

Young People's Workforce Reform Programme

Evaluation Report

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Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the final report on the evaluation of the Young People's Workforce Reform Programme. The research and analysis has been independently conducted by Ecorys UK Ltd.

Over 500 interviews were held with a wide range of participants involved in the three year programme, which was tasked with developing the skills of the people who work and volunteer with young people. These interviews informed the report, which provides a clear and detailed analysis of evidence gathered, charting the programme's successes, and challenges.

The report highlights a wide range of positive outcomes across the programme, for individuals and organisations benefitting from the training and infrastructure development. It also found benefits for the workforce as a whole in terms of the legacy of products, materials and infrastructure with potential for future use.

The programme achieved a great deal and it demonstrates what can happen when partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors work together. This way of working is at the heart of CWDC's successful delivery and provides a model for the future sector leadership of workforce development.

The programme developed a series of products which have been well received by the workforce. These products will be available by September in digital form on the CWDC website. They are the legacy of the Young People's Workforce Reform Programme and we hope that you will continue to find them useful in informing workforce development within your organisations.

The State of the young people's workforce report and the Foundation Degree framework are also available to download from our website. For these documents and more information on how to use the Skills Development Framework and the Leadership and Management materials, please visit www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/young-peoples-workforce

We know that investing in the workforce makes a difference to lives of young people – I hope that this report will help you to continue this work. Thank you for all that you do to support young people.



Jane Haywood
Chief Executive

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Key Terms

Terminology relating to the Young People's Workforce Reform Programme (YPWRP)

- **Programme** – Use of the term throughout relates to the YPWRP in its entirety.
- **Strand** – The YPWRP is organised under three main 'strands', these being groups of related activity organised around a particular theme.
- **Workstream** – The name used to describe the individual projects funded under the YPWRP and implemented within the 'strands' of the programme.

Terminology relating to the evaluation methodology used

- **Theory of change** – An evaluative approach that seeks to identify the key aspects of an intervention requiring evaluation, through considering in a structured way **what** that intervention seeks to achieve, **why**, and **how**.
- **Logic model** The results of the theory of change process are summarised in diagrammatic form as a 'logic model' in that the approach traces out the logic of an intervention.
- **Inputs** – In adopting the theory of change approach, inputs refer to the main resources used to take forward the YPWRP.
- **Activities** – The main activities developed and taken forward by the YPWRP through the inputs / resources allocated to the programme.
- **Outputs** – The key immediate products of the activities involved in the YPWRP – for example, numbers of training places delivered or a particular product produced.
- **Outcomes** – Refers to the wider achievements an intervention is intended to lead to. For example, achieving an **output** of a particular number of training places may be presumed to have an **outcome** of increased skills or confidence amongst those benefitting.
- **Impacts** – Distinguished from outcomes in that the former are presumed to be more near or medium term results of activity, and closely linked to outputs, whereas impacts are likely to become apparent over a longer time period. For example, while an **outcome** of YPWRP activity may be a more highly skilled young people's workforce, the **impact** of this may be felt subsequently by the young people and families that workforce supports.

List of Abbreviations

- AA – Advanced Apprenticeship
- ADCS – Association of Directors of Children's Services
- AFIYS – Apprenticeship Framework for Integrated Youth Support
- CATI – Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing
- CDG – Curriculum Development Group
- CP – Common Platform
- CPD – Continuous Professional Development
- CSR – Comprehensive Spending Review
- CWDC – Children's Workforce Development Council
- CWN – Children's Workforce Network
- DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families
- FD – Foundation Degree
- GRS – Graduate Recruitment Scheme
- HE – Higher Education
- HEI – Higher Education Institute
- IT – Information Technology
- InLoGov – Institute of Local Government Studies
- IYS – Integrated Youth Support
- IYSS – Integrated Youth Support Services
- LA – Local Authority
- LDP – Leadership Development Programme
- LEP – Leadership Enhancement Programme
- MDP – Management Development Programme
- MDP – LT – Management Development Programme – Locality Teams
- NDP – National Delivery Partner
- NTO – National Training Organisation
- QCF – Qualifications and Curriculum Framework
- RDA – Regional Delivery Agent
- SAV – Strategic Added Value
- SDF – Skills Development Framework

SSC – Sector Skills Council

SYPWR – State of the Young People's Workforce Report

VLE – Virtual Learning Environment

VSCB – Voluntary Sector Capacity Building

WFD – Workforce Development

YPWRP – Young People's Workforce Reform Programme

Executive Summary

1. Introduction and Evaluation Methodology

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) commissioned Ecorys and H.J. Giller & Associates to independently evaluate the 2008–2011 Young People's Workforce Reform Programme (YPWRP). The YPWRP was introduced in 2008 as part of a ten year government strategy to help develop a more skilled, confident workforce able to work in an effective and integrated way to deliver the best possible outcomes for young people. The main evaluation methodology used was semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, supplemented by telephone surveys and a small number of focus groups and event observations. Desk review of programme information was also undertaken. This summary assesses the main YPWRP strands and workstreams along with its cross cutting themes of communications and data collation in light of intended outcomes. It concludes by assessing the outcomes of the programme overall.

2. Leadership and Management strand

The strand adopted an appropriate, coherent and evidence based focus with the concentration on promoting joint working between different sectors being welcomed. The programmes offered relevant and workforce specific training that would otherwise have been unavailable or difficult to access. Implementation challenges did not significantly affect the effectiveness or efficiency of delivery. Positive outcomes for participants included: increased confidence; improved ability to deploy different approaches and act flexibly in different situations; enhanced progression aspirations; and support for personal achievements such as promotion. The aim of developing leaders and managers with improved skills and capacity to better deliver integrated services was thus achieved to a considerable extent. Planned outcomes to enhance shared working between the statutory and voluntary sectors, and produce new networks and relationships, were also largely met. Participants' frequent reference to increased confidence in working across sectoral boundaries is also notable. The aim to improve succession planning was compromised by the challenging context the sector faced, though attention was focused on this area.

There was some evidence of intended longer term impacts around improved delivery standards and enhanced outcomes for young people. This was not necessarily as universal and identifiable as that relating to the outcomes discussed above. However, in many cases the programmes did lead to significant developments and improvements in service delivery. By extension, beneficial impacts are likely to result for young people. However, impacts on service delivery might have been further maximised. This was not due to the programmes themselves, but resulted from variations in learning transfer between and within organisations and in the support given by local areas to implementation. There is a tangible, positive and sustainable legacy likely to result from the training. This encompasses skills, knowledge and insights being used to inform ongoing practice, allied to strengthened relationships. In the challenging context for the sector, skills gained in terms of managing change are likely to be ever more important.

3. Voluntary Sector Capacity Building (VSCB) strand

Design and development of the VSCB strand and workstream (branded as 'Progress') was effective and appropriate to the workforce development needs of the sector. There is an evident

appetite and need for the training and infrastructural development offered. Given extensive challenges, developing and successfully delivering YPWRP's Progress was a considerable achievement. The strand achieved its key intended outcomes around capacity building and up-skilling within the sector, and ensuring that voluntary sector workers of varying backgrounds became better equipped to meet the demands of joint working. The effective approach developed to training delivery was central to this. Success in improving skills and qualification levels resulted in positive impacts for individuals' ability to undertake their roles. This had obvious benefits for their organisations and led to significant achievement against another intended impact – improving services for young people – though fully quantifying this is difficult.

YPWRP's Progress built the capacity of a range of organisations to deliver training, better understand workforce development requirements and approaches, and improve their positioning in the wider context of service delivery. Such outcomes reflect achievement of the aim to develop a sustainable training and capacity building mechanism. Collectively, the significant level of positive outcomes apparent can reasonably be considered to represent a strategic 'step-change' for workforce development. This is apparent in increased recognition of the significance of training, the greater importance ascribed to accreditation, and the significant up-skilling of the workforce. A clear strategic legacy has been established in terms of enhanced capacity, an infrastructure to support future workforce development, new and enhanced partnerships and relationships, and key products and materials to support further improvements in service delivery. There are challenges to sustaining this legacy but a strong base has been established.

4. Common Platform of Skills and Competences strand

4a. Workforce Development for Integrated Youth Support (WFD for IYS) workstream

Implementation of the nine WFD for IYS consortia and their approaches generally worked well, and there were notable impacts for individuals accessing support and training through the workstream. These included enhanced knowledge and skills, confidence, understanding of joint working, and ability to undertake work roles effectively. Positive outcomes for employers releasing employees for training and offering placements were also apparent. There was also indicative evidence of likely enhanced outcomes for young people. Perhaps the most significant outcomes achieved concern the impetus provided to progress IYS in consortia areas through partnership development. The aim of enhancing capacity to support training and CPD in the consortia areas, and hence further progress IYS, was also achieved to a large degree.

Evidence of the transferrable 'models of practice' the workstream hoped to encourage was less tangible. Developments encompassed subtle changes to working practice rather than producing singular, transferrable models. However, integrated working was certainly more recognisable in consortia areas through development of strategic relationships and a supporting infrastructure. There was also evidence of likely positive outcomes for young people, due to those working with them being better trained and through positive effects on service delivery. Aspects of a legacy infrastructure likely to bring sustained benefits for individuals, organisations, and wider service delivery were thus evident. However, funding issues mean that the model developed to support learners may have limited sustainability, as might approaches to joint working in the absence of the workstream's impetus and a clear policy lead on the value of integrated working.

4b Skills Development Framework (SDF) workstream

Development of the SDF was effective and efficient, partly as a result of gathering a range of perspectives to inform its production. This helped ensure it was well received upon publication in terms of content and focus. The SDF was widely cited as effective in highlighting possible career progression, embodying required skills and competences, and being clear and well structured. These intended outcomes were thus met to a high degree. However, despite its strengths future widespread use of the SDF remains uncertain. The environment into which the SDF was launched, lack of support by some stakeholders and an uncertain place in relation to Government policy may affect widespread adoption. The framework is thus in need of 'champions' in different workforce areas and clear policy backing. Relevant SSCs do intend to reflect the framework in standards and qualifications revision. However, achievement of intended impacts around raising status and morale, stimulating recruitment and retention, and supporting skills development and progression remains uncertain given the above context.

4c Apprenticeship Framework for Integrated Youth Support (AFIYS) workstream

There were difficulties in developing the AFIYS which meant that a finalised framework had not been produced or approved at the time of reporting. Amongst stakeholders aware of the draft framework views were generally positive. The AFIYS was seen as having the potential to lead to qualifications that are attractive to learners and can garner support and take-up amongst sections of the workforce. Enhancing workforce recruitment was recognised as a potential outcome in particular. However, it is still too early to fully assess likely acceptance and take-up of the framework and associated qualifications, and the framework will require effective promotion to achieve its potential. As a result the degree to which the AFIYS workstream met its intended outcomes is limited, though the potential to achieve these in future remains.

4d Foundation Degree Framework for Working Together for Young People workstream

Allowing for delays caused mainly by external factors, design and development of the Foundation Degree (FD) framework was broadly effective. The document produced was viewed positively with its potential to gain a useful and required place in the qualifications landscape being widely noted. However, there remain a number of likely challenges to widespread development of qualifications facilitated through the framework. These include external challenges in the current budgetary context allied to a perceived need to further promote the framework amongst qualifications providers and employers. While the workstream effectively met its key outcome of producing the framework itself, likely achievement of the wider intended impacts from the activity is thus difficult to judge and will only be clear in the longer term.

4e Common Platform (CP) strand overall

While design, development and implementation posed challenges for the CP strand and workstreams, the approaches taken have been broadly effective and efficient. Progress was most evident on intended outcomes around developing a clearer entry and progression picture for the workforce and developing more consistent training and qualifications. However, it is still too early to fully judge the nature and extent of achievement of intended outcomes and impacts. This is to be expected as these outcomes represent longer term ambitions and aspirations,

originally intended to be delivered in the context of a ten year strategy. The conclusions cited above for the CP 'products' such as the SDF mirror those for the strand as a whole therefore.

Further progress against planned outcomes is possible, but this will depend on the extent to which the activity and products developed gain widespread traction within the workforce. Accepting this, the strand delivered a significant legacy in respect of workforce development and the promotion of integrated working. This relates both to the positive outcomes evident through the WFD for IYS workstream and the CP products. In maximising the potential of this legacy there is a need to further promote and 'champion' the ways of working and products developed. Sustaining the legacy will undoubtedly be a challenge, and will depend in part on policy developments and the context within which young people's services are operating.

5. YPWRP Cross Cutting Activity

The effectiveness of communications varied. Aspects of the approach were widely recognised as useful and appropriate, though the anticipated level of support for the YPWRP and its implementation perhaps failed to fully emerge. Several factors challenged the effectiveness of communications including: the difficulty of developing a clear and coherent overarching narrative; the reliance on partner organisations to communicate messages in the context of competing priorities; and communications restrictions during Purdah and following the 2010 General Election. In terms of the State of the Young People's Workforce reports (SYPWR), evidence suggests their development was relatively successful given challenges relating to available data. Views on the reports varied, but were broadly positive in light of them representing the first attempt to produce such a codified universal data source. The SYPWR 2009 has also clearly been used in different ways and contexts by individuals and organisations. However, there is recognition of the reports' limitations as practical workforce planning tools. To address this, more detail is required as per the SYPWR 2009's recommendations for further data collection.

6. Conclusion: The Young People's Workforce Reform Programme Overall

In assessing the YPWRP it is important to recognise the challenge of implementing an ambitious workforce development programme in the context of a large, varied and disparate young people's workforce. This challenge grew over time as external factors affected the workforce. Designing a coherent programme reflecting workforce needs and implementing it effectively and efficiently is thus a significant achievement. The YPWRP Board played a key role, as did all involved in the programme's delivery. The programme achieved a wide range of positive outcomes. These encompass outcomes for individuals and organisations benefitting from the training and infrastructure development involved; benefits for localities and particular sectors within the workforce; and gains for the workforce as a whole in terms of the legacy of a series of products, materials and infrastructure with potential for future use. While there are challenges to ensuring the sustainability of outcomes, the basis has been laid to achieve a longer term legacy and for the positive outcomes generated to be sustained.

Achievement of intended programme outcomes is evident most clearly in terms of raising skill levels and the quality of practice within the workforce. However, significant achievements are also evident in respect of each of the other intended outcomes established. Accepting this, there is a need to be realistic as to how far the YPWRP could have fully met all intended

outcomes in light of the size of the workforce and the aspirational nature of the goals set. Achievement of outcomes is also sometimes difficult to quantify, due in part to the fact that the full range and extent of such outcomes will take time to emerge. Despite this, there is good evidence of the degree to which the YPWRP met some of the more long term impacts intended – particularly those around improving service delivery for young people, and the experience of young people of those services. Likewise, evaluating the YPWRP highlights a range of evidence around the strong likelihood of positive impacts accruing from programme activity in respect of young people's opportunities and life chances, both in the near and longer term.

1.0 Introduction

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) commissioned Ecorys and H.J. Giller & Associates to independently evaluate the 2008–2011 Young People's Workforce Reform Programme (YPWRP). This report presents the overall evaluation findings, building on and incorporating the findings of an interim evaluation report produced in November 2010. The interim report was based on research between September and November 2010. This final report draws on a second phase of research undertaken between January and March 2011.

1.1 Background to the YPWRP and its evaluation

1.1.1 The YPWRP and its development

The YPWRP was introduced in 2008 as part of a ten year government strategy to help develop a more skilled, confident workforce able to work in an effective and integrated way to deliver the best possible outcomes for young people. The programme covered voluntary and paid workers in the statutory, private and third sector who work with young people aged 13-19 years (up to 25 for those with learning difficulties or disability). It included workers whose primary role is to:

- Enable and support young people in their holistic development.
- Work with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development.
- Enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society.
- Support them to reach their full potential.
- Help to remove barriers to young people's progression and to achieve positive outcomes and a successful transition to adult life.

The following workers were excluded, as they receive specific training equipping them to work with young people:

- Staff in schools, further education settings, work-based and adult and community learning settings who are directly delivering or directly assisting the delivery of formal compulsory education or post-16 education or training.
- Social workers and social care workers.

The YPWRP was informed by a number of policy priorities reflected in key policy documents including: 'Every Child Matters'¹, 'Youth Matters'² and 'Youth Matters: Next Steps'³, 'Aiming High for Young People'⁴, and the '2020 Children and Young People's Strategy'⁵. The 'Youth Matters' Green Paper set out the need to re-model the workforce in line with planned changes to roles and practices through the development of integrated youth support services. The

¹ Every Child Matters: Change for Children, DCSF, 2004

² Youth Matters, Green Paper, DCSF, 2005

³ Youth Matters: Next Steps, DCSF, 2006

⁴ Aiming high for young people: a ten year strategy for positive activities, DCSF, 2007

⁵ 2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy, DCSF, 2008

'Children's Workforce Strategy'⁶ consultation document set out the vision of a world class workforce that:

- Is competent and confident.
- People aspire to be part of and want to remain in – where they can develop their skills and build satisfying and rewarding careers.
- Parents, carers, children and young people trust and respect.

Policy priorities outlined in later documents – notably *Aiming High for Young People*⁷ and the *2020 Children and Young People's Strategy*⁸ – aimed to help develop a skilled and confident workforce to deliver the most effective practice known to improve young people's outcomes.

CWDC, on behalf of the Children's Workforce Network⁹ (CWN), was responsible to the then Department of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) for the development and implementation of the YPWRP. To assist this, CWDC and CWN established a Youth Workforce Reform Programme Board (subsequently renamed the Young People's Workforce Reform Programme Board). The initial task of this Board was to develop and agree the broad focus and parameters for the programme, and subsequently to oversee the development of an Implementation Plan (and annual successor plans) detailing the workstreams that collectively comprise the YPWRP.

The design of the YPWRP stemmed from work which drew on a range of existing evidence and further feasibility studies commissioned to support the programme's development. In response to evidence on strengths and development needs for the workforce, a set of workstreams were developed around three strands. These strands were: Leadership and Management, Voluntary Sector Capacity Building (VSCB), and Common Platform of Skills and Competences. The strands each reflect a particular thematic focus in light of the workforce development requirements identified through the evidence review and supporting development work. The programme was also supported by cross-cutting activities around communications and data collection. The diagram on page three illustrates the programme strands, workstreams and cross-cutting elements and how they fit together.

1.1.2 The YPWRP and the scope of the evaluation

The evaluation assesses design, operation and outcomes in respect of the YPWRP at the level of the overall programme, its three strands, and individual workstreams. It thus covers:

- The Leadership and Management strand and its component Leadership and Management programmes – the Management Development Programme (MDP); Leadership Development Programme (LDP); and Leadership Enhancement Programme (LEP).
- The VSCB strand and its component VSCB training activity, branded for delivery as 'Progress'.

