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## **ESF Youth Programme Support**

**Report of Programme Information Exchange event  
on 9 February 2018**

## Introduction

London Councils has been commissioned to support the London ESF Youth Programme.

This support aims to improve the impact of the Programme by providing opportunities for providers and partners, including local authorities, to:

- Identify and overcome barriers to successful delivery
- Exchange ideas, experiences and effective practice
- Manage transition between different strands of the Programme so that young people are better supported into positive destinations

The principal means of support is through a ***London ESF Youth Programme Information Exchange***, a termly event at which providers and partners can

- continually develop working relationships
- ensure that activities are appropriately targeted according to local need
- identify and share effective practice

and so increase the number of young people who are in education, training or employment.

The events bring together partner organisations (such as local authorities):

- (1) sub-regionally – where partners and all the London ESF Youth Programme providers operating in each of the sub-regional areas through which the programme has been contracted can work together to make the Programme work well locally
- (2) thematically – where partners and all the providers delivering each specialist strand of activity identify what works well.

The fifth Information Exchange event took place on 9 February 2018 from 1000 to 1300 at City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA.

This is the report of the event and has been prepared to:

- ensure that the key actions arising from the event are taken forward
- enable the project's sponsors to plan support for future programmes.

If you have any questions about this report or this project, please contact:

Peter O'Brien  
Regional Commissioning Manager (Young People's Education and Skills)  
London Councils  
59½ Southwark Street  
London  
SE1 0AL  
**Tel:** 020 7934 9743  
**Email:** [peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk)

### Attendees

Angela	Browne	Project Manager	South Thames Colleges Group	angela.browne@south-thames.ac.uk
Ann	Mason	14-19 Manager	Achieving for Children	ann.mason1@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Anna-Maria	Volpicelli	Executive Assistant	London Councils	anna-maria.volpicelli@london.gov.uk
Anne-Marie	Greenland	Clusters Programme Manager	Newham / 15billion-ebp	Anne-Marie.greenland@15billionebp.org
Catherine	Verrinder	Team Leader, Southwark Choices	London Borough of Southwark	catherine.verrinder@southwark.gov.uk
Christie	Anayiotou	ESF Projects Lead	Barnet and Southgate College	christie.anayiotou@barnetsouthgate.ac.uk
Dee	Smith	London, South and Wales Director	Springboard	dees@springboarduk.org.uk
Denise	Donovan	Group Partnership Manager	Department for Work and Pensions	denise.donovan1@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Disa	Golijanin	ESF Projects Coordinator	Barnet and Southgate College	disa.golijanin@barnetsouthgate.ac.uk
Donna	Lawson	Operations Manager	Catch22	donna.lawson@catch-22.org.uk
Erik	Stein	Group Manager: Integrated Youth Services	London Borough of Barking & Dagenham	erik.stein@lbbd.gov.uk
Gary	Buckley	Operations and Business Development Manager	Action West London	gary.buckley@actionwestlondon.org.uk
Jo	Jack	Youth Engagement (14-19) Coordinator	London Borough of Croydon	jo.jack@croydon.gov.uk
Laura	Harris	Contracts Manager	Action West London	laura.harris@actionwestlondon.org.uk
Linda	Leigh	Careers Service Manager	London Borough of Waltham Forest	linda.leigh@walthamforest.gov.uk
Mani	Kadungala	Head of London & South East	Springboard Charity	manik@springboarduk.org.uk
Mary	Vine-Morris	Area Director (London) and National Lead Employment	Association of Colleges	mary.vine-morris@aoc.co.uk

Michelle	Barrett	Officer	Greater London Authority	michelle.barrett@london.gov.uk
Nanette	Higgins	External Programmes Manager	Prospects Services	Nanette.Higgins@prospects.co.uk
Peter	O'Brien	Regional Commissioning Manager - YPES	London Councils	peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk
Priscilla	Hansberry	Partnership Manager	London Borough of Hounslow	priscilla.hansberry@hounslow.gov.uk
Rita	Chircop	Senior Programme Manager - ESF	Greater London Authority	rita.chircop@london.gov.uk
Tara	Oliver	ESFA ESF Delivery Manager	Education and Skills Funding Agency	tara.oliver@education.gov.uk
Tawhid	Qureshi	ESF Programme Manager	Greater London Authority	tawhid.qureshi@london.gov.uk
Umar	Tariq	Director	Ealing KBM Group	umar.tariq@kbmggroup.co.uk
Yolande	Burgess	Strategy Director	London Councils	yolande.burgess@londoncouncils.gov.uk

Apologies were received from

Darren	Fernandes	ESF Compliance & Performance Adviser	Education and Skills Funding Agency	darren.fernandes@education.gov.uk
Derek	Harvey	Group Partnership Manager London and the Home Counties	Department for Work and Pensions	derek.harvey@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Drew	Gallon	ESF Programmes Manager	Greater London Authority	drew.gallon@london.gov.uk
Marcia	Pires	ESF Project Manager	South Thames College	marcia.pires@south-thames.ac.uk
Mohamed	Reffas	Supply Chain Manager	Prevista	mohamedr@prevista.co.uk
Rezaul	Hussain	Business Manager	Newham / 15 billion, EBP	rezaul.hussain@15billion.ebp.org
Salman	Khan	Director	Ealing KBM Group	Salman.khan@kbmggroup.co.uk
Venetia	Rogers	Education Policy Manager	London Borough of Hillingdon	vrogers@hillington.gov.uk
Andrew	Williams	Career Advisor	London Borough of Barnet	andrew.williams@barnet.gov.uk

