimants in Enfield had risen by 11.9%. This compared to a rise of 3% across London.

Across Enfield

As at June 2012, the highest number of female benefit claimants could be found in Edmonton Green. Nine of the ten wards with the highest number of female claimants lay entirely east of the A10 (the other being Southbury which is intersected by the A10). The wards with lowest number of claimants were Grange, Winchmore Hill and Cockfosters.

Identified barriers

Academic research has identified the following barriers for women and mothers returning to work:

- Childcare (51.3%)
- Caring for others (31.9%)
- Lack of flexible hours and time (28%)
- Expectations of progression: self esteem, confidence and self efficacy (29%)
- Suitable employment opportunities and training (31.8)

Source: Green et al (2004)

Qualitative work with organisations and job seekers in Enfield carried out on behalf of the Commission identified a similar range of issues:

- Childcare or caring responsibilities were seen as the prime barrier
- Family size – a significant proportion of Enfield's population have 3+ children, compounding the issues they face around childcare
- Limited availability of part time work in Enfield and the local area
- Lack of confidence and fear of returning to the Labour market
- Some women either not wanting to work or not needing to work

Solutions for this group

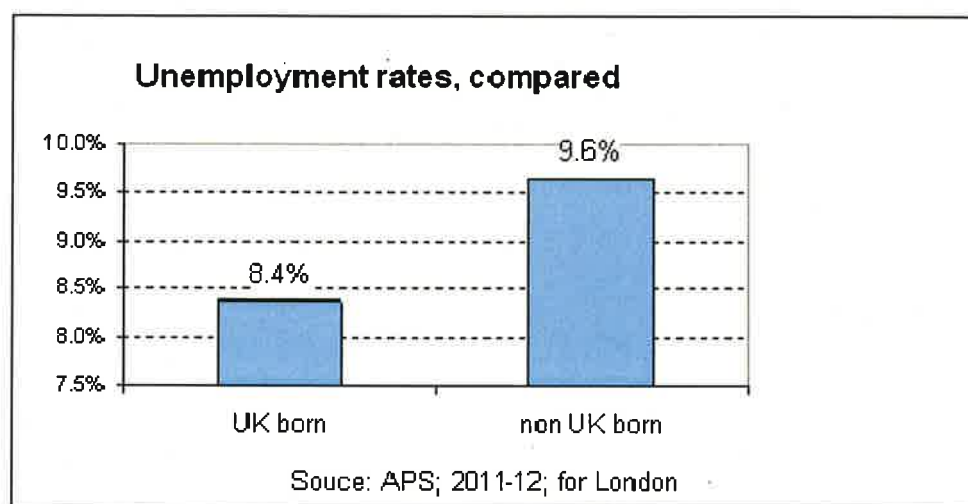
The research carried out on behalf of this commission identified a number of programmes and approaches which can demonstrate some evidence of success in addressing worklessness amongst this group:

- **Children's Centres** provide training and volunteering opportunities
 - **Parent Support Advisors** offer courses to help parents into work
 - **Enfield Parents and Children** provide volunteering opportunities and community work
 - **Parent Engagement Panel** – parent champions signpost and provide information about employment
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Group 2 – Migrants from outside of the UK

Prevalence

- According to the ONS annual population survey 2011/12, across the London region 34% of working age migrants are not working, while the rate for UK nationals is 31%.
- No data was available for migrant worklessness in Enfield – The Claimant rate for London is set out in the table below.



Trend

- Across London, ONS survey data identifies an 18% increase in worklessness among the migrant group over a five year period

Identified/perceived barriers

The academic research and qualitative research identified a range of barriers for migrants from outside the UK. However, the constantly changing nature of this group means that it is important to recognise that some of the barriers may be based on perceptions or historical experience rather than the current reality

- Insufficient English language skills
- Lack of knowledge/understanding in looking for and applying for jobs in the UK
- Availability of, and access to, appropriate employment support services
- A lack of other skills, such as IT skills
- Difficulty in getting foreign qualifications recognised – migrants need advice on how to do this and how to apply these qualifications to the UK work context.
- Competition for jobs with young people
- Transience, which means that this group lack established contacts to help them find work
- Cultural values seen by some to impact on opportunities for women from migrant groups