⁶ Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Children's Workforce Strategy, DCSF, 2005

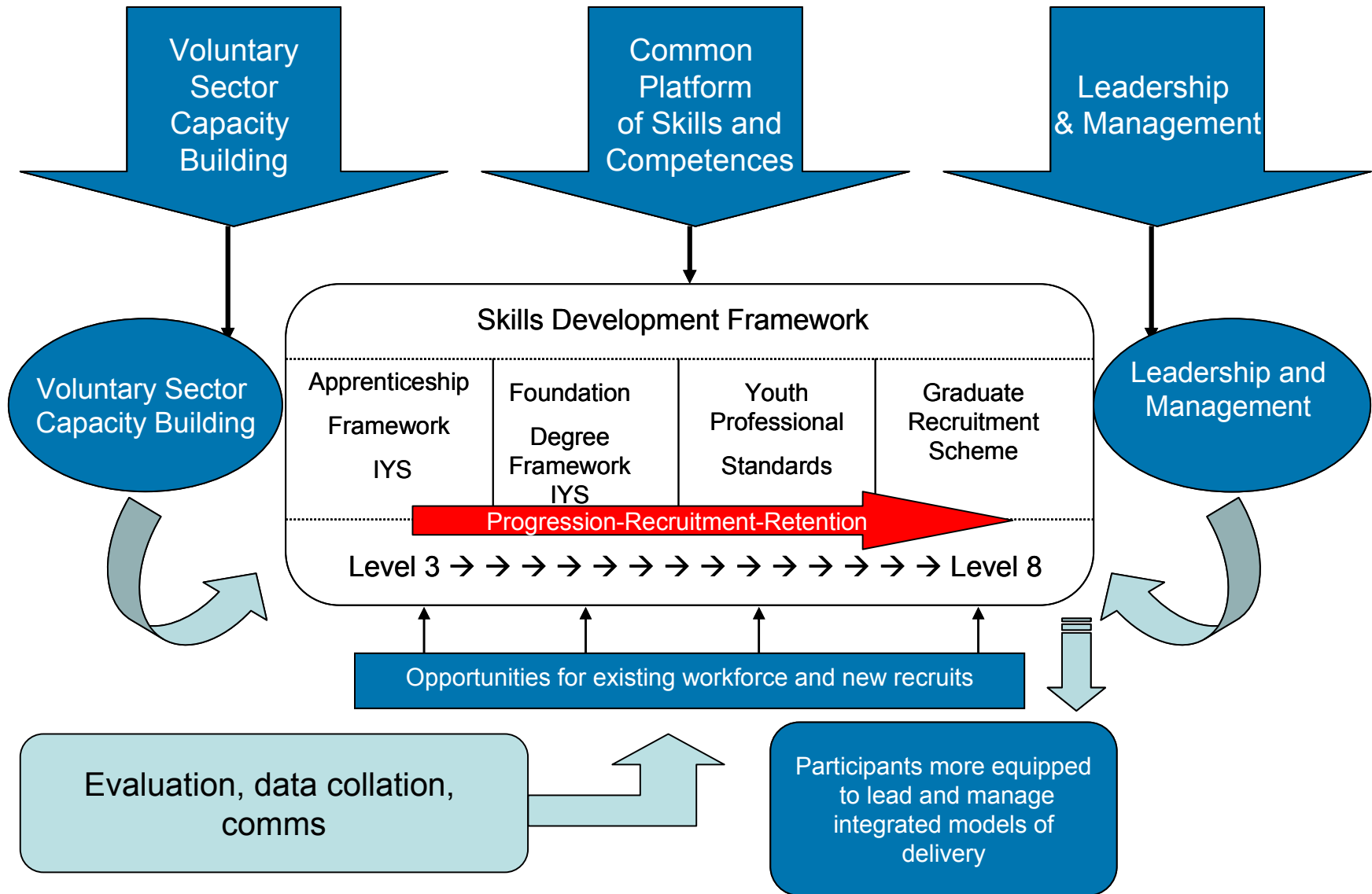
⁷ Op. cit., DCSF, 2007

⁸ Op. cit., DCSF, 2008

⁹ The Children's Workforce Network (CWN) was an alliance of twelve partners, including CWDC, who worked together to support the development of a world-class children's and young people's workforce in England. CWN decided in September 2009 to disband itself. More information is at www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/our-partners/cwn

- The Common Platform strand and its component workstreams: Workforce Development for Integrated Youth Support (WFD for IYS); Skills Development Framework (SDF); Apprenticeship Framework for Integrated Youth Support (AFIYS); and the Foundation Degree Framework for Working Together for Young People (FD Framework).

Figure 1.1 Diagrammatic representation of the YPWRP (Source: CWDC)



The cross-cutting themes of communications and data collection (comprising the production of State of the Young People's Workforce Reports¹⁰) are also part of the evaluation scope.

1.2 Evaluation approach and methodology

To develop a comprehensive and coherent approach to evaluating the YPWRP at the programme, strand and workstream levels, in addition to evaluating the programme's cross-cutting elements, an evaluation framework was developed at the outset of the work. This framework set out the evaluation approach at each of these 'levels', along with the approach to evaluating the YPWRP's cross-cutting elements. In doing so the framework included: analysis of the 'theory of change'¹¹ relating to the programme, its component strands, workstreams and cross cutting themes; 'key research questions' in respect of each of these elements; and the main methodological approaches to be used to address these questions.

To help illustrate the intended outcomes of the YPWRP's strands and workstreams, 'logic models' taken from the framework to provide a diagrammatic representation of the 'theory of change' are included in the chapters that follow. The logic models describe the context and rationale for the strands and workstreams, the inputs and key activities involved, and the outputs, outcomes and impacts intended to stem from them. The logic models thus provide a focus for assessing the degree to which intended outputs, outcomes and impacts were met. To further inform understanding of the evaluation focus, a brief description of the approach to evaluating the strands and workstreams is offered in each chapter that follows.

The information presented in the logic models was derived from a review of programme documentation supplied by CWDC. This review included the April 2009 Implementation Plan for the YPWRP, along with other planning and implementation materials relating to the strands and workstreams involved. The logic models formed part of the evaluation framework developed to guide the research and which was agreed with CWDC prior to commencing the evaluation.

The research informing the evaluation was divided into two main phases. Phase one led to the production of an interim evaluation report, focused principally on the YPWRP's design and development, implementation and consideration of outcomes to November 2010. Production of the interim report was intended to contribute to the overall evaluation, and its findings are incorporated into this final evaluation report. Phase two ran until March 2011 and further informs this report. It focused on design and development, implementation and assessment of outcomes at the programme, strand, workstream 'levels' over the YPWRP's lifetime.

¹⁰ The State of the Young People's Workforce Reports are two reports developed to collate data on the young people's workforce. The reports, titled 'A Picture Worth Millions: State of the Young People's Workforce' were produced in 2009 and 2010. The 2009 report is referred to as SYPWR 2009 and the 2010 as SYPWR 2010.

¹¹ Theory of change is an evaluation methodology drawing on work developed in the United States around evaluating community and social programmes. See, for example, Chen H.T. (1990) 'Theory Driven Evaluations' London: Sage. Over the past 15 years it has become widely used in evaluating social and regeneration initiatives in the United Kingdom. See, for example, Mackenzie M. and A. Blamey (2005) 'The practice and the theory: Lessons from the application of a theories of change approach' Evaluation 11: 151-168 and Sullivan et.al. (2002) 'Building collaborative capacity through theories of change: Early lessons from the evaluation of Health Action Zones in England' Evaluation 8: 205-226.

1.2.1 Methodological approach used and specific methodological elements involved

The methodological approach to evaluating the YPWRP at each of the levels described is summarised in the table on pages six and seven, including detail of the research undertaken in phase one and that completed in phase two. Given the limited extent to which the intended outcomes of the YPWRP could be quantified, a broadly qualitative approach was identified through development of the evaluation framework as the most appropriate mechanism for addressing issues around design, development and implementation and assessing outcomes.

Semi-structured interviews with a range of programme stakeholders, informed by a series of bespoke topic guides, was the main methodological element used. This was identified as the most appropriate approach for gathering the views of a range of stakeholder groups in respect of each YPWRP element within the evaluation scope. 203 interviews were undertaken, a detailed breakdown which for each YPWRP element is provided in the summary table below.

These interviews were supplemented by Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI)¹² surveys using a random sample of participants for two YPWRP elements – the VSCB and WFD for IYS workstreams – where a significant, identifiable and accessible number of beneficiaries were supported. The CATI interviews used structured questionnaires comprising predominantly 'closed' questions, inviting respondents to rate aspects of their experience, with a smaller number of 'open' questions to explore responses in more detail. This enabled additional perceptual evidence to be gathered to complement that accessed in stakeholder interviews.

A small number of focus groups and observation at consultation and review events were further methodological elements used for some workstreams. The events provided an opportunity to use observation to supplement the stakeholder interviews, hence providing the evaluators with a chance to gain a sense of additional stakeholder and workforce perceptions on two YPWRP workstreams – SDF and AFIYS. Focus groups were used as part of evaluating the VSCB workstream as a resource efficient mechanism for gathering the views of a particular group of stakeholders key to the workstream's implementation. The focus groups used a semi-structured topic guide to facilitate discussion, while an observation 'pro-forma' was prepared to enable researchers to record aspects of the consultation and review events they attended.

Finally, desk review of additional information relevant to the programme and its component elements was undertaken. Where applicable (see table below), this comprised:

- Feedback from organisations and individuals connected to the programme.
- Additional evaluative reports and materials produced by programme contractors.
- A review of quantitative data relating to achievement of programme outputs.
- Assessment and incorporation of findings from a report produced by the Institute of Local Government (InLoGov) at the University of Birmingham which evaluated the impact of the Leadership and Management programmes run under the YPWRP.¹³

¹² CATI surveys involve the use of computer software to assist with the delivery and 'routing' of questionnaires.

¹³ The InLoGov report, Young People's Workforce Leadership and Management Development Programmes Final Report: Assessing the Impact of the Investment in Leadership and Management Development of the Young People's Workforce, is available as a separate appendix to this report.

Table 1.1 Summary of methodological elements at programme, strand and workstream level

Evaluation Level	Key Methodological Elements	Number of Interviews	Split between Phases
Overall programme level	<p>In depth face to face / telephone interviews with a selection of high level stakeholders, including representatives from the Department for Education, CWDC, Sector Skills Councils, trade unions, and representative organisations connected to the young people's workforce.</p> <p>Repeat of interviews with same stakeholders in phase two to gather additional evidence on programme level outcomes.</p> <p>Aggregation of evidence from strand and workstream level evaluative activity.</p>	23	<p>Phase One – 13</p> <p>Phase Two – 10</p> <p>(reduction in phase two due to availability)</p>
Leadership and Management strand level	<p>In depth face to face / telephone interviews with stakeholders including members of the Leadership and Management reference group, representatives of the programme delivery contractor and partners, trainers delivering the programmes.</p> <p>Six case study visits in localities where the programmes ran including interviews with senior staff (Directors / Heads of Service and equivalents), participants in the programmes, and their colleagues).</p> <p>Review of programme MI and incorporation of additional evaluation evidence in programme contractor and InLoGov report on the evaluation of the Leadership and Management programmes.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>36</p>	<p>Phase One – 9</p> <p>Phase Two – 8</p> <p>Phase Two - 36</p>
Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand level	<p>In depth face to face / telephone interviews with stakeholders involved with the VSCB workstream –delivery contractor and national delivery partners, representatives of the national training organisations delivering places, regional delivery agents, and representatives of organisations receiving support to become accredited training providers.</p> <p>Two focus groups with regional delivery agents involved with the VSCB workstream.</p> <p>Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) survey of a sample of 205 respondents receiving training through the voluntary sector capacity building workstream.</p> <p>Telephone interviews with trainers who were trained to deliver the training within the VSCB workstream.</p> <p>Collation and aggregation of wider evidence relating to the voluntary sector capacity building strand's intended outcomes gathered from other YPWRP evaluative activity to add to the available evidence base.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>12 participants</p> <p>205</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Phase One – 7</p> <p>Phase Two – 11</p> <p>Phase One – 5</p> <p>Phase Two – 7</p> <p>Phase Two – 205</p> <p>Phase Two – 5</p>
Common Platform of Skills and Competences strand level	<p>In depth face to face / telephone interviews with a selection of high level stakeholders.</p> <p>Repeat of interviews with the same stakeholders in phase two to gather additional evidence on Common Platform strand level outcomes – seven interviews</p> <p>Aggregation of evidence from Common Platform workstream level evaluative activity (see rows below).</p>	16	<p>Phase One – 9</p> <p>Phase Two – 7</p> <p>(reduction in phase two due to availability)</p>
Workforce Development for	In depth telephone interviews with WFD for IYS consortia leads.	9	Phase One – 9

Evaluation Level	Key Methodological Elements	Number of Interviews	Split between Phases
Integrated Youth Support workstream level	Visits to a selection of five of the nine WFD for IYS consortia areas involving interviews with consortia leads and partners, participants being supported to take Advanced Apprenticeships (AAs), Foundation Degrees (FDs), and post-graduate qualifications through the workstream, individuals mentoring the participants, and employers providing placements for the participants. Assessment of performance against planned outputs from the workstream.	41	Phase Two – 41
	CATI survey of a sample of participants who received support to undertake AAs (46 participants), FDs (41 participants), and post-graduate qualifications (16 participants).	103	Phase Two – 103
Apprenticeship and Advanced Apprenticeship for Integrated Youth Support workstream level	In depth telephone / face-to-face interviews with stakeholders (comprising members of the reference group established to assist with framework development, representatives from relevant SSCs, representatives from the contractor involved in developing the Apprenticeship framework). N.B. planned interviews in phase two cancelled due to delay in progressing the workstream. Observation at two consultation events held to inform the development of the framework – capturing data / evidence on the process involved and views emerging around the Apprenticeships Framework.	4	Phase One – 4 Observations in phase one
Foundation Degree Framework for the Young People's Workforce workstream level	In depth telephone / face-to-face interviews with stakeholders (drawn from members of the working group established to assist with framework development; representatives from relevant SSCs or sectoral bodies; and representatives from the contractor involved in developing the framework). Desk review of outputs from the online consultation process and working group set up to support the development and implementation of the framework.	9	Phase One – 3 Phase Two – 6
Skills Development Framework (SDF) workstream level	In depth telephone / face to face interviews with stakeholders from: relevant SSCs and sectoral bodies; reference groups which played a role in the process of developing the SDF; and wider stakeholders – e.g. statutory and voluntary sector service representatives, representative organisations from the youth sector. Use of consultations developed for other elements of the Common Platform strand (e.g. workforce development for IYS) to gather views on the SDF and its potential impact. Observation at two consultation events held as part of the ongoing process of SDF development – capturing data / evidence on the process involved and views emerging around the framework. Desk review of any additional information and documentation produced as part of the ongoing development and implementation of the SDF.	19	Phase One – 9 Phase Two – 10 Observations in phase one
Communications cross-cutting theme	In depth face to face stakeholder interviews individuals having a closely involved with communications activity. Use of methodologies and approaches developed for evaluating the YPWRP and its constituent strands and workstreams as a mechanism for capturing additional evidence around communications activity.	3	Phase One – 2 Phase Two – 1
Data collection cross-cutting theme	In depth telephone and face to face stakeholder interviews with three 3 individuals involved with the production of the State of the Young People's Workforce Reports – two in phase one, one in phase two. Use of methodologies and approaches developed for evaluating the YPWRP and its constituent strands and workstreams as a mechanism for capturing additional evidence around communications activity.	3	Phase One – 2 Phase Two – 1

1.2.2 Sampling and analysis

Selection of interviewees for the semi-structured interviews was undertaken by the evaluators in collaboration with CWDC and contractors supporting delivery of the workstreams concerned (where relevant). Interviewees were purposively selected with the main criteria being the potential to offer objective and relevant knowledge and perceptions of the YPWRP overall, or the strand / workstream concerned, allied to ensuring a balance of relevant stakeholder groups.

The need to protect the anonymity of interviewees means that throughout the report direct quotations have been attributed in such a way as to provide as much detail as possible on the position of the interviewees, and their relationship to the programme, whilst not making those providing quotations identifiable. As a result, where there are limited numbers of interviewees who may be identifiable given their close relationship with a particular aspect of the YPWRP, as is the case with programme and Common Platform level stakeholders, details on roles are withheld.

To maximise available resources, interviews were not transcribed but a combination of note-taking and recording was used. The interviews, along with the focus groups and event observations, were fully written up to facilitate analysis. First stage thematic analysis of interviews, where applicable segmented by stakeholder group, was undertaken at the programme, strand and workstream levels using standard qualitative analysis 'grids' analysed by topic guide question. A second stage of analysis brought together the findings in respect of each aspect of the YPWRP being evaluated, including incorporation of focus group and observation findings. As applicable, findings from the CATI surveys (see below) and findings from the desk based review elements described were also incorporated.

Respondents for the CATI interviews were selected randomly from lists of programme participants supplied by the relevant programme contractors in each instance. In the case of the 103 CATI interviews undertaken for the WFD for IYS strand (see table below) minimum quotas were attached to participants being supported to take Advanced Apprenticeships (45 interviews), those taking Foundation Degrees (40 interviews), and those taking post-graduate qualifications through a Graduate Recruitment Scheme (GRS) (15 interviews). This was intended to broadly reflect the numerical split of the different types of participant supported by the workstream. The CATI interviews were analysed through production of summary response tables for the closed questions, allied to a thematic analysis of responses to the open questions.

In the final analysis stage key findings at the workstream level, along with those relating to the YPWRP's cross cutting elements, were aggregated to inform final assessments at the strand and programme levels. Thus, findings relating to the various workstreams under the Common Platform strand were combined with dedicated strand level interviews to form the overall strand level assessment. Likewise, a set of dedicated programme level interviews were supplemented by findings from the strand and workstream level evaluations to assess the YPWRP overall.

1.3 Report Structure

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter two** focuses on the Leadership and Management strand.
- **Chapter three** examines the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand.
- **Chapter four** covers the Common Platform of Skills and Competences strand, including a focus on its component workstreams:
 - ▶ Workforce Development for Integrated Youth Support.
 - ▶ Skills Development Framework.
 - ▶ Apprenticeship and Advanced Apprenticeship for Integrated Youth Support.
 - ▶ Foundation Degree Framework for the Young People's Workforce.
- **Chapter five** focuses on the YPWRP's cross cutting elements – communications and the production of the State of the Young People's Workforce Reports.
- **Chapter six** examines the YPWRP at the overall programme level.
- **Chapter seven** concludes the report by summarising key overall findings and offering some concluding remarks.

2.0 Leadership and Management Strand

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Overview of the Leadership and Management Strand

The strand comprised three main programmes – the Management Development Programme (MDP), Leadership Development Programme (LDP), and Leadership Enhancement Programme (LEP). Each was designed to provide management and leadership training specific to the young people's workforce. The intent behind the strand and each of the programmes was to improve joint working between universal and targeted sections of the workforce and between the voluntary and statutory sectors. Equipping participants to manage change was also a key objective. For each of the programmes participation was entirely voluntary.

The MDP aimed to train over 5000 frontline managers within the young people's workforce. It included an element to support the development of integrated or joint working at locality levels – the MDP Locality Teams extension (abbreviated to MDP-LT to clarify when this is under discussion). The LDP aimed to develop new and future leaders, with a target of providing 300 training places to managers in senior and strategic roles who had the potential to enter formal leadership positions. The LEP sought to support strategic leaders in integrated youth support settings to develop their roles, and to address challenges faced in their areas (each Local Authority participant on the programme worked with a voluntary sector counterpart).