## Agenda



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# Supporting the London ESF Youth Programme – Programme Information Exchange

Friday 9 February 2018 10.00-12.30

**Location:** City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA

## Agenda

<b>10.00 Welcome and introductions</b>	Yolande Burgess, Strategy Director, London Councils
<b>Session One: What has worked well</b>	Table discussions and feedback
<b>11.15 Comfort break</b>	
<b>Session Two: Key learning points to take forward</b>	Table discussions and feedback
<b>12.15 Plenary discussion</b>	
<b>12.30 Close</b>	

## Summary of Discussion

The project's Strategic and Technical Advisory Group to use the Information Exchange to consider how well the delivery of the London ESF Youth Programme as a whole is matching the original concept and design goals of the Programme.

The event was facilitated by Yolande Burgess, Strategy Director at London Councils, and consisted of two sessions, both of which were briefly introduced by Peter O'Brien from London Councils.

The key issues raised were:

- There is clearly a demand for the type of provision available through the London ESF Youth Programme, but its alignment to statutory services and other mainstream education provision should be made clearer from the outset – and co-location works!
- In particular, flexibility in meeting the needs of young people is a characteristic of the Programme that has contributed to participants' successes
- Although there is respect for the concept of 'one programme, many strands', its deliverability was difficult to achieve: not all providers were truly able to get up and running quickly and some needed much longer than others to complete their supply-chain
- A single set of eligibility criteria to apply across the whole programme would have been simpler to evidence and operate so that paperwork could follow each participant, preferably electronically, to minimise bureaucracy and duplication
- The funding system and rates seem to have stood the test of time and the emphasis on sustained outcomes was welcome. Providers also thought that premium payments enabled them to provide more intensive support where it was needed most
- In the future, there could be different strands (or programmes) for
  - a. short-term, cyclical issues in the labour market;
  - b. medium-term issues supporting specific strategies; and
  - c. long-term structural issues.
- Bringing providers together is a good idea, but it would have worked better if the support was in place at the start of the Programme (or even before the official start so that it could supported the Programme's set-up, especially in building the relationships that are critical to referrals) and there could have been greater support to promoting the Programme as a whole to establish a separate identity for the Programme.

Several providers asked about the possibility of extending contracts and Tawhid Qureshi from the European Programmes Management Unit provided a brief update. Tara Oliver from the Education and Skills Funding Agency told providers that they could expect official communications on the subject shortly.

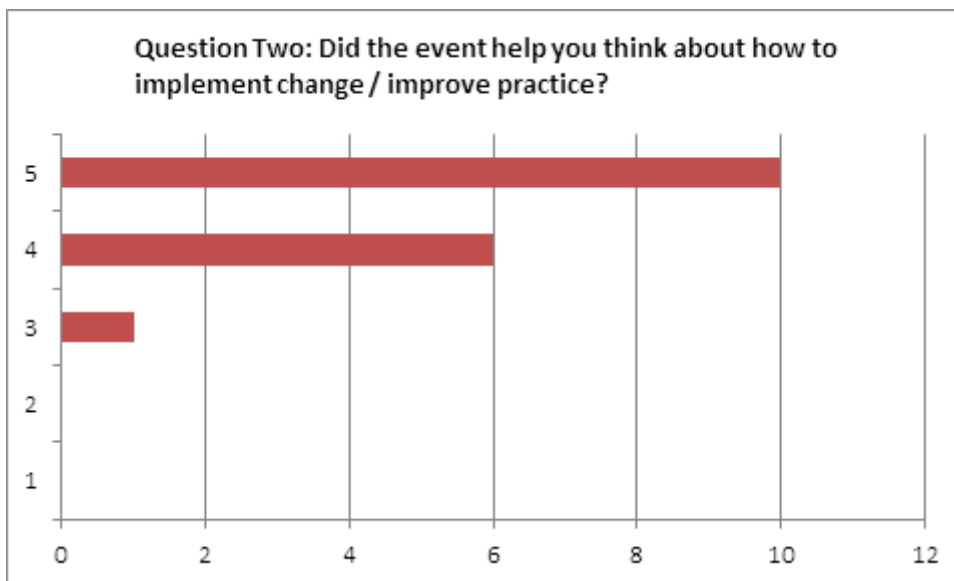
## Actions and recommendations

1. In the future, funding bodies could consider the need for providing impartial ways through which providers can communicate and support each other and commission activities within the context of the programme's procurement.
2. Co-production worked well in the design of the London ESF Youth Programme, but procurement could have been more sensitive to the changing demands of the labour market.
3. Future programmes should have more consistent eligibility and evidence requirements that do not disadvantage participants.
4. Funding agencies and their partners should define a smaller number of priority groups to target through interventions such as the London ESF Youth Programme.
5. The EPMU will continue to involve partners in the arrangements for the extension of contracts (the EPMU has been working closely with partners throughout the development of the Programme and its delivery).

## Feedback

The feedback shows that colleagues welcomed the opportunity for the type of open discussion that was possible at a small workshop.

We received 17 completed evaluation forms from the 26 attendees. The charts below show the feedback received on the scored questions



**Question Three: Did you find the event well planned and structured?**