Solutions for this group

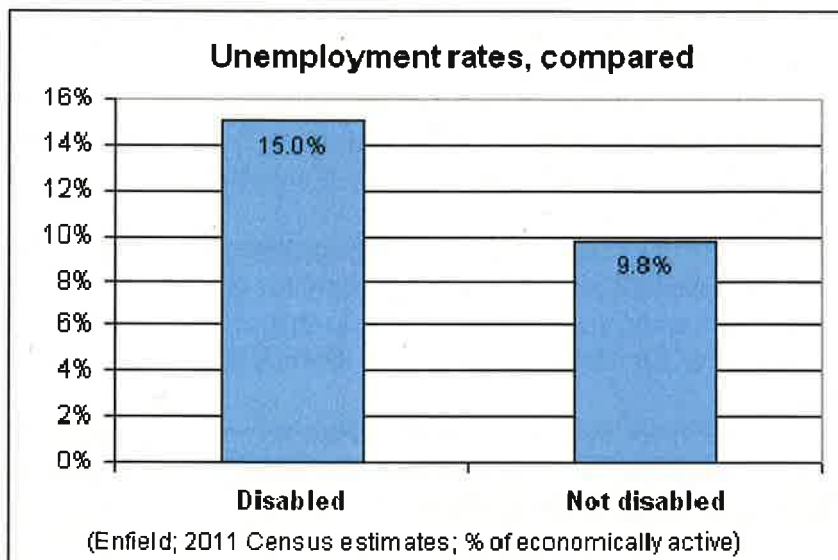
Some local programmes seeking to address worklessness among this group include:

- A community mentoring project run by Enfield Race Equality Council (EREC)
 - ESOL Classes, a work club, and a 'Parents into Work' programme run by O"-Bay Community Trust
 - Bilingual courses in Play work provided by Enfield Children and Young Persons Services
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Group 3 – Disabled

Prevalence

- As at November 2011, there were 14,320 people claiming an out of work benefit related to disability. The large majority of these (12,680) were claiming Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Incapacity Benefit
- According to the ONS annual population survey (October 2010 – September 2011) over half of working age people in London with a disability are not working.
- DWP statistics from November 2011 found that Enfield had the 9th highest proportion of disability benefit claimants out of 33 London Boroughs.
- The largest age groups claiming out of work disability related benefits were those aged 35-44 and 45-54.



Trend

- In Enfield, there has been a 6.3% increase in the number of working age benefit claimants claiming disability related out of work benefits in the past 3 years. This compares with an increase of 5.6% across London and 1.7% across England.

Across Enfield

- As at June 2012, Edmonton Green had the highest level of working age people claiming a disability related out of work benefit. 12.6% of the total working age population in that ward claimed such a benefit. This was notably higher than in the next highest four wards (Haselbury, Lower Edmonton, Turkey Street and Upper Edmonton), where between 9.6% and 9.9% claimed such a benefit. The lowest levels of working age people claiming a disability related benefit were to be found in Grange, Town, Winchmore Hill and Bush Hill Park wards where the claimant rate ranged from 3.5% to 5.1%.

Identified/perceived barriers

Evidence from the research undertaken for this Commission has identified the following barriers for this group:

- Lack of confidence
- Perceived or actual discrimination from employers
- Difficulty in finding work with sufficient flexibility in working patterns
- Physical access to work including transport and inaccessible buildings

Solutions for this group

There are a range of programmes aimed specifically at finding solutions for this group:

- Disability Employer Advisors are based at Job Centres. Their purpose is to help disabled job seekers to find work and tell them about disability friendly employers.
 - The Access to work grants are available for disabled job seekers. The grants can be used for things which improve the chances of finding and sustaining work, such as the purchase of specialist equipment and travel costs.
 - Two tick scheme – Employers seeking to demonstrate that they are 'positive about disabled people' can apply for accreditation of this scheme. This encourages employers to adopt such approaches and makes it easier for disabled people to identify disability friendly employers.
 - In Enfield, the Park Avenue Disability Resource Centre provides employment support services, education and training opportunities for people with a range of disabilities.
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Group 4 – The 16 – 24 age group

Prevalence

- Data from the 2011 census shows that of Enfield's population of 312,500, 42,200 (13.5%) are aged between 15 and 24.
- As of May 2013, 4.40% of 16-18 year olds were not in education, employment or training against a target of 5.0%.
- Between 2001 and 2010, employment rates among the 16-24 year olds dropped by 4.3% for males and 2.4% for females. With 21% of Enfield's residents being under the age of 15, there is a growing trend in unemployment among young people.
- Enfield has the 4th highest number of 19-24 year olds claiming benefits in London

Trend

- Over a 5 year period up to February 2012, DWP data shows that the number of young people claiming benefit has risen by 23%. This compares with rises of 15% across London.

Across Enfield

Worklessness among 16 – 24 year olds is an issue across Enfield, but is most prevalent in the wards in the East and South of the Borough, with the highest figures found in Ponders End, Edmonton Green and Enfield Lock.