2.1.2 Approach to evaluating the Leadership and Management strand

The diagram on page 12 traces out the 'theory of change' behind the Leadership and Management strand. In doing so it identifies the strand's key activities, inputs, outputs, and intended outcomes and impacts. This provides a basis for evaluating the strand and its component programmes. To inform the evaluation, strand specific in-depth telephone and face to face interviews were undertaken with 17 stakeholders, including members of the Leadership and Management reference group, representatives of the programme delivery contractor and partners, and trainers delivering the programmes. Where applicable, evidence from high level stakeholders interviewed in respect of the programme overall, are taken into account.

Case study visits were also undertaken in phase two of the research to assess outcomes for participants and on wider service delivery in six Local Authority areas. Each visit included interviews with senior staff (Directors / Heads of Service and equivalents), along with participants in the programmes and their colleagues.¹⁴ A total of 36 interviews were undertaken, including 17 MDP participants, six LDP participants and six LEP participants. Finally, the evaluation also incorporates additional evidence from reports produced by the main delivery contractor for the programmes and an evaluation produced for the contractor by InLoGov.¹⁵

¹⁴ Areas visited were selected to avoid areas where InLoGov had undertaken fieldwork for their evaluation, along with selecting areas where all three Leadership and Management programmes operated.

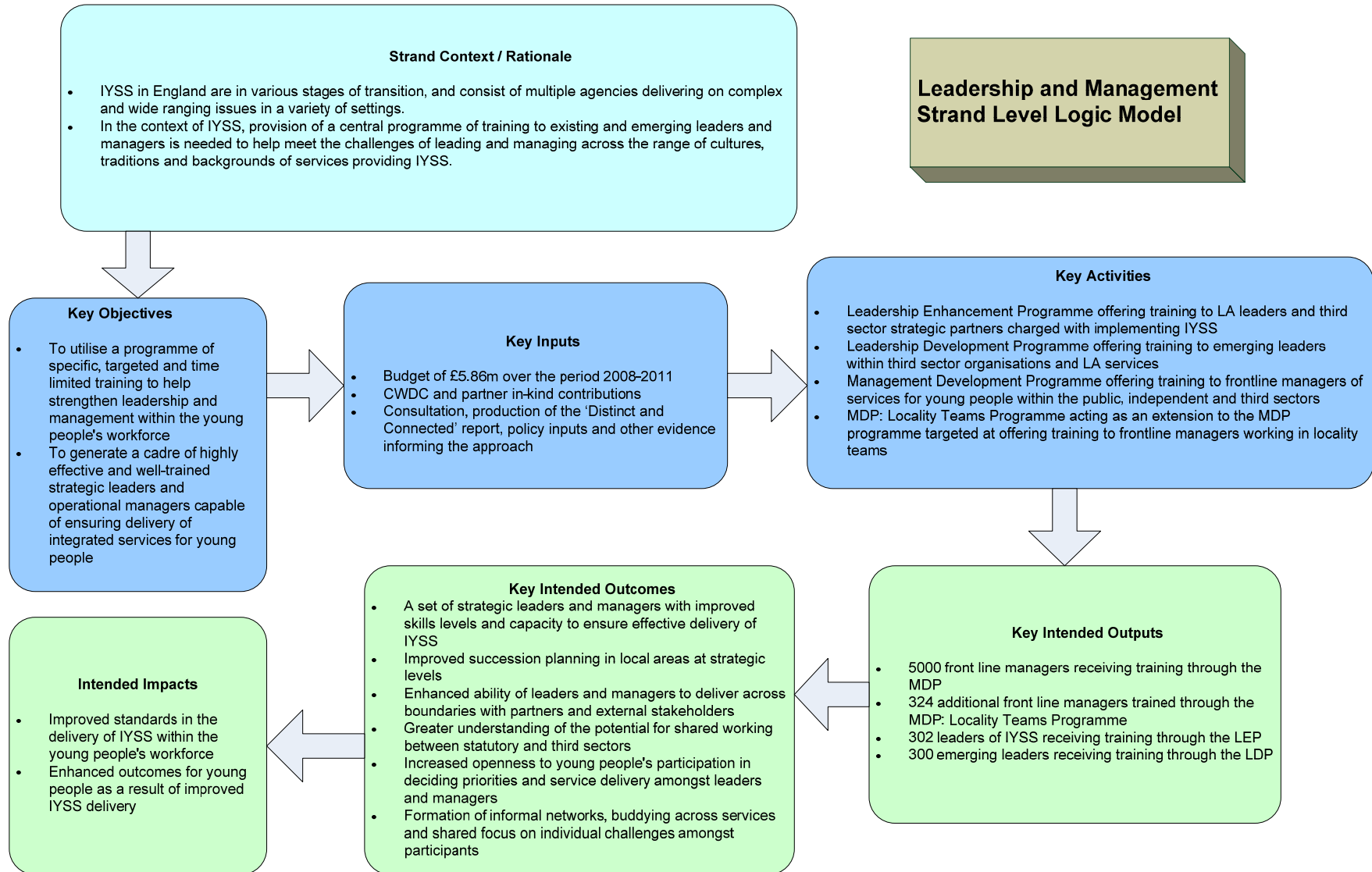
¹⁵ The Institute of Local Government Studies report is available as a separate appendix to this report.

2.1.3 Chapter Outline

The remainder of the chapter considers:

- Design, implementation and performance of the strand.
- The outcomes that can be attributed to the strand.
- Sustainability and legacy considerations relating to these outcomes.
- Conclusions from evaluating the strand, with reference to its intended outcomes and impacts.

Figure 2.1 Leadership and Management strand level logic model



2.2 Design of the Leadership and Management strand

Evidence suggests that the approach taken to designing the Leadership and Management strand was very much in line with requirements to develop capacity and succession planning at higher levels within the workforce. Stakeholders with knowledge of initial design and development offered almost universally positive views. In particular, interviewees felt that there was effective use of consultation and evidence. As such, producing and acting upon the 'Distinct and Connected'¹⁶ report on leadership and management in the young people's workforce was widely seen as significant. Equally, in respect of the YPWRP overall, the decision to prioritise the strand early on in the programme was noted as logical and appropriate.

In the main, interviewees at the strand and overall YPWRP programme level also felt that the suite of programmes developed formed a coherent overall approach to leadership and management skills. In particular, the combination of addressing frontline management skills and higher level strategic leadership and management skills was felt to be sensible and appropriate. Specific aspects to the design and development of the strand viewed positively, or cited as effective by these interviewees, included:

- Designing the strand and its component programmes to bring together individuals working in different sectors, with the aim of facilitating the sharing of ideas. The LEP requiring statutory sector participants to identify a voluntary sector partner was seen as positive here.
- The focus on designing an approach which sought to include the voluntary and statutory sectors, and which aimed at facilitating joint working and cross-fertilisation of ideas.
- Developing a series of linked programmes, each with a clear focus and target group.

The case study visits in phase two provided the opportunity to test elements of these stakeholder perceptions in terms of the relevance of the programmes, in addition to looking at the demand for them. The visits demonstrated that the programmes were collectively welcomed by voluntary and statutory sector participants at all levels, and were seen as offering relevant and specific management training that would otherwise have been unavailable or difficult to access. In one area, the Director of Youth Services noted that in the absence of the initiative a programme would have had to have been put together locally. While it was acknowledged that this was possible, it was also noted that such an approach would have led to fewer staff from a more limited range of organisations benefitting at a greater cost to the Local Authority. Also, combining statutory and voluntary sector participants in pairs in the LEP was again viewed as innovative and beneficial by participants and those at Director or 'Head of Service' level.

2.3 Ongoing development, implementation and performance

2.3.1 Ongoing development of the Leadership and Management programmes

In general, stakeholders consulted specifically about the Leadership and Management strand, along with those interviewed about the YPWRP at the programme level, were very positive

¹⁶ Distinct and Connected, National Youth Agency and CWDC, 2008

about the role played by the delivery contractors and partners in developing and fine tuning the Leadership and Management programmes. Specific aspects viewed as positive by those consulted in terms of the detailed design of the programmes included the following:

- The way in which the programmes were explicitly designed to provide participants with the space to think and engage with issues they faced in an iterative fashion.
- The incorporation of site visits and exchanges in a 'learning by observing' fashion.
- The relevance of the programmes to actual practice.
- The focus on linking participation to the potential of accreditation.
- Piloting aspects of the programmes, and receiving feedback, to influence full roll out.
- The time taken to ensure that as far as possible the different programmes involved were 'pitched' at the right level and tailored to the groups involved in particular courses.

Again, similar perceptions were offered by those interviewed as part of the case study visits. The specificity to the youth sector and current policy and operating contexts was particularly welcomed both by programme participants and individuals with a strategic or workforce planning role in youth services. A number of participants commented that they had only attended more generic management training in the past, with the tailored, focused and context specific aspects to the programmes being favourably compared to this. The case study visits also illustrated the benefits of designing a programme explicitly focused on drawing in a range of sectors and disciplines, a theme discussed further below in terms of outcomes.

Similarly, as discussed in more detail below, it is clear from participants' experiences of the programmes that the time and space to think about practice, the chance to share ideas with others, and opportunities to gain accredited qualifications were viewed positively. There is thus a strong correlation between the sort of stakeholder perceptions concerning the ongoing development and refining of the programmes noted above, and evidence available from participants and those involved in helping roll out the programmes at local levels.

Accepting these broadly positive views, it is clear that a number of difficulties or challenges did occur in terms of developing and fine-tuning the approach taken. These include:

- Contextual factors – for example, variation in the way integrated working was understood and developed in different areas meant that the programmes were seen as facing challenges in terms of gaining a balance between generic and specific content.
- Work pressures and time constraints which meant inevitably that some participants were not able to engage with the programmes to the extent they might.
- Sectoral specificity in terms of the degree to which the programmes were able to be tailored to and reflect the needs of leaders and managers from particular sectors.

While the above issues were identified as challenges, the interviewees who raised them did not feel they affected their overall view of the programmes' design and ongoing development as being appropriate and effective. Rather, the issues were viewed as considerations that might be noted in terms of further development of leadership and management training in the sector. They are thus considered further in section 2.3.3 around potential improvements to any future related leadership and management programmes targeted at the young people's workforce.

2.3.2 Implementation and performance

In general the strand and its component programmes were viewed as having been effectively administered and implemented at all levels – from CWDC through the main delivery contractor to the organisations engaged to act as delivery partners. In particular, the co-ordination and delivery role of the lead contractor was widely recognised as effective. Positive aspects to implementation cited by stakeholders interviewed at the strand and programme level included:

- Commissioning regionally based delivery partners with particular local knowledge and the ability to tap into local networks.
- The openness of the lead contractor to take on board feedback and partner views.
- The ability to adjust courses to suit particular audiences within an overall generic structure.
- The ongoing process of review and refinement of the programmes put in place.

While implementation was reported as having worked well overall stakeholders familiar with the detail of this, notably trainers and representatives of delivery contractors, cited a number of issues and challenges that had arisen.

2.3.2.1 Issues and challenges to implementation

Implementation was affected by the differential rates of change and restructuring occurring in particular parts of the workforce and in different geographical areas. The varying stages of transition implied by this context meant that, for example, the ability to engage and recruit the right individuals to the different programmes was not always straightforward. This was further complicated by other issues around appropriate recruitment and selection. In relation to the LEP difficulties in identifying the key lead for IYSS at the local authority level, when this is not a recognised 'position' were noted. Likewise, the difficulty of encouraging very senior people to commit their time to training of the type offered was seen as a significant challenge. The issue of ensuring the right people at the right level were recruited to the LDP was similarly noted, with having participants at different levels highlighted as a problem in some cases.

While the focus on engaging voluntary sector participants was seen as a strength of the approach taken, identifying potential voluntary sector participants was also noted as a challenge. As a result, more planning time and better intelligence on the voluntary sector and potential participants was suggested, potentially through a process of 'mapping'. There was also widespread recognition that ensuring that voluntary sector participants were appropriate and at the right level for the programmes was always likely to be challenging. In part this was seen as inevitable, given that identifying appropriate participants was always likely to be more difficult than for the statutory sector where job roles and relative seniority are often clearer.

As several of the case study visits revealed, a significant amount of time and effort was also required at the local level to ensure that adequate numbers engaged with the programmes, and that a good spread of disciplines and sectors were involved. Again, this was clearly a particular challenge in respect of the voluntary sector, most notably where the absence of a suitable VCS umbrella organisation made such engagement more time consuming. Similarly, both the stakeholder interviews and case study visits indicated that it was sometimes difficult to ensure an appropriate mix of participants at all programmes.

In terms of implementation 'on the ground', the case study visits indicated the significant role played by local actors in supporting the development and implementation of the programmes. In some instances a workforce development lead took a strong role in working with delivery contractors to co-ordinate programme implementation, while in others the co-ordination of delivery was seen as more down to the delivery contractors themselves. The perception of those areas where a stronger role was taken, generally by youth service workforce development managers, was that this was helpful. Likewise, it was noted that this approach aided the overall strategic use of the programmes to promote positive leadership and management development.

In a limited number of instances, stakeholders and those interviewed as part of the case study visits discussed implementation challenges in respect of the design of the different leadership and management programmes. In respect of the LEP a small number of interviewees, mainly those trainers delivering the programme, felt that the action learning approach was not always the most suitable for all participants. For some trainers this necessitated the development of a more combined approach, complementing the action learning aspect with more standard seminar style input and discussion.

In terms of the MDP, some of those consulted during the case study visits raised the issue that some areas would have benefitted more if they had considered local issues relating to integrated working in a more thoroughgoing way prior to implementation. While this was recognised as partly an issue for the areas themselves, it was also felt that the design of the programme might have been developed in such a way as to more directly encourage and facilitate this. As such, the locality teams extension (MDP – LT) was seen as a good solution.

In general, however, the perspective of some stakeholders was that some areas still missed part of the opportunity offered by the programmes due to a lack of a more strategic approach to implementation. However, this point needs to be balanced against the programmes' voluntary approach to participation and focus on not imposing particular models of IYSS. This meant that influencing the pace and nature of local approaches was beyond their direct remit. Reflecting national policy, the approach was to allow local areas to develop at their own pace in their own ways.

2.3.2.2 Effectiveness of implementation and performance against output targets

Despite the above challenges, the general perspective of those interviewed as part of the stakeholder consultations and case study visits was that implementation of all the programmes had worked well. This impression of effective implementation is supported by the performance of the programmes against their output targets.

The largest target allocation of places was for the MDP. Against a target of 5000 frontline managers to be trained, the programme achieved 5054. The target of 300 emerging leaders to be trained through the LDP was met exactly. Against a target of 324 for the MDP – LT programme 322 places were achieved. The only programme where performance against targets fell somewhat short was the LEP. Not all Local Authority areas chose to participate. In addition, in some areas there were problems in identifying voluntary sector leaders to fulfil the requirement for attendance on the programme to be 'matched'. A total of 234 participants were achieved against a target of 302 as a result of these factors.

Success in delivering the majority of the target outputs further suggests that the structures and approach put in place to support delivery were effective and appropriate. Again, this reflects the general perception of interviewees in this area. The overall impression is thus that the Leadership and Management programmes, and the strand as a whole, were implemented both effectively and efficiently. Accepting this, there were some suggestions around improving design and implementation. These are worth considering to inform any similar initiatives of this kind that might be developed in future.

2.3.3 Potential approaches to developing and implementing similar initiatives in the future

Suggestions made around improving design and implementation relate to five main areas:

1. More tailoring to local contexts. This perception was particularly common amongst those MDP participants consulted, alongside some of the stakeholders involved in development and implementation. The view of one MDP participant is illustrative of this, along with the view that any future programme would benefit from senior engagement to inform local tailoring:

"...the course was great, but before it's run again there should be a session with senior managers to get at the local context, policy and vision." (Youth Service Provision Manager, MDP participant).

In a related way, the Head of IYSS in one area visited noted that if similar programmes were to run again, they would like to see local areas commission these with a focus on local needs and context. Where stakeholders had experience of the Locality Teams approach (MDP – LT) they were generally positive with regard to the degree it was able to address these issues.

2. More time and better planning before the roll-out of the programmes in local areas. This relates to the perception, discussed in terms of outcomes below, that the overall strategic gains in localities were not always maximised. The view was that the slightly ad-hoc roll out of the MDP programme in some areas visited meant that it was difficult to strategically plan for and ensure cross sector representation. In one instance, six MDP cohorts were run in an area but availability and timings were only indicated on a cohort by cohort basis. The perception was that if the series of programmes had been announced in advance participants could have been chosen more strategically at the Local Authority level; that is, on a cross-sectoral locality basis.

3. Examining whether the voluntary accreditation element should be made mandatory and integral to such programmes. The perception was that this would help protect the time of participants to seek accreditation through training in light of the greater demands this involves. It was also seen as potentially contributing to individuals' personal commitment in this area, and to ensuring the support of sponsoring organisations for full accreditation to be gained.

4. Implementation of a clearer and more detailed articulation of the national (policy) context as regards integrated or joint working. There was a feeling that the MDP in particular would have benefitted from this. While it was recognised that there was no single firm 'model' or 'blueprint' for targeted youth support or joint working, nonetheless some greater emphasis on a national overview was cited as being potentially useful. This view was articulated

both by senior managers who had an overview of people attending the MDP, as well as MDP attendees themselves.

5. The need to take greater care over the composition of cohorts for particular courses.

While not a commonly raised issue, in some instances participants on the MDP noted that their line manager had been on the programme with them, and that this had potential implications for people's ability to be open and honest.

2.4 Outcomes from the Leadership and Management strand

Phase one of the research gave some indications about the nature of outcomes stemming from the Leadership and Management strand. However, given the limited number and scope of the phase one stakeholder interviews, evidence relating to outcomes was largely anecdotal. The predominant view was that outcomes were largely positive, but that fully quantifying and evidencing these was difficult. Outcomes that were discussed principally related to:

- Positive feedback provided by programme participants relating to their views on the training (though there was an acceptance that identifying ongoing outcomes was limited).
- Raising awareness of the need for succession planning within services and the potential for progression amongst participants.
- Promoting joint working, particularly between the statutory and voluntary sectors.
- Improved service delivery (though this was restricted to a view that the programmes would be likely to lead to this rather than that they definitely had).

As intended, the case study visits and other stakeholder interviews in phase two of the research proved a much more fertile source of evidence around outcomes. The interviews and visits highlighted and enabled discussion around a series of outcomes, reflecting those illustrated in the diagram on page 12, in the following areas:

- The experience of participating in the programmes.
- Outcomes for individuals participating in the programmes.
- Impacts on the colleagues of participating individuals.
- Outcomes resulting from the collective impact of running the programmes in localities.
- Impacts on the delivery of services, and by extension, on young people.
- Strategic impacts around workforce development and planning in particular localities.

2.4.1 Experiences of programme participants

The case study visits provided the opportunity to discuss experiences with a range of voluntary and statutory sector participants across the LEP (six interviewees), LDP (six interviewees), and MDP (17 interviewees) programmes. In addition, several of the stakeholders interviewed had also attended the programmes. In general, the interviews illustrated that participants had very positive experiences. Key findings in respect of each programme are illustrated in turn below.

2.4.1.1 Management Development Programme

Views of participants with regard to their overall experience of attending the programme were almost universally positive. The comments of two of the participants interviewed illustrate this:

"It was one of the most worthwhile six days I have spent on a learning activity". (Frontline manager in statutory youth services).

"The ... training was the best training I ever had. I learnt more in six days than in six months on my xxxx course". (Frontline manager in statutory youth services).

In terms of particular elements of the MDP, the distance learning materials and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) were generally viewed positively. However, it was clear that in some cases time pressures and reluctance to use IT based resources meant that participants did not gain as much from this as they might have done. Amongst those with favourable views on the materials, one frontline manager from an education welfare services team noted that the delivery of learning materials in this way was "...forward thinking..." and "...efficient...", commenting that the materials had provided a gateway to obtaining further information. Where participants had engaged with the materials and viewed them positively, several noted that they continue to use them and find them to be a beneficial reference point on an ongoing basis.

The face-to-face modules delivered within the MDP were frequently cited as the most beneficial aspect of the programme by participants, and the tutors delivering these were also commonly praised. Several participants used the word 'brilliant' to describe their views on the course modules. In respect of tutors, one statutory sector participant noted that the tutor was "...a great facilitator with great experience...", while another commented that the course tutor "...brought the best out of us and really enthused us". Several interviewees from the voluntary sector also commented that they felt the course delivery was tailored and delivered in such a way as to be inclusive and relevant to their needs. The use of young people as trainers as part of the course delivery element of the MDP was also positively remarked upon. As one participant noted:

"...it hit home that young people need to be involved in all aspects of what we do". (Voluntary sector youth service manager)

It was also clear that participants commonly felt that the programme was beneficial in terms of allowing the time and space for reflection outside of the pressures of their everyday work, in addition to enabling them to discuss issues with peers from different sectors and disciplines. The comment made by one participant typifies this frequently expressed view:

"It was a real luxury to spend time out, to stand back and think with people with whom I wouldn't otherwise have contact with". (Frontline manager in statutory youth services).

Although some MDP participants interviewed had gone on to gain an accredited qualification as part of the programme, it was clear that other participants found this difficult for several reasons. These included time pressures stemming from work or family commitments, a perceived lack of support and / or willingness from line managers to free up time, a feeling that they were not capable of undertaking the formal accreditation element, and lack of relevance to their work.

Where participants did go on to gain accreditation views were again broadly positive, though it was commonly noted that it had been difficult, required commitment, and was a lot of work.

As the above analysis suggests, views on the MDP itself were largely positive. However, a small number of participants did express more negative views. In one instance this was related to the feeling of a participant from a voluntary sector organisation that she was "...out of my depth..." in respect of course content and level, while in another case the participant found it difficult to relate the course to her job role in a small voluntary sector advisory organisation.

2.4.1.2 Leadership Development Programme

Those participants interviewed were similarly positive overall to the individuals who had undertaken the MDP. Again, the opportunity to share practice and discuss ideas relating to service delivery with peers was particularly valued. As one interviewee noted:

"It was an opportunity to test out ideas ... what might work or not work, with people who are doing the job in different parts of the country". (Youth Service Manager, statutory sector).

In terms of specific elements of the LDP, the use of a 360 degree feedback process to engage colleagues for their views on participants was well received and cited as a useful aspect. Commonly this was welcomed from the perspective of informing views on the management style of participants, what they might need to change, and how this could be improved. In one instance this process was seen as central in informing a participant's establishment of a leadership development action plan which included improving work with colleagues, specific plans for engaging secondary schools, and identifying priorities for strategic planning initiatives.

The face-to-face sessions were viewed by participants as being well facilitated and particularly beneficial in allowing exchanges of views and ideas. The course modules themselves were similarly positively viewed, though in one case an interviewee noted that he did not always feel sufficiently stretched. However, this view was in the minority and is likely to reflect the difficulty (noted earlier in respect of implementation) of developing such courses that are able to meet the needs of individuals with different knowledge bases and levels of experience.

As with the MDP, the elements of the programme that participants engaged with less were those more vulnerable to time pressures and other commitments. Some interviewees made use of the reflective journal element of the programme, one noting that this "...helped me be a theorist – reflector..." (LDP participant, statutory sector). However, for a number of those consulted this aspect was seen as difficult to engage with due to time pressures and / or a feeling that concentrating on other aspects of the programme would be more beneficial. In addition, one interviewee felt that they would have gained more from the journal if use of it had been tied in more closely to face-to-face sessions with the course tutor.

2.4.1.3 Leadership Enhancement Programme

In the main, views on the LEP mirrored those on the MDP and LDP around the positive experience of participants on the course. Again, the sharing of ideas between peers was often noted as being particularly positive, with one interviewee commenting on the benefits of "...participants taking the opportunity to build relationships..." (LEP participant, statutory sector). Within this, the pairing of attendees from the statutory and voluntary sectors was noted as being

helpful in being able to discuss and consider the interface between the two sectors. Similarly, the action learning approach was viewed by most interviewees as a beneficial, suitable and / or appropriate mechanism to support these aspects.

The LEP face-to-face sessions were positively viewed by most participants. The point was made that tutors were aware of and sensitive to the fact that programme participants were likely to bring with them considerable experience of integrated working and high level leadership. Most interviewees had made use of the VLE and course materials and found them helpful and appropriate. One participant reported using the materials outside of the programme to inform work on a Masters Degree. Again, in a minority of cases time pressures meant that participants found the VLE and its materials to be less useful or beneficial. As one interviewee outlined:

"The use of the virtual learning environment came with a huge number of assumptions and expectations that you would visit the site and work through the materials systematically ... Yet the pace of the operational change is such that the demands of everyday make this unrealistic". (LEP participant, voluntary sector).

Only in one case was an interviewee less positive in respect of the LEP overall. In this instance, the individual felt that the action learning approach focused too much on sharing views and experiences, rather than on strategy and developing solutions. As such, the programme was seen as too much of a "...talking shop..." and as a result a "...missed opportunity...". However, even in this case the individual concerned did note separately that they had felt benefits from participation in terms of enhancing relationships with their statutory sector partner on the programme, and through having the opportunity to take time out and reflect on issues.

2.4.2 Outcomes for individuals participating in the programmes

Across the three programmes, the majority of those interviewed reported highly positive outcomes as a result of participation. Very few interviewees felt that there had been little or no positive outcome from participation. The outcomes considered closely relate to the intended strand outcomes around improved skills and capacity of leaders and managers, and the ability to deliver services more effectively, illustrated in the logic model diagram on page 12. Types of outcomes examined are as follows:

- Increased confidence in undertaking management and leadership roles.
- Encouragement and space for self reflection resulting in perceived improvements in personal effectiveness.
- Greater knowledge of different management and leadership styles leading to an ability to be more flexible in addressing the needs of different situations.
- Enhanced aspirations for progression.
- Contributions to personal achievements such as promotion, gaining a new job or retaining jobs in the context of restructuring processes.

Perceptions of increased confidence and understanding of management and leadership were very commonly cited outcomes across all programmes, though particularly in relation to MDP and LDP participants. As one interviewee noted:

“The course made me realise that there are different styles of management and how I can support staff more effectively”. (Frontline manager in statutory youth services, MDP participant).

Enhanced understanding of the distinction between management and leadership was noted by several LDP participants, while for MDP participants exposure to different management ideas and styles was seen as a key benefit likely to influence how they undertook their roles. In one instance this was expressed in terms of the MDP offering new techniques and insights into how to manage people, while for another the effect of the course was to:

“...take the reins off my management style ... I have learned to trust staff more rather than micro-manage, to let the staff develop for themselves”. (Frontline manager in statutory youth services, MDP participant).

Participants in all three programmes also frequently linked the ability to 'step back' or take time out from their day-to-day responsibilities with greater understanding, self reflection, and as a result increased effectiveness in their managerial or leadership role. Enhanced interest in, or aspirations for, progression was also a common outcome discussed, particularly those who had undertaken the LDP but also amongst MDP participants. LDP participants discussed how the course had equipped them with a broader perspective on managing services which would serve them well from a progression standpoint. In addition, one participant outlined how the course had led to an increase in her level of confidence to seek more senior positions, resulting in being promoted to a children's services post at Assistant Director Level.

Where participants felt that there had been little impact on their aspirations for progression or confidence in their ability to progress this tended to be related to the fact they were nearing retirement, or that the external environment and restructuring within services meant that such progression was not realistic. One MDP participant in the statutory sector noted that, while they found the course "motivating", "...when you come back you face the reality - that reality being the uncertainty of service continuity and continuing employment". In a minority of cases, while acknowledging the positive impact of the training participants felt that the experience had simply not affected their attitudes to progression.

Although for most participants across the programmes a key outcome was around enhancing knowledge and understanding of leadership and management, this was not universal. In particular, views on this varied more amongst LDP and LEP participants. In several cases where LDP and LEP participants did not think their participation had notable impacts on their own understanding, this was because they already felt experienced in this area and / or had studied theoretical models of leadership and attended previous related courses.

While only offering a snapshot of outcomes for individuals in terms of the numbers of participants interviewed, the above analysis suggests that the programmes have had a range of positive and significant impacts. In addition, the findings around impacts on individuals strongly correlate with those in the InLoGov report referred to earlier. Based on interviews with 97 participants across all programmes, the InLoGov study indicates that just under three-quarters felt the courses enabled them to take positive steps to improve management and leadership of

integrated services. Likewise, nine out of ten participants identified specific positive changes to their leadership and management approach stemming from their participation.¹⁷

2.4.3 Impacts on the colleagues of participating individuals

Interviews with colleagues of participants were used where possible to investigate whether they had picked up on any changes in management and leadership approaches amongst those participants. In some instances interviewees found this difficult to assess as isolating course impacts from organic changes in their relationship with the participant concerned was problematic. Several interviewees did feel that identifiable changes had occurred however. One interviewee noted that supervision sessions were now:

"...more structured, we both are more prepared for the meeting, more focused on the key issues, rather than finding the focus while in the meeting". (Youth Services Project Officer, statutory sector, colleague of LDP participant).

Other colleagues similarly commented on changes in supervisory practice, with one noting that they now felt "...more valued...". For others, the courses were perceived to have reinforced what was already effective practice on the part of their colleagues and / or having led to the use of new practices and approaches. While the case study visits were only able to offer an impression of effects on colleagues stemming from participation, it should be noted that none of the interviewees consulted reported negative impacts or outcomes.

2.4.4 Outcomes resulting from the collective impact of running the L&M programmes within particular localities

One of the themes explored in the case study visits concerned how far identifiable collective outcomes within particular areas could be observed as a result of running one or more of the programmes. This relates to the intended strand impact around improving delivery standards in the context of IYSS, and intended outcomes around encouraging the formation of networks and partnerships along with enhancing service delivery across sectoral and workforce boundaries.

While most interviewees felt sure that there would have been impacts in these areas, this was sometimes seen as either difficult to evidence or quantify. However, in a number of instances concrete examples of impacts were offered. These encompassed the creation and development of partnerships and networks, an increase in joint and integrated working leading to particular outcomes, and enhanced relationships and understanding between key agencies in the locality leading to identifiable results. In this, the visits again confirm the findings of the InLoGov study, wherein outcomes around building new relationships and improved understanding between the various managers and sectors providing services for young people were cited as the biggest single impact from the programmes.¹⁸

In several cases the stronger links developed between the statutory and voluntary sectors were cited as a positive (collective) outcome. For one Director of IYSS, the programmes were viewed as having collectively contributed to what he termed as the "...creation of an environment..." to

¹⁷ See Institute for Local Government Studies report, available as a separate appendix to this report.

¹⁸ Ibid.

explore the potential for shared working between the statutory and voluntary sectors. In another area, an LEP participant from the statutory sector noted that:

“I used the course primarily as an opportunity to explore the potential relationships between the County Council and the Children and Young People’s Partnership [voluntary sector umbrella organisation]”. (LEP participant, statutory sector)

This led to a joint development paper on the future of strategic planning between the two sectors, ensuring that the voluntary sector was integrated into the council’s strategic planning for children and young people and that their role on the Children’s Trust Board was maximised.

Several interviewees referred to the programmes as having contributed to the creation of beneficial new networks and partnerships. In one instance, a voluntary sector MDP participant reported that the course led to a notable extension of opportunities to work with external agencies. This meant that a new course on sexual health had been developed and was running in schools, along with in youth centres managed by people who had also attended the same MDP course. The fact that a number of participants also referred to course attendance as having increased their confidence to manage and engage with external partners would also appear likely to generate some positive outcomes in this area.

Along with the examples detailed, interviewees commonly cited that they had come away from the programmes with an enhanced understanding of how to develop integrated working in their localities, and the role of collaboration between organisations in this. The findings from the case study visits reinforce one of the main conclusions of the InLoGov report based on interviews with a range of programme participants – namely, that enhancing managerial capacity to provide integrated services had been significantly reinforced through the introduction of the programmes.¹⁹ The sharing of practice and ideas was again discussed in this context. The comments of one Workforce Development Manager are illustrative of these aspects:

"From a Young People’s Service perspective the impact of the programme has been to enable a group of managers ... to think about their own practice, models and theories of management while maintaining a service ... At a time of increasing challenges it has given managers time to think about their practice in collaboration with other disciplines and agencies". (Workforce Development Manager, statutory sector, MDP participant).

2.4.5 Outcomes concerning the delivery of services, and by extension on young people

Connected to the above outcomes the majority of those interviewed in the case study visits, along with some of those consulted in the stakeholder interviews, also felt that there were broadly positive outcomes evident from the programmes in terms of improved service delivery. In some instances this was extended to a view that, in turn, positive impacts for young people had or would be likely to occur. While this view was not universal, where the programmes were felt to have had a lesser impact this was due to other developments in localities being more significant, and / or a view that budget cuts and restructuring compromised any potential gains.

¹⁹ Ibid.

In terms of enhanced service delivery, it was common for attendees on all programmes to link perceived gains in this area to greater understanding of approaches to integrated working which were then discussed or used with colleagues, team members, and external partners. Specific examples included an MDP participant from the voluntary sector who reported applying some of the exercises in the course modules to his work setting, and another who noted that the programme made her "...think out of the box..." around the potential for multi-disciplinary and joint working. In this case, since concluding the course the participant had made links with parent support advisors and family support staff to jointly work with education welfare officers.

Participants on the LDP and LEP programmes tended to discuss service improvement in terms of enhanced team performance and commitment which could in part be traced to their experience of the programmes and the new ideas gained from them. One LDP participant reported the main result of his attendance being a commitment to developing more of a shared vision amongst staff in the service he managed, and drawing on staff views on forward planning and development. The development away days convened to facilitate this were viewed as enhancing service delivery. An interviewee involved in the LEP similarly noted that the programme contributed to developing a commitment to common aims and vision amongst his teams. This was linked to a perception that participating would ultimately benefit young people as the staff working with them would be better motivated and surer of their objectives.

More broadly, participants reported outcomes relating to young people in two main senses. Firstly, through increasing engagement of young people to contribute to enhancing service delivery. Secondly, in terms of perceptions of improved outcomes for young people themselves. Examples of the former perceived to have led or be likely to lead to improved service delivery (relating to the intended strand outcome of improving openness to young people's participation) included:

- Engaging young people in service design, quality procedures, and peer mentoring.
- Developing young people's representation in an initiative to improve school attendance.
- Engaging young people in staff recruitment processes.
- Establishing a youth forum wherein young people were involved in project governance.

Concrete examples of improved outcomes for young people were often seen as difficult to fully identify or quantify. However, the perception of most interviewees was that positive outcomes would result, the comment of one participant being reflective of the general view in this area:

"...if I manage my staff more appropriately and they feel more supported they will deliver a more effective service". (Statutory Youth Service Co-ordinator, MDP participant).

Likewise, an LDP participant felt that outcomes for young people would improve due to adapting his approach to give staff more capacity and autonomy to work collectively to be creative.

Where interviewees were less positive around outcomes in terms of young people's involvement in service delivery, or outcomes for young people, this tended to be for two main reasons. Firstly, a perception that young people were already engaged fully in the area of service delivery and that involvement with the programmes had little impact on this. Secondly, that the way

service delivery was increasingly focused on targets rather than the needs of young people would mitigate against any enhanced outcomes which might stem from the programmes.

2.4.6 Strategic outcomes for workforce development and planning in particular localities

The case study visits were used to assess perceptions and evidence for more strategic outcomes and impacts relating to service planning and delivery within particular localities. In general these were somewhat mixed. There were some good examples of positive strategic developments which interviewees felt could be ascribed, whether wholly or in part, to the programmes (see case study boxes below). However, the visits also revealed a range of factors seen as mitigating positive outcomes and impacts.

For some interviewees, while the programmes were seen as having collectively contributed to the development or enhancement of joint working, they were not necessarily viewed as the main strategic driver for this. Other interviewees felt that while outcomes were apparent there was less evidence as to how they were manifested operationally. Service restructuring was also seen as challenging potential strategic impacts, as were spending cuts. In particular, these effects were cited as hampering succession planning. The comment of one LEP participant is reflective of a widely shared view:

"The programme could have had a very beneficial effect on succession planning ... It's blown out of the water now [i.e. with financial cuts and implementing restructuring]. Succession planning is the last thing on people's minds". (Senior statutory Youth Services Manager).

Another LEP participant noted that senior managers were working in a changed environment with this being a "...totally different world..." from the one she was engaged with when on the programme. Likewise, another senior manager commented that the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) had been a key factor in restricting succession planning. This perception of challenges to maximising gains in terms of succession planning was likewise shared by some of those consulted who were involved in delivering the training.

A small number of interviewees also felt that the way the programmes themselves were designed and implemented acted as a constraint on positive outcomes. There was a feeling that greater linkages between the three Leadership and Management programmes within particular localities would be required to gain their full (potential) strategic and collective impact, though there was also recognition of the planning, practical and logistical difficulties inherent in this. This links back to the potential improvements to future approaches discussed in section 2.3.3.

In addition a small number of interviewees, including trainers delivering the programmes and those co-ordinating them locally, felt that an additional inhibitor to sustained strategic outcomes was the extent to which relevant organisations cascaded the learning achieved. The 'sponsoring organisations' concerned were viewed as not developing a thoroughgoing strategic approach to the cascading of the knowledge acquired on the courses. From this perspective, the consequence was that potential strategic gains were not likely to be achieved or to be fully sustainable. This also strongly reflects one of the main findings of the InLoGov evaluation of the

programmes, wherein the inconsistency of organisational support for the programmes, and the absence in some cases of planning on how to maximise outcomes, was identified.²⁰

Despite these challenges and mitigating factors, a number of interviewees nonetheless felt that the programmes were beneficial in terms of strategic planning and workforce development. For one Director of IYSS, the LDP and MDP were reported as having "...contributed to the development of the next generation of multi-disciplinary team leaders and managers...". Other LEP and LDP participants reported benefits in terms of enhancing the way they operated in strategic contexts, and / or in assisting them with thinking through new approaches. Finally, some concrete examples of strategic impacts also emerged, presented below as case studies:

Case Study One: Developing new strategic approaches

In one of the localities visited several of those consulted identified a clear and direct impact from the LEP in terms of developing new approaches at the strategic level. One of the senior managers described the historical relationship between the council and the voluntary sector as one of grant aid but not a strong partnership. In this context the LEP brought together the statutory and voluntary sectors in a "neutral place" wherein they could scope out a landscape for the future of integrated working. The work undertaken by the LEP participants demonstrated an absence of a strategic forum for the two sectors to come together to plan. This has now been addressed through the development of a new Youth Partnership and accompanying Youth Strategy. The strategy has the support of the county council, district councils, police, NHS, the fire service and the voluntary sector, and is seen by those concerned as a direct legacy of the LEP likely to be vital for the future of youth services in the context of budget reductions over the next three years.