Identified barriers

A wide range of barriers exist that impede the 16-24 year old group finding and, as important, sustaining employment. Evidence shows that while some young people move from job to job with only short periods of unemployment, there is a growing problem of long-term unemployment.

Barriers include:

- Employability – there is evidence that 16-24 year olds lack crucial soft skills (independence, self-discipline, self-confidence, relationship building and team work)
- Some members of this group have unrealistic expectations of salary, working hours, travel time etc.
- Rising employer expectations - greater value placed on work experience
- The young people who most need work experience are often the least likely to get it.
- There is a mismatch between available jobs and the skills of 16-24 year olds - e.g. highest number of vacancies in Enfield is for heavy goods vehicle drivers.
- There is a lack of aspiration among some young people, particularly in the NE of the Borough. There is also a lack of parental encouragement, resulting in young people looking no further than local employers.
- Family experience of inter-generational worklessness means that some people in this group have a poor attitude to work.

Solutions for this group

This is a very diverse group – 16 year olds are very different from 24 year olds and the group covers the full spectrum of ethnicity, educational attainment, skills and disability. Therefore a wide range approaches will need to be delivered to have a measurable impact on reducing worklessness among 16-24 year olds in Enfield.

Programmes identified to date include:

- **National Youth Contract** – launched in April 2012, aiming to provide nearly 500,000 opportunities for 18-24 years olds including apprenticeships and voluntary work experience
 - **Trail Blazer (Day 1 offer)** – work experience and employability skills for those claiming JSA for less than 1 month.
 - **JobsNet** have a young people's broker who is respected by young people particularly in N.E Enfield
 - **Council apprenticeship programme**
 - **Flexible Support Grant** - allows JCP to tailor back-to-work support to meet local need. Enfield has been the most successful North London district in commissioning activity for the 18-24 year old group. Projects include confidence building and pre-employment training; bicycle repair courses; call centre training courses
 - **ECYPS Fair share trust** – 2-3 days retail work experience
 - **CHENEL Silver Track Course** – training for employment in the rail industry
 - **Tackling the social impacts of worklessness** – ECYPS/YSS work on estates; Restore – targeted work with gangs; Academies Hub Teams and parent support; Troubled Families initiative; Information, Advice and Guidance in schools and colleges
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Group 5 – Older People aged 50 – 64

Prevalence

- Data from the 2011 census shows that of Enfield's population of 312,500, 42,700 (15.25%) are aged between 50 and 64.
- 9,050 people (20%) of this group are claiming working age benefits. This compares with 18% of working age benefit claimants aged 16-64
- According to the 2010 annual population survey, 36% of this group were not working. This compares with the younger working age population, aged 16-39 - 31%; 16-24s - 59%; women of working age - 39%.
- Among local London boroughs, Haringey and Waltham Forest have higher rates of worklessness and Barnet a lower rate as might be expected.
- 79% of the group are economically inactive i.e. not seeking work

Trend

- Over a 5 year period up to February 2012 DWP data shows that the number of benefit claimants aged 50 – 64 rose by 13.8%, this is slightly higher than London (12.8%) than London The increase is also slightly higher than the increase in all working age claimants in Enfield (12.0% over 3 years; 12.7% over 5 years).

Across Enfield

- Of the approximately 19% of this group that can be categorised as job seekers, the highest numbers, as might be expected are in the south of the Borough, with the highest figures found in Edmonton Green , Haselbury and Upper Edmonton.

Identified barriers

- Qualitative work with organisations and job seekers in Enfield carried out on behalf of the Commission identified the following barriers:
- Perceived ageism (age discrimination) by employers
- Lack or absence of IT skills; some have no access to the Internet
- Lack of confidence during the job application process; they often believe they lack employability skills
- Low literacy and numeracy and/or lack of academic qualifications
- Health issues
- ~~Transport costs and reluctance to commute~~

Impact of welfare reform on older people

- Higher pension ages will deter some people from retiring earlier and encourage others to return to work to supplement savings

Solutions for this group

The research carried out for the Commission identified a number of interventions that can demonstrate some evidence of success in addressing worklessness among this group:

- More publicity for Working Tax Credits - the Over 50s Forum highly value the 'top up' it provides
 - Personalised guidance and support e.g. help with updating CVs and job applications, particularly if this person is of a similar age.
 - JobsNet has an over 50s job broker who offers advice at a drop-in session at the Dugdale Centre
 - The 60+ Oyster card introduced in November 2012 could help as it provides free travel for over 60s, not yet eligible for a Freedom Pass.
 - Self-employment can be an important route back to work for the over 50s
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