Case Study Two: Catalytic effects at the strategic level

The final review meeting for one LDP participant with the Director of IYSS in the locality was seen as significant in facilitating discussion about the vision for integrated working in the local context. Through this process three points of focus guiding strategy and delivery were determined. This clarification enabled the LDP participant to more effectively communicate this vision to staff within his organisation, seek secondment of those staff into the new emerging structure to support this, and commence a discussion at the strategic level about how service provision should be delivered in the future.

2.5 Sustainability and the legacy of the Leadership and Management programmes

On the whole the case study visits in particular elicited positive responses around the degree to which gains from the programmes had been and would be sustained. In the main, interviewees based this perception on the view that participants have gained skills, knowledge and insights that are being used to inform practice on an ongoing basis; that the strengthening of

²⁰ Ibid.

relationships continues to lead to positive outcomes; and that a good proportion of those going through the programmes will continue to be involved in leadership and management roles within the young people's workforce. In particular, the legacies around improved practice, networking and partnerships similarly reflect the conclusions of the InLoGov evaluation in this area²¹. They similarly confirm the significant achievements evident in terms of meeting the intended strand outcomes around the formation of networks and joint partnership working.

Similarly, other stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation expressed positive views around sustainability. Again, these related principally to ongoing benefits for individuals, allied to the development and strengthening of partnerships, networks, and greater understanding between organisations. Where legacy or sustained impact were felt to be more uncertain, this view again principally related to external factors such as the effects of budget cuts and restructuring.

Evidence thus suggests that the positive and sustainable legacy of the programmes is tangible despite the difficult context in which many services are operating. Indeed, in this uncertain and challenging context the skills gained in terms of change management in particular, and broader leadership and management skills in general, can be seen as ever more important. Interestingly, a number of interviewees also commented on the ongoing appetite for programmes of this type, particularly the MDP, in local areas and across the workforce.

2.6 Conclusion

Evidence suggests that the process of designing and developing the Leadership and Management strand has proved to be both effective and efficient. The programmes involved reflect an appropriate, coherent and evidence based focus in light of the requirements for leadership and management training. The focus on facilitating shared understanding between different sectors, along with promoting joint and integrated working, were clearly welcomed. Equally, it is clear that the strand and programmes offered relevant and youth workforce specific training that would otherwise have been unavailable or difficult to access. In line with this, the overall impression is one of effective and efficient design, development and implementation across the strand as a whole. While there were some implementation challenges, these do not appear to have significantly compromised the effectiveness or efficiency of delivery.

Indeed, lessons learned from implementation can inform possible future initiatives and include:

- The need for tailoring of programmes as far as possible to local contexts.
- The requirement for effective strategic planning and engagement of relevant agencies and organisations before roll-out in local areas to ensure potential gains are maximised.
- Considering whether accreditation of such programmes should be made mandatory and integral to ensure participants are encouraged and feel supported to take advantage of this.
- Ensuring effective contextualisation of training within wider policy and practice.
- The importance of focusing on the composition of cohorts going through programmes.

²¹ Ibid.

The available evidence strongly indicates that a range of positive developments have accrued from the engagement of leaders and managers in the programmes, which were themselves well received by participants. A strong body of evidence is available around positive outcomes encompassing: increased confidence; greater understanding of and ability to deploy different management and leadership approaches; improved abilities to act flexibly in response to different situations; enhanced aspirations for progression; and contributions to personal achievements such as promotions and gaining new positions. This suggests that the intended strand outcome of developing a set of strategic leaders and managers with improved skills and capacity to better deliver integrated services has been achieved to a considerable extent.

Intended outcomes around greater understanding of the potential for shared working between the statutory and voluntary sectors, and the development of new networks and relationships, have likewise been met to a significant degree. Collective impacts resulting from running the programmes in particular localities and the range of new partnerships and joint working evident help illustrate this. The frequent reference of participants interviewed to their increased confidence and understanding around working with partners across sectoral boundaries is also significant from the perspective of the strand's intended outcomes. While the intended outcome of improved succession planning has been compromised by the challenging context the sector faces, the programmes have raised aspirations and led to more attention in this area.

There is also some evidence of intended longer term and further 'downstream' impacts around improved delivery standards and enhanced outcomes for young people resulting from strand activity. This evidence is not necessarily as universal, tangible and immediately identifiable as that relating to positive outcomes for those participating in the programmes. However, the range of concrete and positive examples of beneficial outcomes that emerged in this area suggests that the programmes led to significant developments and improvements in service delivery in many cases. By extension, these outcomes around improved service delivery illustrate the beneficial impacts for young people likely to result.

There is also a sense, however, that positive impacts on service delivery might have been maximised more effectively than they were. This is not necessarily as a consequence of the strand itself or its component programmes in terms of design and overall implementation. Such limitations largely result from variable engagement of local areas in helping to co-ordinate implementation, allied to some variation in the degree to which learning was cascaded between and within organisations sponsoring participants. The need for improved strategic planning at local levels around implementation and maximising impacts thus emerges as a notable theme.

Along with it being clear that the strand and programmes within it have resulted in a range of positive and significant outcomes and impacts, the available evidence also indicates that there is a tangible, positive and sustainable legacy likely to result. This legacy encompasses the skills, knowledge and insights from the programmes that can and are being used to inform practice on an ongoing basis, allied to the strengthening of relationships which are continuing to lead to positive outcomes. In the uncertain and challenging context within which much of the sector is working, the sort of skills gained by managers and leaders in terms of change management in particular, and broader leadership and management skills in general, are likely to be ever more important.

3.0 Voluntary Sector Capacity Building Strand

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Overview of the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand

The Voluntary Sector Capacity Building (VSCB) strand aimed to better equip workers of varying backgrounds within the voluntary sector workforce to meet the demands of effective joint working and the delivery of integrated youth support. The intention was to improve provision of services to young people by volunteers and paid staff in the voluntary sector, leading to enhanced outcomes for young people. In part this was a response to past under-investment in the sector from a workforce development perspective. The core element of the strand involved delivery of the VSCB workstream (branded for delivery as the 'Progress' project).²² Specifically, YPWRP's Progress aimed to:

- Deliver 25,000 accredited training places to volunteers and paid staff at Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF) levels two and three.
- Develop a curriculum across five priority areas for training and skills development.
- Establish a course to train 360 trainers to deliver the training under the project.
- Provide bursaries to 30 organisations to gain accreditation for training delivery.

Through its implementation, the intention was that YPWRP's Progress should also lead to the development of a sustainable training and capacity building mechanism for the sector through the establishment of an enhanced legacy infrastructure and set of training materials. However, the VSCB strand is broader in its scope than the YPWRP's Progress project alone. Its aim is to promote voluntary sector capacity building both through YPWRP's Progress and the other strands and workstreams of the YPWRP. Therefore, the assessment that follows focuses heavily on YPWRP's Progress but also considers how far other YPWRP elements have supported the achievement of overall strand objectives.

3.1.2 Approach to evaluating the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand

Reflecting the aims of the strand, the diagram on page 32 traces out the 'theory of change' behind the intervention and its core element, the YPWRP's Progress project. It identifies the rationale for the strand, along with the key inputs, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes and impacts connected to it – hence providing a basis with which to assess achievement.

To inform this assessment, a series of in depth telephone and face to face interviews were undertaken with stakeholders. These included: the lead delivery contractor for YPWRP's Progress; representatives of the National Delivery Partners (NDPs) engaged to support its implementation; representatives of the National Training Organisations (NTOs) with responsibility for delivering training places; a selection of the Regional Delivery Agents (RDAs) whose role was to co-ordinate delivery at the regional level; and a selection of representatives of organisations receiving support to become accredited training providers. Seven stakeholder

²² The Voluntary Sector Capacity Building workstream is referred to subsequently in the report as 'Progress' or the 'Progress project' to aid clarity and distinguish this element from the broader capacity building strand as a whole.

interviews were undertaken in phase one of the research and a further 11 interviews were undertaken in phase two.

To complement the interviews, two focus groups (one in each research phase) were undertaken with the RDAs. Another key element to the approach involved a Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) survey of a sample of 205 beneficiaries receiving training through YPWRP's Progress, undertaken in phase two of the research. A small sample of five trainers who had been trained to deliver training completed the dedicated set of consultations being undertaken in phase two.

Given that the VCSB strand is wider in scope than YPWRP's Progress itself, the above elements were complemented by the collation and aggregation of wider evidence relating to the strand's design, implementation and intended outcomes gathered from other YPWRP evaluative activity. For example, evidence gathered through the evaluation of the Leadership and Management strand relating to outcomes for the voluntary sector is incorporated, as are the perspectives of stakeholders interviewed at the YPWRP programme level.

3.1.3 Chapter outline

The remainder of the chapter considers, in turn:

- The design and development of the strand and the YPWRP's Progress project.
- Implementation of YPWRP's Progress, including performance in meeting the output targets set.
- The outcomes that can be attributed to the strand.
- Sustainability and legacy considerations relating to these outcomes.
- Conclusions from evaluating the strand, with reference to its intended outcomes and impacts as per the diagram on page 32.

3.2 Design and development

Design and development in relation to the VSCB strand and YPWRP's Progress is evaluated in respect of:

- The extent to which the strand and YPWRP's Progress are appropriately or suitably designed from the perspective of meeting the capacity building requirements of the voluntary sector.
- More detailed considerations relating to the design and development of YPWRP's Progress in terms of the delivery infrastructure established and the content and focus of the training developed.
- The extent to which the design of the YPWRP as a whole contributes to and supports the intended outcomes of the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand.

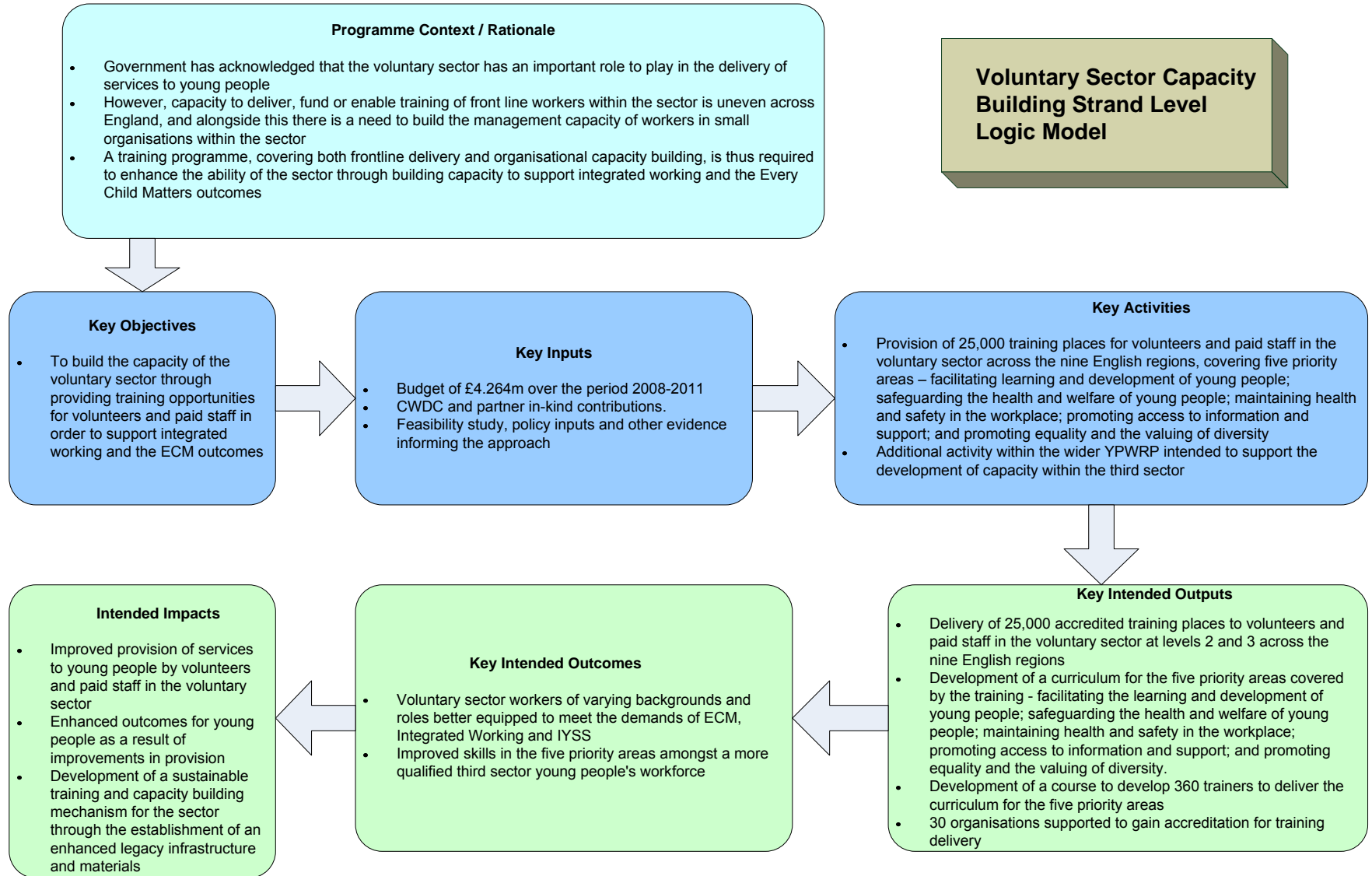
3.2.1 Views on the suitability of, and need for, the intervention

The perception of the majority of those consulted was that the approach to designing the strand as a whole and YPWRP's Progress in particular had been well thought through. It was widely

noted that the strand and its component project reflect the particular needs of the voluntary sector in terms of workforce development, and the need to respond to the extensive and important role the sector plays. The comment of one of the NTO representatives interviewed was typical here:

"...[the approach] meets the needs of developing voluntary sector capacity within the young people's workforce very, very, well...". (NTO representative)

Figure 3.1 Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand level logic model



Voluntary Sector Capacity Building Strand Level Logic Model

The appropriate nature of the intervention was seen as related to the widely shared view that there had been a good level of consultation as part of the development of the strand. The approach of asking the voluntary sector to identify workforce development priorities to inform the design of YPWRP's Progress was noted here. As one of the RDAs commented, as a result "...the approach is spot on...". Several stakeholders also made the point that investment in the voluntary sector is rightly reflective of its size and significance as revealed through the State of the Young People's Workforce report.²³

The majority of those consulted also discussed the evident need within the sector for the type of intervention represented by the strand as a whole and YPWRP's Progress in particular. As several interviewees noted, there is a requirement and appetite for investment in workforce development and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) which historically has not been met. The focus on developing one of the YPWRP's key strands and workstreams to focus on voluntary sector capacity building was thus seen as timely and welcome by most interviewees who commented on this.

Views on the significant level of need that YPWRP's Progress was seen as addressing were shared across the different stakeholder groups consulted. The point was commonly made that while there is other training available, many voluntary and community sector organisations can not afford it. As one RDA representative noted, "With the current cuts in the youth third sector ... Progress has happened at an opportune moment". Likewise, a NDP representative commented:

"I don't think a lot of people in the field appreciated how critical this programme was. Something like this may not come along for the next 10 years ... It is a £4 million investment, there is definitely not [similar provision available]". (NDP representative)

Other stakeholders made reference to the approach of subsidising the training units delivered under YPWRP's Progress being appropriate and important given the nature of voluntary sector organisations and the funding constraints they face. As one RDA representative commented: "The subsidised units are enabling training providers to deliver training at highly subsidised rates which they wouldn't have been able to do before". The view that YPWRP's Progress was offering opportunities that would otherwise not be accessible was also clear in relation to the specific sections of the workforce the NDPs represented.

The significance of accreditation was also a common theme in the general view that YPWRP's Progress offered something different and new. The comment of an NDP representative illustrates this:

"The accreditation is ... key ... the courses around those priority areas were always available ... but accreditation has been such a learning point for the sector". (NDP representative)

Amongst representatives of the organisations receiving bursaries to become accredited training centres, the perception of YPWRP's Progress offering opportunities that would otherwise have been unavailable was also common. Representatives indicated that while their organisations

²³ See: 'A Picture Worth Millions: State of the Young People's Workforce', CWDC, 2009

would still have been keen to explore the option of accreditation, were the bursary not available, this was not necessarily an option in the immediate future. As one noted: "...the next obvious step for us was to go to deliver accredited programmes..." with the funding being in the "...right place and [at] the right time..." to enable this. Another commented that: "We saw this as a fantastic opportunity to increase our capacity as a training provider".

Finally, the CATI survey of participants accessing training also supports the view that YPWRP’s Progress was offering training that many would have been unable to access otherwise. As table 3.1 shows, 53 per cent of those surveyed felt they would not have been able to access training elsewhere at the time they engaged with YPWRP’s Progress.

Table 3.1 Perceptions of Progress participants on their ability to access similar training elsewhere

Question	Response	Count	Column N %
If the opportunity to take the training had not been available through the Progress project at this time, do you think you would have been able to access similar training elsewhere?	Yes	61	29.8%
	No	109	53.2%
	Don't know	35	17.1%
	Total	205	100.0%

Source: CATI survey of Progress participants (N.B. Figures may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding)

3.2.2 The design and development of Progress

3.2.2.1 Delivery infrastructure and training curriculum

In terms of the design of the YPWRP’s Progress project, views were again broadly positive. This was the case in terms of the delivery infrastructure established to support implementation, and in respect of the content and orientation of the training. There was widespread recognition that the overall focus on building capacity through delivering training places was the right approach. This was seen as particularly significant in light of the historically limited nature of training and CPD opportunities targeted at the sector. A number of interviewees also noted that the focus on developing a training and delivery infrastructure, in addition to merely delivering training places, was central from the point of view of promoting the sustainability and legacy of the intervention.

The use of a regional delivery infrastructure combined with National Delivery Partners and training organisations was positively viewed by those that commented on this aspect. This was seen as effective and efficient from the perspective of engaging different constituencies within the voluntary sector workforce, in addition to drawing on the knowledge, expertise and connections of organisations at the regional level. Similarly, the approach taken to establishing project management and delivery co-ordination groups, allied to a specific working group that led on curriculum development, was positively viewed in terms of drawing on relevant expertise.

In terms of the content and orientation of the training developed, in the main all stakeholder groups consulted felt that the five priority training areas²⁴ identified for the curriculum were appropriate. One of the interviewees compared the five priorities to a training needs analysis for the sector they had previously undertaken and found it matched well, commenting:

"... for us it was a perfect match, we knew when we were approaching training providers ... what training was needed. All the training that trainers are wanting to do fits within the priorities". (RDA representative)

A minority of interviewees felt that particular elements of the five areas identified were either inappropriate or insufficient. One NDP representative, for example, felt that the place of health and safety as a priority was questionable. The view was that this element would be better handled outside the YPWRP’s Progress curriculum given the wider and more significant outcomes for the sector that the project sought to promote. In terms of other priorities being required one NTO representative felt that a more specific priority around dealing with difficult behaviour would have been beneficial, as this was the sort of training frequently requested by those in the sector.

3.2.2.2 The suitability of the Progress approach and curriculum in meeting the needs of the sector

Most stakeholders across the different groups consulted felt that the focus and nature of the training curriculum was appropriate to the needs of the sector. For example the flexibility of the curriculum, with a wide range of training units being accessible, was discussed in positive terms by the RDAs in one of the focus groups held. In contrast to the generic nature of previous programmes, it was noted that this flexibility allowed YPWRP’s Progress to meet the needs of organisations with different roles and of different sizes.

The CATI survey undertaken with participants benefitting from training serves to strongly support the positive views expressed in this area by other stakeholder groups. As table 3.2 demonstrates, the majority of participants (83.5 per cent) rated the suitability of the training on offer as either 'good' or 'very good' in terms of the degree this was felt to meet their needs.

Table 3.2 Progress participants' views on the suitability of training options in meeting their needs

Question	Response	Count	Column N %
How would you rate the suitability of training options available in terms of meeting your training needs?	Very poor	1	0.5%
	Poor	4	2.0%
	Average	15	7.3%
	Good	85	41.5%
	Very good	86	42.0%

²⁴ The five priorities were: facilitating the learning and development of young people; safeguarding the health and welfare of young people; maintaining health and safety in the workplace; promoting access to information and support; and promoting equality and the valuing of diversity.

	Don't know / Don't remember	14	6.8%
	Total	205	100.0%

Source: CATI survey of Progress participants

(N.B. Figures may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding)

As table 3.3 shows, participants surveyed were similarly positive concerning the level of choice the different types of training available offered them. In this instance 68 per cent felt that the level of choice in this sense was either 'good' or 'very good'.

Table 3.3 Progress participants' views on the level of choice offered by the available training

Question	Response	Count	Column N %
How would you rate the range of different types of training and training units available through the Progress project in terms of the level of choice this offered you?	Very poor	5	2.4%
	Poor	11	5.4%
	Average	18	8.8%
	Good	73	35.6%
	Very good	66	32.2%
	Don't know / Don't remember	32	15.6%
	Total	205	100.0%

Source: CATI survey of Progress participants

(N.B. Figures may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding)

Consultations were also used to test the degree to which RDA representatives felt that the approach developed met the needs of voluntary sector organisations in their region. Similarly, the research looked at how far NDP representatives felt that YPWRP's Progress reflected the needs of organisations within the sectors they represented.

Through the focus groups and stakeholder interviews the most common view of RDA representatives was that YPWRP's Progress had addressed regional needs to a significant degree, but that ongoing funding would be required to fully meet them. The general view was that following some initial problems with implementation, YPWRP's Progress had reached a range of large and small organisations. The overall perspective of NDP representatives was similarly positive in terms of the extent that the project's approach and curriculum met the needs of organisations within their sectoral networks. The NDPs also generally felt that their role in the delivery infrastructure created had been a significant contributory factor to this.

3.2.2.3 Engagement of NDPs and RDAs in developing Progress

Both NDPs and RDAs offered positive views on the degree to which they had been effectively engaged to support the ongoing development and design of YPWRP's Progress. However, in the case of the RDAs the compressed timescales for delivery had made this more challenging, and in the view of some had potentially compromised the effectiveness of their role. In the case of the NDPs those interviewed generally felt that they had been effectively engaged in contributing to a number of elements of the project, notably the Curriculum Development Group

(CDG)²⁵ and in informing the familiarisation training for those being trained to deliver units under YPWRP's Progress.

3.2.3 The wider design of the YPWRP and its relationship to the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand

Given that the intended outcomes for the voluntary sector from the YPWRP are intended to be generated by programme elements beyond YPWRP's Progress itself, it is worth briefly examining perceptions of the extent to which programme design supported this objective. In the main, evidence for this was drawn from interviews with stakeholders at the YPWRP programme level, along with those interviewed in respect of the common platform strand of the programme.²⁶ To a lesser extent evidence is drawn from interviews with YPWRP's Progress stakeholders from the groups discussed above, in instances where interviewees had a wider understanding of the YPWRP.

A key theme in this area was the general perception that the YPWRP had effectively sought to consider the voluntary sector and its workforce development requirements as part of the overall approach developed. Elements such as the focus of the Leadership and Management strand on including the voluntary sector in its design considerations were often cited, as were the way this training was tailored and delivered. Likewise, in the main stakeholders felt that the Common Platform workstreams had taken note of voluntary sector considerations in design terms. Efforts to engage voluntary sector representatives in reference groups across the programme, in addition to on the main YPWRP Board, were seen as key factors in supporting these aspects.

A minority of interviewees from a voluntary sector perspective felt that it had sometimes been a challenge to ensure that the sector's perspective had been fully taken on board within reference groups, and / or that at times the YPWRP Board had given more weight to the statutory sector and Governmental perspectives. Even where such comments were made, however, the overall view was that the programme as a whole had successfully incorporated and reflected the voluntary sector's perspectives and needs in terms of workforce development.

In line with this, the majority of stakeholders who discussed the overall design of the programme from the perspective of supporting the intended outcomes of the VSCB strand felt that an appropriate approach had been taken. The view that specific components had been put in place to successfully support these outcomes was likewise common. Indeed, the synergy between programme strands and workstreams in supporting the voluntary sector strand emerged as a notable theme in terms of perspectives on the overall design of the YPWRP.

3.3 Implementation and performance

YPWRP's Progress was considered from several perspectives to evaluate the extent to which it was effectively and efficiently implemented. Consultations with stakeholders connected to

²⁵ The CDG was established to guide the development of the curriculum covering the five priority areas outlined above.

²⁶ Please see section 1.2 for more detail on these stakeholders and their role in the evaluative process.

YPWRP's Progress and, where relevant, those interviewed at the programme level focused on the following areas:

- The extent to which delivery mechanisms and the implementation approach were successful in enabling organisations and individuals to access training and support through the project.
- The database of qualification units which developed to support implementation.
- How well YPWRP's Progress was implemented overall, including what was effective and less effective in this and the lessons that might be drawn from the experience.

To complete the assessment of implementation and performance, relevant findings from the CATI survey of YPWRP's Progress participants are considered, and the performance of the project in meeting target outputs is examined. The section concludes by bringing the evidence together to make some overall judgements.

3.3.1 Implementation and the accessibility of Progress

In line with the above discussion on the design of the YPWRP's Progress delivery infrastructure, in the main those interviewed gave positive views on the role of this in ensuring the training and support available was accessible to its target audiences. The most common view was that the delivery infrastructure enabled YPWRP's Progress to be successful in terms of its reach across the young people's voluntary sector workforce. This reach was seen as evident in terms of engaging organisations of different sizes and the degree to which the sector overall was engaged. As one interviewee noted:

"We are coming across lots of people that would never have been able to access our training without this programme, and they are finding the training invaluable ... people at a community level are really embracing it". (NTO representative)

In terms of reaching organisations of different sizes another interviewee commented:

"We have worked with some small charities at the local level that just don't have any budget whatsoever to do training. It's great because these are the people who really need the training and can't afford it". (NTO representative)

In a smaller number of instances those consulted felt YPWRP's Progress had not achieved the 'reach' that they had hoped for, and / or that it was difficult to fully judge this. Some interviewees linked this to the tight timescales for project implementation. Longer lead-in times were felt to be required to fully engage smaller organisations. As one of the NTO representatives commented:

"It takes a longer time to 'drip drip' through the voluntary sector to get to the smaller organisations ... It needs a longer time to get embedded, to get down to ... those very small organisations that need up-skilling". (NTO representative)

One of the NDP representatives also questioned the degree to which YPWRP's Progress had succeeded in engaging organisations within the particular part of the voluntary sector workforce the representative was familiar with, noting:

"...my fear is that the organisations who have accessed the funding are the ones who would normally have done so. Organisations have not got their fair proportion of the funding because of the rush and ... the temptation to use existing networks". (NDP representative)

3.3.2 Perspectives on the database of qualification units in supporting implementation

A key part of the implementation of YPWRP's Progress involved the development of a database of qualification units, linked to the five priority training areas discussed. The database was universally welcomed and praised from the perspective of its role in supporting implementation. One RDA representative noted: "That has been an absolutely excellent tool, its brilliant", while another commented that the database "...has been welcomed by everybody, I've not had any negative comments". From the perspective of a third, the database was key in developing packages of training units that would be attractive to learners and employers:

"It has highlighted the flexibility of the QCF in being able to cluster units in different ways to develop training that is more appropriate to employer needs as well as learner requirements".
(RDA representative)

Those stakeholders interviewed from the lead delivery contractor, the NDPs, and NTOs were similarly positive over the database's utility. From the perspective of one NTO representative, the database was seen as significant in developing a comprehensive curriculum through its role in collating potential training units and highlighting where any gaps existed. As discussed below, the database was also widely viewed as a tool or legacy of the development of YPWRP's Progress that could be used to inform the development and implementation of related approaches in future.

3.3.3 Perspectives on the overall implementation of Progress

At the time of the interim evaluation of the YPWRP, the implementation of Progress had been significantly delayed by the extended Purdah period around the 2010 General Election. In the view of some stakeholders consulted in phase one, the time taken to agree elements of the project's delivery was also a contributory factor. Delays were viewed as challenging the project's ability to engage training providers and raise its profile amongst potential participants.

The research undertaken in phase two of the evaluation, focused on the period that YPWRP's Progress became fully operational, illustrates that a number of difficulties continued to challenge effective implementation. Many of these ongoing challenges can be related to the delays mentioned. While these issues and challenges are considered in more detail below, it should be noted that there was widespread recognition of the amount that was achieved in the time available for delivery, and the considerable efforts of all involved. As one interviewee noted:

"I think it's amazing that it's got so far in such a short space of time ... A year's work has been done in six months". (NTO representative)

3.3.3.1 Elements seen as supporting implementation

Whilst discussing implementation challenges and their effects, a range of stakeholders consulted in phase two also discussed a number of positive aspects to project delivery. The infrastructure developed to support implementation was itself widely praised as helping effective and efficient delivery, as was the database of qualifications. In addition, stakeholders often remarked positively on the curriculum development aspect of implementation, noting that the CDG had established a strong training offer and the supporting tools required to deliver it. While not a universal view, several interviewees also felt that the 'familiarisation training' to train

individuals to deliver YPWRP's Progress units was effective and useful. As one interviewee commented:

"The familiarisation training is really helping people work through the priorities of the project, to work it into their delivery and then think more broadly around the potential and possibilities of the QCF, and how they can cluster units around their work". (RDA representative)

One of the NTO representatives similarly noted how the materials developed to help implement the training had been well received, commenting on the benefits of being able to cascade the training to other staff.

Significantly, those undertaking the familiarisation training gave broadly positive views. Amongst the five trainers interviewed, the actual process of becoming involved with YPWRP's Progress was seen as straightforward. Equally, in general the training was positively received. Those interviewed commented on the knowledge of the trainer delivering the sessions, and that it was beneficial to be able to engage with the other trainers on the course. The training was also seen as helping their organisations to enhance their offer, and enabling them to think about the existing training offered. Those being trained were also positive about the support provided by the lead delivery contractor.

Representatives of the organisations receiving bursaries to become accredited training centres also gave positive views around implementation. The process of applying for funding was seen as simple, straightforward and self explanatory, being described as "streamlined" by one interviewee. In addition, all interviewees stated that they were aware of the different support mechanisms available, and that the lead contractor was helpful in supporting them in the process of making their application.

Perhaps most significantly, as discussed in section 3.3.4 the experience of YPWRP's Progress participants themselves (as revealed through the CATI survey) appears to have been generally positive in terms of accessing and undertaking the training. As such, it is clear that significant aspects to the implementation of YPWRP's Progress worked effectively.

3.3.3.2 Challenges to implementation

YPWRP's Progress faced a number of implementation challenges and there were aspects of the project that stakeholders felt worked less well in terms of implementation. Discussion of these aspects is significant from the perspective of the learning they may offer for related approaches in the future. Implementation challenges and lessons highlighted can be summarised as follows:

Delays to implementation

The widespread perception was that those involved dealt with delays to the project as effectively as they could. However, delays remained an ongoing issue as YPWRP's Progress moved into its main delivery phase. In response a number of interviewees felt the project could have begun earlier in the YPWRP's lifetime. As one NDP representative noted:

"The timescales are pretty ridiculous ... [For] the amount of money that has been spent ... a year is too short ... it should have been at least a two to three year project". (NDP representative)

Another NDP representative felt that there should have been more systematic outreach work over a longer time period to publicise YPWRP's Progress and to start making relationships with new organisations. Whilst views on the effect of delays such as those caused by the 2010 General Election varied, most stakeholders interviewed felt that the delivery of the project and its outcomes would have been compromised by this to some degree.

Communications and Marketing

Some stakeholders, notably those from NTOs and RDAs, saw restrictions on communications and marketing as a key challenge to delivery. As one of the RDA representatives noted, communications had to be very "...low key..." because of budgetary and other restrictions in this area. For the RDAs, the effect was that they could not hold publicity events but rather had to rely on low-key information meetings and their own marketing networks. Views on whether this significantly compromised delivery varied, though on the whole most stakeholders felt that this challenge was one that could be 'worked around' through other routes. Nonetheless it was commonly cited that effective publicity and marketing was a key aspect of initiatives such as YPWRP's Progress, and that maximising this would be significant in any future activities. The comment of one of the NTO representatives is illustrative of this:

"So many people were surprised that this was on offer, I think if this were rolled out [further] there should be a national strategy to make sure every organisation is aware of it and smaller organisations would have wider access ". (NTO representative)

Uncertainty over unit allocations / numbers of training places

Perhaps the most significant issue raised concerns ongoing uncertainty through the delivery phase on the part of training organisations and RDAs as to the target number of training places or 'unit' allocations they were working to. Several RDA representatives described how targets were not written into their contracts by the lead contractor, and that they were given as one put it a "...free rein..." to recruit. Subsequently however, limits to the number of training units were imposed in light of the budget available to support YPWRP's Progress. As a result, the perspective of most RDA representatives was that unit allocations should have been written into their contracts at the outset.

This sequence of events caused a number of issues throughout what might be termed the YPWRP's Progress 'delivery chain'. These included ongoing uncertainty amongst RDAs and training organisations as to whether they could deliver units and how many; training organisations engaging in the familiarisation training but then not being able to deliver training; and examples where training organisations had made financial commitments that they were unsure could be recouped. The following comment from an RDA representative illustrates these issues:

"I have now got three or four training providers that have gone through the whole process and got no delivery...they have invested several trainers' staff time on the two day

familiarisation training, they have signed local learning agreements and conducted eligibility checks and then they've received nothing". (RDA representative)

Such issues emerged as a significant theme in consultations with trainers from organisations delivering YPWRP's Progress. One representative stated that despite being trained, cascading the training internally and lining up 60 places for external training, they were then told that delivery was no longer possible. This was felt to have resulted in the organisation concerned not being able to reach a wider audience, and having to tell the learners they had lined up that they could no longer do the training. As with the RDAs consulted, such representatives also felt in some instances that these issues caused problems for them from a reputational point of view and / or that they felt they had been made to look unprofessional.

Information Technology (IT) system design and the 'Ticket to Progress'

Issues around IT systems and the 'Ticket to Progress' aspect of registration for those undertaking training clearly caused frustration amongst those connected to implementation. This feeling was particularly prevalent amongst the RDAs consulted, and was one of the major themes that emerged in the focus group held in phase two of the research. The general view was that difficulties with the system had been a major challenge, and that this had acted as an unfortunate distraction for those involved.

Perceived difficulties for users of the system, both those intending to access the training and training providers, were thus seen as an unnecessary barrier to the smooth implementation and operation of YPWRP's Progress. Difficulties were raised by all five participants in the familiarisation training interviewed for the evaluation, particularly in respect of helping to register participants. Not only was the website seen as difficult for participants to use, some trainers interviewed felt that their organisation's reputation could have been damaged because of the problems their learners faced using the system. As one such interviewee noted:

"They [learners] are my customers. It's not understandable to them why they have to go through such a complicated process to register". (Trainer trained to deliver YPWRP's Progress)

The general view of a range of stakeholders was thus that the 'Skills Profile' and 'Ticket to Progress' systems were not fully fit for purpose, partly as a result of being 'off the shelf' products. As discussed further in section 3.3.4 despite these widely cited difficulties amongst the stakeholder groups consulted, evidence from the CATI interviews with those taking the training suggests that the latter saw this as less of an issue. This may reflect the fact that training organisations often registered participants, partly in response to the difficulties noted.

Relationships between the national and regional levels in the Progress delivery infrastructure

In some instances RDA representatives and those from NDPs cited issues in integrating those involved in implementation at the regional and national levels. Accepting that the lead contractor for YPWRP's Progress was pro-active in encouraging the RDAs to attend more of the national meetings, communication between these levels was sometimes seen as a less positive aspect to delivery. In part this was viewed as a consequence of the compressed delivery timescale,

meaning that attendance at such meetings and the relationship building that might have resulted was difficult. This may reflect the reasoning behind the comments of two of the NDPs interviewed concerning links between the national and regional levels:

"I'm sure a lot of the RDAs are used to working with national bodies, but we never felt they fully utilised the expertise, knowledge and contacts". (NDP representative)

"The national partners have a lot of regional contacts but the RDAs seemed to work in a very insular fashion." (NDP representative)

A minority of interviewees noted that practical consequences emerged from communication and liaison problems. For one of the RDA representatives, in their view there was a need to better explore how to better ensure duplication of training provision co-ordinated by RDAs and NTOs did not occur. Accepting the issues raised, it should be noted that this is within the context of the widely shared view that the delivery infrastructure developed for YPWRP's Progress worked well overall. Effective partnership between the different elements and layers involved was likewise seen as significant in this. In addition some positive examples of linkages between particular RDAs and NDPs were also cited, in one instance leading the RDA to extend their network of partners.

Familiarisation Training

While the familiarisation training was remarked on positively by stakeholders, including those trainers attending the training themselves, a number of those consulted offered more mixed views. More negative perceptions of effectiveness tended to be connected to the format and nature of the familiarisation training sessions. In particular the length of the training (two days) was the key issue here, with some feeling that this was an unnecessary burden – particularly for self-employed trainers or those from smaller organisations. As one interviewee noted:

"Some of the trainers were quite angry ... they had to do two days. They felt it was quite unnecessary". (RDA representative)

The main issues identified by attendees at the familiarisation training were in relation to some of the content of the sessions. In particular, some of the trainers interviewed felt that there was too much of a focus on articulating and discussing the core values of YPWRP's Progress in contrast to a greater focus on practical requirements for delivery. However, some of the trainers did note that they felt their concerns were addressed, with one interviewee commenting that the second day of the training much better reflected what they felt was necessary.

It was also clear that the 'cascade model', wherein attendees at the sessions cascaded the training to colleagues was widely seen as a useful step. For example, one of the NTO interviewees noted that in their view the cascade model was vital. From this perspective it would otherwise be too expensive and against the interests of small organisations to release their staff for two days. Accepting this, a minority of stakeholders felt that the cascade model should have been promoted and developed further. From this perspective, offered by some RDA and NTO representatives, improving the model would reduce the cost of running the courses and the need for back-fill costs for organisations sending attendees. Likewise, such interviewees tended

to feel that more thought should have been given in general as to how to balance the requirement for quality assurance whilst maintaining flexibility and accessibility.

3.3.3.3 Key lessons from the experience of implementation

The above implementation challenges and issues highlight some useful lessons which might be considered in the context of informing future approaches of this kind. These are as follows:

- Approaches such as YPWRP’s Progress, which contain multiple delivery elements and a complicated delivery infrastructure, require realistic lead-in times and implementation timescales to avoid creating 'knock-on' issues and challenges likely to affect implementation.
- Effective marketing and publicity can support the implementation of large scale training programmes, and ensure that meeting target outputs is more straightforward and likely.
- Approaches such as YPWRP’s Progress would benefit from clear planning and communication of target outputs, and ongoing and effective monitoring during delivery.
- Attention needs to be given to the design of IT systems to ensure that they support effectiveness and efficiency in terms of delivery and do not act as a hindrance.
- Where approaches depend on a delivery infrastructure that combines national and regional level inputs, adequate time and attention to developing partnerships between actors at these levels and effective communication between them is significant.
- Careful design of training programmes for trainers to deliver projects such as YPWRP’s Progress is important in gaining the full buy-in and commitment of providers. Use of cascade models can play an effective part in this.

3.3.4 Findings from the CATI survey of Progress participants relating to implementation

Despite the implementation challenges discussed, evidence suggests that the difficulties encountered did not compromise the experience of participants. Of the 205 beneficiaries of training surveyed, the majority (69 per cent) rated the information and guidance given them to help decide on whether to access the training as either 'good' or 'very good', rather than 'very poor', 'poor' or 'average'. Likewise, 82.5 per cent rated guidance on which options to access as either 'good' or 'very good'. Despite the perceptions of stakeholder groups around the issues for participants in accessing and registering for the training, as table 3.4 shows the vast majority (84 per cent) rated this aspect of their experience as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Table 3.4 Views of Progress participants on the ease of registering for and accessing the training

Question	Response	Count	Column N %
Overall, how would you rate the ease with which you were able to register for and access the training?	Very poor	2	1.0%
	Poor	3	1.5%
	Average	15	7.3%
	Good	58	28.3%
	Very good	114	55.6%
	Don't know / don't remember	13	6.3%
	Total	205	100.0%

Source: CATI survey of Progress participants (N.B. Figures may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding)

The largely positive experience of participants in registering for and accessing training may, in part, be down to the fact that other evidence suggests that training organisations played a role in making the training as easy to access as possible. The difficulties around the 'Ticket to Progress' system and online registration may thus have been ameliorated. Of 62 participants from the sample who reported using 'Ticket to Progress', the majority (42 respondents) rated this as 'good' or 'very good' in terms of its utility for accessing the training.²⁷ Those surveyed also gave highly positive perspectives on their experience of the training itself. As table 3.5 shows, nine out of every ten participants rated the training as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Table 3.5 Views of Progress participants on the training overall

Question	Response	Count	Column N %
In terms of the training itself, how would you rate this overall?	Very poor	3	1.5%
	Poor	2	1.0%
	Average	12	5.9%
	Good	52	25.4%
	Very good	132	64.4%
	Don't know/Don't remember	4	2.0%
	Total	205	100.0%

Source: CATI survey of Progress participants (N.B. Figures may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding)

Responses given to an 'open' question on what was good about the training reinforced the point made earlier in terms of training meeting participants' needs, along with demonstrating that numerous aspects of training delivery had been well received. The informative, practical, applied nature of the learning came through strongly, as did respondents' views on the suitability of the way the courses were delivered. In particular, numerous respondents commented on the quality of those delivering the training in terms of responsiveness, understanding, effectively communicating with them, and being engaging.

3.3.5 Performance against output targets

At the interim evaluation stage there were questions raised around the ability of YPWRP's Progress to meet the output targets set for it. However, 27,558 training places were delivered against the target of 25,000. In light of the range of challenges and issues around implementation discussed, this can be viewed as a significant achievement and reflects the evident level of demand within the sector. In terms of the other target outputs detailed in the diagram on page 32, a total of 30 organisations were given bursaries to support them to gain accreditation as planned, and against a target of training 360 trainers to deliver YPWRP's Progress 524 was achieved.

3.3.6 Overall reflections on implementation and performance

Taking account of the extensive challenges faced, it is clear that a considerable amount was achieved in establishing YPWRP's Progress and delivering the number of different elements within it. Within the constraints faced, evidence suggests that the project has been implemented

²⁷ Full detail on this can be found in the tables of closed responses to the CATI survey in Annex One.

in a broadly effective and efficient manner. While the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation might have been compromised by some of the challenges and issues discussed, overall the impression is that an appropriate and strong delivery infrastructure was developed which enabled the project to meet the majority of these challenges.

Aspects of implementation that worked effectively include the establishment of a qualifications database and approach to curriculum development that clearly aided the development of an effective and appropriate training 'offer'. This in turn formed the basis for the strong levels of achievement in terms of the intended outputs from the project around training places offered and ensuring that a number of trainers were trained to deliver them. The partnership work between the various actors and stakeholder groups involved in implementation has been significant, and the positive experience of those accessing the training is another key point. This latter aspect offers strong and persuasive supporting evidence around effective implementation.

Where implementation worked less well, to a considerable degree this can be traced to the compressed timescales for delivery that YPWRP's Progress encountered. Some notable lessons can be drawn from this however. These revolve around the time that approaches such as YPWRP's Progress require to be developed and delivered, the need for clear planning and monitoring of intended outputs for projects of this scale, the significance of effective and 'fit for purpose' IT systems to support delivery, and the need to ensure effective linkages between different delivery areas and levels in complex and large scale training initiatives such as YPWRP's Progress.

3.4 Outcomes from the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand

At the interim evaluation point, YPWRP's Progress was only just beginning to be implemented. Outcomes at that stage largely revolved around the successful establishment of a delivery infrastructure to support implementation, along with the relationships developed and partnerships established. A significant element of phase two of the research focused on investigating the outcomes accruing from YPWRP's Progress, as well as in respect of the VSCB strand in general. This enabled discussion around and assessment of outcomes in a number of areas covering:

- Outcomes for the voluntary sector and particular sectors within it.
- Outcomes for individuals receiving training through YPWRP's Progress.
- Outcomes for organisations whose employees or volunteers were trained through YPWRP's Progress.
- Outcomes for those central to the YPWRP's Progress delivery infrastructure: RDAs, NDPs and NTOs.
- Outcomes for organisations receiving bursaries to become accredited training centres.
- Wider outcomes from implementing the approach developed.

Following discussion of these areas, the wider contribution of other YPWRP workstreams to the achievement of intended outcomes from the VSCB strand is considered.

3.4.1 Outcomes for the voluntary sector and particular sectors within it

Perhaps the most significant outcomes from the VSCB strand and the YPWRP's Progress project relate to infrastructural developments resulting from implementation. These developments concern 'infrastructure' in a number of senses:

- The delivery infrastructure developed to support implementation.
- The establishment of new networks and relationships, contributing to the enhancement of the broader 'infrastructure' available to deliver services to young people.
- 'Infrastructure' in terms of the range of products and mechanisms to support voluntary sector training and capacity building developed.

These infrastructural developments are both an outcome from, and key legacy of, the VSCB strand and the YPWRP's Progress project. As one of the NDP representatives noted, the development of such an infrastructure can be viewed as particularly significant and positive given that it was "...developed by the sector, for the sector...". The development of an effective capacity building and training delivery infrastructure was widely cited as a key outcome benefitting the voluntary sector as a whole from a young people's workforce perspective. Aspects such as building capacity through offering bursaries for organisations to gain accreditation, and the development of a cadre of up-skilled trainers able to deliver training, were seen as contributing to an effective infrastructure that could be shown to have worked.

As noted, the outcomes for the voluntary sector in terms of infrastructural development go beyond the YPWRP's Progress delivery infrastructure into areas such as the range of networks and partnerships developed through YPWRP's Progress. As several RDA representatives noted, a key aspect to this outcome related to their role in supporting organisations to form consortia that may well be important in accessing future funding. In one example given, such a consortium was developed and had, at the time of the phase two research, just submitted a bid to the Skills Funding Agency to provide services to young people. It was also widely noted, both by RDA representatives and those from training organisations, that the development of such relationships is particularly crucial in a time of increasingly scarce resources for the sector.

While the impact of the development of new networks and partnerships is difficult to quantify, it seems fair to note that it will have made a positive contribution to the capacity building the strand seeks to achieve. Likewise, the potential impacts likely to result on an ongoing basis in terms of new strategic alliances within the sector and collaboration between organisations to bid for and deliver services are considerable.

Another area of outcomes for the young people's voluntary sector widely cited relates to the broader range of products and mechanisms developed to support training and capacity building. Central amongst these is the database of qualification units developed to inform and support the training curriculum established through YPWRP's Progress. As noted, this aspect was universally welcomed and praised by a range of stakeholders. Other materials related to YPWRP's Progress, such as those developed to implement the familiarisation training, were similarly cited by a number of interviewees as a significant outcome and legacy.

Finally, interviews with NDP representatives in particular served to highlight a widespread perception of positive outcomes relating to particular segments within the voluntary sector young people's workforce. One of the NDP representatives outlined how YPWRP's Progress had given them much more ability to communicate with organisations in the regions. The result was that they had recommended to such organisations the benefits of joining local and regional umbrella groups to input to strategic decision making bodies and access information. While it was acknowledged that the effects of this were difficult to quantify, the view was that this had increased the capacity of organisations within the sector concerned, had helped up-skill their staff, and assisted them to strategically engage with other organisations and decision makers.

3.4.2 Outcomes for individuals receiving training within the Progress project

The survey of 205 participants accessing training through YPWRP's Progress offered compelling evidence of positive outcomes and impacts for them. The findings summarised in tables 3.6 and 3.7 below were of particular significance. As shown in table 3.6, 95 per cent of those surveyed felt that the training would help them in their work or volunteering.

Table 3.6 Progress participants' views on whether the training will help in their work / volunteering

Question	Response	Count	Column N %
Do you feel that the training received will help you improve in your work or volunteering activity?	Yes	195	95.1%
	No	4	2.0%
	Don't know	6	2.9%
	Total	205	100.0%

Source: CATI survey of Progress participants (N.B. Figures may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding)

As table 3.7 demonstrates, 200 out of the 205 participants surveyed (or 98 per cent) would recommend that others working with young people should try and access similar training. As with perceptions of whether the training would help with work or volunteering, this strongly suggests that the training is likely to have had beneficial outcomes for those engaged.

Table 3.7 Progress participants' views on whether they would recommend the training to others

Question	Response	Count	Column N %
Based on your experience overall, would you recommend that other people working or volunteering with young people should try and access similar training?	Yes	200	97.6%
	No	3	1.5%
	Don't know	2	1.0%
	Total	205	100.0%

Source: CATI survey of Progress participants (N.B. Figures may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding)

In addition the 'open' questions used in the survey elicited a range of positive examples of how respondents felt the training would support and develop them in their work or volunteering. The following comments are illustrative and reflective of the type of responses received around increased confidence, perceptions of improved ability to undertake job or volunteer roles, and benefits in opening up new opportunities:

"I think it [the training] explains a lot ... It made me more comfortable in my work and ... what I can and can't do. I felt more competent in the job afterwards". (YPWRP's Progress participant)

"I can do different things now...it's opened up opportunities". (YPWRP's Progress participant)

The reasons respondents gave for why the training would help in their work and volunteering also strongly suggest that there are likely to be beneficial impacts for the young people they work with. The following comments from participants illustrate the sort of likely beneficial impacts of the training in this area:

"It gives me more confidence in terms of doing face to face work with young people, and once I have the qualification it will give me more confidence that I am able to do the work, this then flows out to the people I am working with". (YPWRP's Progress participant)

"It's [the training] going to help me to safeguard vulnerable young adults and support volunteers in safeguarding vulnerable young adults". (YPWRP's Progress participant)

3.4.3 Outcomes for organisations with employees or volunteers trained through Progress

Given the timing of YPWRP's Progress delivery, the scope to directly consider impacts on organisations that participants receiving training worked or volunteered for was limited. However, it was possible to gain some anecdotal information through consultations with individuals delivering training to several participants from a particular organisation. In this sense, perceptions were almost universally positive as to the beneficial outcomes for organisations. As one of the NTO representatives noted, "We have worked with amazing organisations that have really benefitted...". Similarly, another trainer commented in respect of a small voluntary sector organisation that had put their staff and volunteers through the training:

"We've had a massive impact on that organisation; they wouldn't have been able to access the training without Progress". (Trainer trained to deliver YPWRP's Progress)

The fact that 95 per cent of those surveyed who received training felt that this would help them in their work or volunteering can also be taken as strong evidence of the likely benefits for their organisations. The range of responses given by those taking the survey when asked how the training would help them in their work or volunteering is also notable here. Such responses included the ability to work more independently, to work more effectively with young people, improved confidence, greater insight into work or volunteering requirements, and the development of new skills and knowledge.

3.4.4 Outcomes for those involved in the Progress delivery infrastructure

Another key area of outcomes relates to those organisations that formed a core part of the delivery infrastructure for YPWRP's Progress: the RDAs, NDPs, and NTOs. With a few exceptions related to the implementation difficulties and challenges discussed, representatives of each of these stakeholder groups gave positive responses about the impacts on their organisations. This can be viewed as another aspect contributing to positive developments around building capacity in the near term, in addition to developing a supportive infrastructure for the longer term.

For the RDA representatives their engagement was seen as bringing a number of benefits around developing new approaches to their work, diversifying the focus of operations, learning lessons around engagement with initiatives such as YPWRP's Progress, and the establishment of new partnerships, relationships, and networks. The comments of two of the RDA representatives interviewed illustrate this latter impact in particular:

"It has increased our capacity as an organisation. We have picked up another 15 organisations who have joined our network". (RDA representative)

"It has been great for us for capacity building; it has increased our membership quite heavily... It's really given us a presence in the region". (RDA representative)

Another RDA representative noted how additional funding to that provided through the YPWRP would enable them to extend the sort of approach developed through YPWRP's Progress. This would involve setting up a series of training, learning and development clusters to offer further training and workforce development opportunities. Several representatives also remarked on how the network of trainers built up through YPWRP's Progress would be invaluable in their ongoing work. Other RDA representatives gave examples of how YPWRP's Progress had assisted them to develop their internal capacity and ways of working. In one instance YPWRP's Progress was seen as significant in helping to develop operating systems, hence building capacity within the organisation. In another YPWRP's Progress had enabled the organisation concerned to diversify their involvement with the broader training and development infrastructure in the region.

Outcomes for the NDPs in many ways reflect those for the RDAs around the development of new partnerships, and the expansion and deepening of their own networks. NDP representatives tended to reflect on this in terms of enhanced networking and relationships at both national and regional levels. As one of the representatives noted, YPWRP's Progress had enabled their organisation to work with another 360 organisations across the country. In another case, links developed with some of the RDAs by the NDP concerned was seen as opening up new opportunities to continue their work on a regional level, moving into new arenas where they previously had only limited involvement.

Two of the NDP representatives also gave examples of positive outcomes related to what might be termed 'cross sectoral' effects. In these instances, involvement with YPWRP's Progress had allowed the NDPs to promote links between the area of the workforce they represented and another area or 'sector'. In one case, this was seen as offering the opportunity for young people from a particular 'community of interest' represented by the NDP to access new opportunities in an area represented by one of the other NDPs. Connected to this, several of the NDPs noted that their organisations had learned a lot from involvement and engagement with the other national partners. Internal capacity building for the NDPs was another related and commonly cited outcome.

For the NTOs, the principal outcomes cited revolved around increased engagement with different organisations and sectors, enhanced visibility and profile, developments in internal capacity, and informing the way the organisations concerned undertake their work. In one case, an NTO representative described how their organisation had started working with a major

national children's charity through YPWRP's Progress. Another similarly remarked on how engagement with the project would put the organisation in a stronger position to access future contracts and work, having accelerated the process of gaining additional accreditation and linkages:

"We have become stronger and more adaptable and have increased opportunities to secure future contracts by ... becoming an accredited provider. We now have effective systems in place ... it's been a great legacy, it has tested us like no other project before ... it's made us evaluate what's effective practice within our own organisation". (NTO representative)

As this indicates, while the implementation challenges described earlier certainly created some difficulties for those involved in YPWRP's Progress, this in itself may also have had some benefits in terms of gaining experience of such challenging delivery and some of the issues it creates.

3.4.5 Outcomes for organisations receiving bursaries to become accredited training centres

Organisations supported through bursaries offered by YPWRP's Progress used the funding to undertake training courses necessary to gain accredited status through registration with one or more awarding bodies. All representatives interviewed stated that although the bursary did not necessarily cover all costs, it was seen as a worthwhile and significant investment for the future. In a number of cases the award of the bursary was seen as providing a 'push' or greater impetus to progress this aspect of their work. The comments of two of the interviewees are illustrative here in noting that: "The bursary was the catalyst for us to do this" and "...the grant gave us a bit more freedom to explore this option".

As several representatives also commented, status as an accredited provider resulted in a notable increase in capacity as a result of being able to draw down funding to offer a wider and expanded level of training. In some cases the achievement of accreditation was also cited as helping to add another income stream, hence building the capacity of the recipient organisations. In a number of cases possibilities to run courses with other organisations have now arisen. As one representative noted, "We can now say to schools that are visiting us that we can run accredited courses". Additional benefits achieved through involvement with YPWRP's Progress also included an increase in partnership working. As one representative commented:

"...it has allowed us to widen our menu of opportunities, so our appeal to providers and partners has been increased, so the potential to develop new partnerships is helped."
(Representative of an organisation receiving a bursary)

3.4.6 Wider and additional outcomes from implementing the approach

Stakeholder consultations relating to the VSCB strand also served to identify a range of other wider and additional outcomes. These included a common view that the activity undertaken had increased the understanding of voluntary sector organisations. As one RDA representative noted, the training curriculum established through YPWRP's Progress encouraged employers to think about skills needs. Likewise, training provider representatives commented on the

increased understanding and awareness of the voluntary sector and its needs within the wider training community.

The increased recognition of the significance of accreditation within the voluntary sector was another widely identified positive outcome. As an NDP representative noted, consultation work their organisation had done in the past tended to reveal that a lot of organisations did not value accreditation and perceived it as too expensive and time consuming. The view of this interviewee was that YPWRP's Progress had served to highlight the importance of accreditation, with this being particularly significant given its increasing importance in terms of competing for funding. Similarly, as one of the RDA representatives noted of YPWRP's Progress, "...it has taken accredited training into places it wasn't getting to before...".

It was also clear that there has been considerable learning gained through the VSCB strand in terms of assessing demand for capacity building, and in effectively designing and tailoring this to requirements 'on the ground'. Most of the RDA representatives described how their work through YPWRP's Progress demonstrated the scale of un-met demand still present across the voluntary sector young people's workforce. As two of the representatives interviewed commented:

"The uptake from learners has been amazing. Unfortunately now we've got more learners but there's just not the capacity left out of the 25,000 units". (RDA representative)

"It demonstrates the need for training in this region." (RDA representative)

3.4.7 The wider contribution of YPWRP workstreams to achieving intended outcomes from the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand

In addition to the outcomes discussed above, other elements of the YPWRP have also contributed to the intended outcomes from the VSCB strand – in particular, the intended outcomes around better equipping the voluntary sector workforce to deliver integrated or joint working, and improved service provision through and by the sector.²⁸ Evidence for this was drawn from interviews with stakeholders at the YPWRP programme level, along with those interviewed in respect of the Common Platform strand.²⁹ To a lesser extent evidence is also taken from interviews with YPWRP's Progress stakeholders where interviewees had wider understanding of the YPWRP.

Contributions cited from wider YPWRP elements to strand outcomes tended to reflect and build upon the examples discussed earlier in the chapter around overall programme design being consonant of voluntary sector needs. The view of a number of interviewees at the programme level was that the benefits of capacity building through the Leadership and Management training programmes would have made a considerable contribution in this area. As outlined in the previous chapter, evidence gathered on the outcomes of these programmes in terms of individual development, improvements in service delivery, and enhanced relationships within the voluntary sector and between its organisations and statutory partners supports this.

²⁸ See the logic model diagram on page 30 for more detail on intended outcomes.

²⁹ Please see section 1.2 for more detail on these stakeholders and their role in the evaluative process.

The other main area of contributions to the intended outcomes of the VSCB strand cited related to perceived outcomes for voluntary sector organisations and individuals from the WFD for IYS areas workstream within the Common Platform strand. While the extent of this contribution was seen as being difficult to quantify, the perception was that outcomes around improved relationships related to the WFD for IYS consortia would have promoted understanding and experience of joint or integrated working. As discussed in the following chapter, the evidence gathered broadly supports this view.³⁰

The same is true of outcomes for individuals receiving support to take qualifications through the WFD for IYS workstream and for their 'sponsoring' employers. As reflected in the findings of the following chapter, there will have been a contribution made in terms of improving service delivery on the part of voluntary sector organisations and their workers or volunteers through this workstream. A small number of interviewees also felt that the Skills Development Framework (SDF), reflective as it is of the voluntary sector and their significance within the workforce, had at least the potential to make a contribution to strand outcomes. While the evidence gathered on the SDF discussed in the next chapter serves to broadly support this perspective, it should be noted that the potential contribution of the framework is still uncertain.³¹

Finally, it should be noted that responses to a survey of Local Authorities (LAs) provided with Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) grants early on in the YPWRP's delivery³² demonstrated that 47% used this to support activity connected to the voluntary sector.³³ Outcomes in respect of these grants are considered in section 6.7 later in the report.

As this discussion suggests, other elements of the YPWRP have certainly made a positive contribution to achieving the intended outcomes of the VSCB strand. Quantifying the full nature and level of this contribution is difficult and will only be fully clear in the longer term. Accepting this, the Leadership and Management strand and its training programmes have evidently made a significant contribution. The WFD for IYS workstream will similarly have made positive contributions, particularly in terms of enhanced capacity through relationship development, though this is likely to be on a smaller scale given the workstream's size and coverage.

3.5 Sustainability and the legacy of the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand

The research undertaken relating to the VSCB strand provides strong evidence of the likely legacy resulting from the outcomes discussed above, along with the potential degree that such positive outcomes can be sustained. In large part, the legacy from the strand and the sustainability of the outcomes generated can be linked to the overall approach taken, along with the specific design and development of the YPWRP's Progress project. The explicit focus on

³⁰ See section 4.2 of the report

³¹ See section 4.3 of the report for further discussion of this point.

³² Grants of between £21,000 and £25,000 were given to all LAs, providing an opportunity for them to develop local plans for young people's workforce development based on the reform programme and local needs.

³³ The survey was undertaken by CWDC in March 2010 and engaged all 150 LAs that were provided with grants ranging from £21,000 to £25,000. 72 Authorities responded giving a response rate of 48 per cent.

developing a sustainable delivery infrastructure, allied to developing materials and products to support this, is notable here. Similarly, the extent to which YPWRP's Progress itself clearly gained widespread visibility and recognition across the voluntary sector young people's workforce is significant. Key aspects relating to legacy and sustainability are discussed in more detail below.

3.5.1 Enhanced understanding and positioning for the voluntary sector

There is extensive evidence relating to the legacy of the strand and YPWRP's Progress in terms of their contribution to enhanced understanding within the voluntary sector of the requirements for effective joint service delivery. The enhanced understanding of joint working and the capacity requirements for this, gained through the Leadership and Management as well as the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strands, is a significant consideration. The renewed and widespread recognition of the significance of accreditation for the sector can also be considered in this light. Such enhanced understanding was commented on across the stakeholders consulted.

Related to this is the improved positioning of the voluntary sector from a young people's workforce perspective, particularly as regards its own sustainability and potential to continue delivering effective services into the future. The training of the workforce through YPWRP's Progress was a commonly noted theme in contributing to this, as was the enhanced capacity of organisations offering training resulting from the accreditation and increased experience and expertise gained. The bursaries offered to organisations to become accredited training centres are significant here. As representatives of these organisations noted, they now had a much better understanding of what they would need to do in order to gain accredited status for additional courses in the future, and would continue to develop and use that knowledge when planning future training. In addition, as an NTO representative commented in discussing their view that the voluntary sector often offers higher quality training but cannot always evidence it:

"The ... training will help sustain some organisations that sell training, as they have skills at the right level to compete on a level playing field with the private sector". (NTO representative)

The research also identified concrete examples of the way organisations planned to seek to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes generated. The lead delivery contractor, for example, has secured strategic partnership funding from the DfE to continue to develop the infrastructure and approach established through YPWRP's Progress. Likewise, one of the RDAs described how they had accessed additional funding to continue workforce development within the voluntary sector.

Interestingly, some interviewees also raised the issue of linking in with the Big Society agenda as a route to progressing the approach taken. As one interviewee put it this approach was "...very timely..." from the perspective of the need to grow capacity not just in relation to voluntary sector organisations, but also in respect of volunteering more generally. Future funding opportunities from the perspective of supporting the Big Society agenda were thus raised as a possibility to support, build on, and continue the training and development infrastructure that the strand put in place.

3.5.2 Strategic and Operational Relationships and Infrastructure

A key legacy discussed by a range of interviewees relates to the strategic and operational relationships that have emerged through the strand, allied to the wider developments in infrastructure of which these relationships are part. As an NDP representative noted, the infrastructure developed in terms of partnership working and relationships generated "...is invaluable ... it's a very strong infrastructure and it would be a huge shame to disband it". As discussed throughout, the delivery infrastructure connected to YPWRP's Progress was widely seen as a key legacy with the potential for sustainability. Indeed, these developments can be viewed as representing a strategic step-change in respect of the place of training in the sector, the importance ascribed to it, and the legacy infrastructure offered to continue its delivery.

Similarly, as an RDA representative commented in respect of YPWRP's Progress, "it has connected training providers in ways they hadn't been connected before", with there being an interest in continuing to collaborate and share information post March 2011. Such developments were seen as offering a clear legacy and considerable potential for enhanced joint working to continue. Numerous examples of new or enhanced strategic partnerships and operational relationships were also cited. These encompassed organisations working collaboratively in consortia to develop training and bid for funding, increased linkages and understanding between organisations with a strategic role and remit in the sector, and a range of working relationships that those involved felt would continue.

3.5.3 Products and materials developed through the strand

The final aspect of legacy widely discussed by participants in the research relates to the supporting products and materials developed through YPWRP's Progress. The database of qualification units developed to support implementation was most commonly cited, though all relevant products and materials were generally seen as a positive legacy. As discussed in section 3.3.2 the database was universally welcomed by stakeholder groups, with interviewees also commonly noting that this could represent one of the key legacies of the strand. Likewise, the familiarisation training materials, as well as the broad curriculum developed as part of YPWRP's Progress, were widely and positively discussed from a legacy and sustainability standpoint.

3.5.4 Challenges to sustainability

While the above discussion offers significant evidence of the positive and sustainable legacy from the strand, a number of interviewees from all the relevant stakeholder groups felt that there were also challenges to ensuring this sustainable and positive legacy. In part these related to uncertainty on the part of many stakeholders as to the intellectual property and copyright status of the products and materials developed. The widespread perception was that if incorrectly handled this could lead to the materials not being available for use within the voluntary sector. A number of interviewees commented that they felt it was important to maintain the availability of the products and materials along with the opportunity to use them.

A further challenge to sustainability related to the compressed timescales available for the implementation of YPWRP's Progress, and the need as one of the RDAs noted to, "...scramble to deliver the training places...". Concerns in this area were particularly prevalent amongst

stakeholder groups that formed part of the YPWRP's Progress delivery infrastructure. A number of interviewees expressed concern that the pressures faced in delivery compromised the ability of those involved to think about and apply their focus to maximising the potential legacy of YPWRP's Progress.

Finally, concerns over future policy direction and the availability of funding to further develop and expand the gains made through YPWRP's Progress and the VSCB strand were widely noted. The potential lack of continuing support and funding for the approach developed was reflected in particular by one NTO representative who discussed the relevance of the Big Society agenda, noting that a lack of support in light of this would be surprising. As the interviewee commented:

"If we want the VCS to blossom there has to be some element of funding that meets their needs". (NTO representative)

3.6 Conclusion

The overall design of the VSCB strand and the YPWRP's Progress workstream, and the approach taken to develop them, were effective and appropriate in terms of meeting the workforce development needs of the sector. There is an evident appetite and requirement for the training and infrastructural development embodied in the strand. The approach of consulting extensively with the sector in informing this was well received and effective. Likewise, it is clear that through its design and approach YPWRP's Progress has offered a range of opportunities to organisations and individuals within the voluntary sector that they would otherwise not have been able to access.

In light of the extensive challenges faced in implementation, it is clear that a considerable amount has been achieved in establishing the YPWRP's Progress project and successfully delivering the different elements within it. Within the constraints faced, the project has been implemented in a broadly effective and efficient manner. Where implementation worked less well or faced challenges this can be traced to the compressed timescales for delivery that YPWRP's Progress encountered. Some notable lessons can be drawn from this experience. These revolve around the time that approaches such as YPWRP's Progress require to be developed and delivered, the need for clear planning and monitoring of intended outputs, the significance of effective and 'fit for purpose' IT systems to support delivery, and the need to ensure effective linkages between different delivery areas and levels in complex and large scale training initiatives.

There is strong evidence that the VSCB strand achieved its key intended outcomes around capacity building and up-skilling within the sector to a considerable extent. Voluntary sector workers of varying backgrounds have certainly become better equipped to meet the demands of joint working and to effectively deliver IYS.³⁴ Central to this was the development of an effective

³⁴ The intended outcome to which this refers (see diagram on page 32) also involved better equipping workers to meet the then Government's Every Child Matters agenda. While this was no longer policy at the time of the strand's full implementation many of the themes connected to the agenda, such as enhancing integrated working, remain relevant to the assessment.

approach to training delivery that was very well received by those benefitting. For individuals the training received had an evident positive impact on their ability to undertake their work and volunteering roles, with this also being linked to the strand's success in meeting its intended outcome around improving skills and qualification levels.

Positive impacts for those receiving training in turn had obvious benefits for their organisations and led to significant achievement against another intended strand impact – that of improving service delivery to young people. While quantifying the degree of enhanced outcomes for young people stemming from this is difficult there was some strong indicative evidence of this occurring, or at least being likely to occur. For a range of organisations YPWRP's Progress has clearly built capacity in terms of their ability to deliver training, their understanding of workforce development requirements and approaches, and their positioning in the wider context of service delivery to young people. Again, such outcomes contribute to the good level of achievement against the overall objectives and intended impacts of the strand, particularly in respect of its aim of developing a sustainable training and capacity building mechanism for the sector.

Collectively, the significant level of positive outcomes in these areas can reasonably be considered to represent a strategic 'step-change' for workforce development in respect of the sector. This is apparent in terms of impacts on the significance with which training is viewed by the sector, the greater importance ascribed to accreditation, the use of YPWRP's Progress to significantly up-skill the workforce and capacity build the sector, and the notable legacy infrastructure offered with the potential to support and inform related approaches.

More broadly, there is strong evidence of the likely legacy resulting from the outcomes discussed, along with the potential degree to which these can be sustained. This can be linked to the overall approach taken, along with the specific design and development of the YPWRP's Progress project. A clear strategic legacy has been established in terms of enhanced capacity within the sector, an infrastructure with the potential to support workforce development in future, a range of new and enhanced partnerships and relationships, and key products and materials to support further developments and improvements in service delivery. While there are potential challenges in sustaining this legacy, such as budgetary constraints, it is evident that a strong basis has been developed to support this.

4.0 Common Platform of Skills and Competences Strand

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the design and development, implementation, and outcomes evident from the Common Platform strand and its constituent workstreams. As a number of the products produced under the strand have only recently been finalised, a key focus of the chapter is also on the potential that they have to meet their objectives moving forward. The workstreams considered are: Workforce Development for Integrated Youth Support (WFD for IYS); Skills Development Framework (SDF); Apprenticeship Framework for Integrated Youth Support (AFIYS); and Foundation Degree (FD) Framework for Working Together for Young People.

Evidence is drawn from the dedicated consultations held in relation to each workstream detailed in section 1.2, along with consultations undertaken with stakeholders at the Common Platform strand level and YPWRP programme level where relevant. Following analysis of the individual workstreams the chapter considers the Common Platform strand as a whole, drawing principally on evidence gathered from the series of consultations undertaken at the strand level.³⁵ To provide a sense of how the different workstreams within the Common Platform strand fit together, and to highlight its intended outcomes and impacts, the diagram on page 58 illustrates the logic or 'theory of change' that lies behind the strand's development.

4.2 Workforce Development for IYS Areas workstream

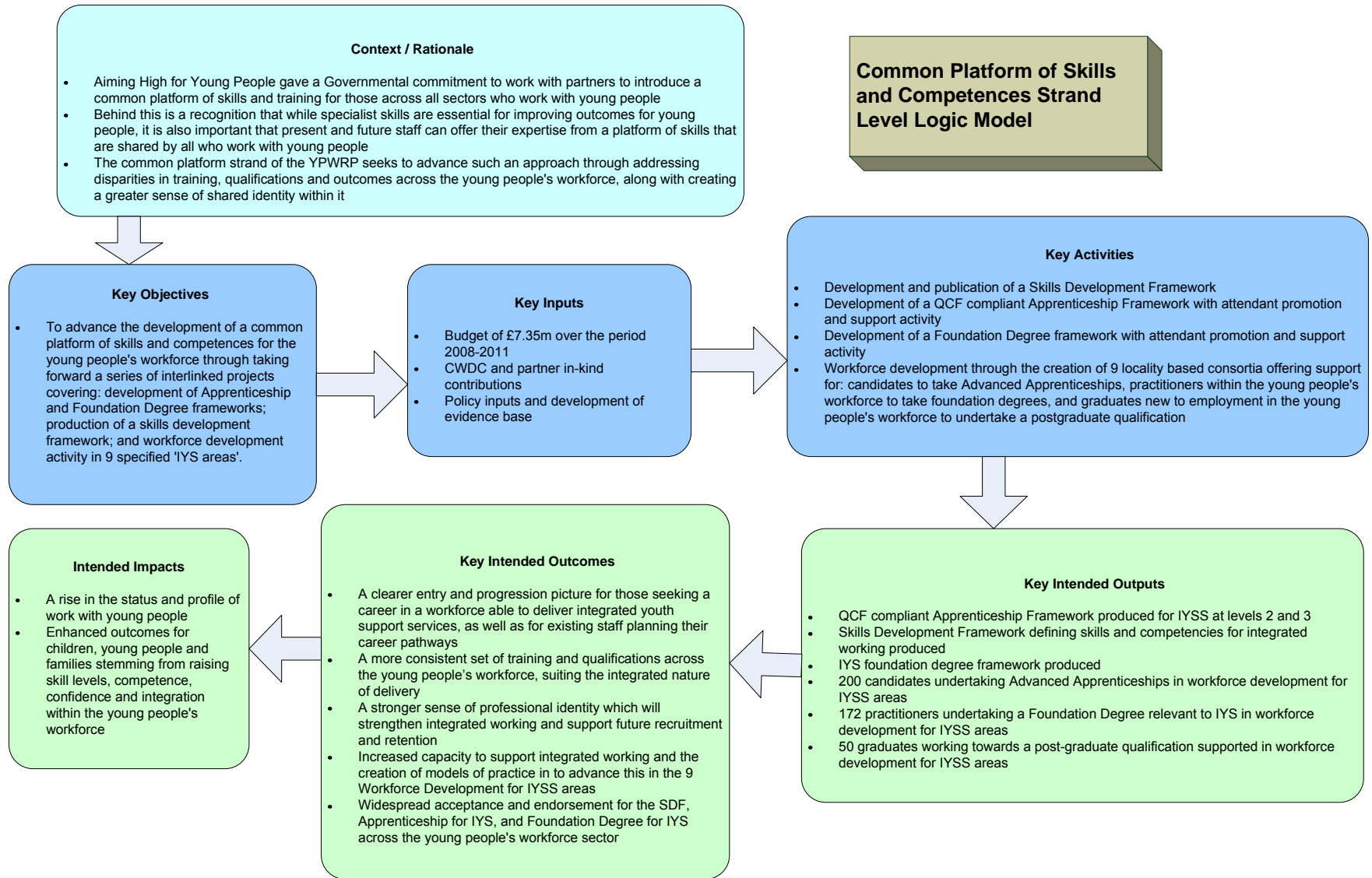
4.2.1 Overview of the WFD for IYS workstream

The WFD for IYS workstream involved the development of nine locality based consortia of voluntary, independent and statutory sector organisations. Support was provided to develop each partnership with the intention of establishing an improved, sustainable infrastructure and set of strategic relationships able to support the implementation of integrated working. The intention was that each consortium would help create improved capacity to support training and continuous professional development (CPD) in the context of IYS, along with creating potentially transferrable 'models of practice'. Bids for funding were assessed according to the potential for advancing IYS in the areas concerned.

A further workstream objective was to deploy this increased capacity to deliver training and CPD through each consortium. This supported varying numbers of individuals funded through the YPWRP to take Advanced Apprenticeships (AAs), Foundation Degrees (FDs) and post-graduate qualifications through a Graduate Recruitment Scheme (GRS) around integrated or joint working. Some consortia supported learners in all three of these groups; others supported learners from two out of the three groups. Through supporting learners and developing the relationships referred to, the intention of the workstream was also to ensure that integrated or joint working was more apparent and recognisable as a 'reality' in the funded IYS areas.

³⁵ See section 1.2 for an explanation of the different evaluation 'levels' and what these involve

Figure 4.1 Common Platform Strand level logic model



For the workstream as a whole target outputs were established on the basis of seeking to support 200 Advanced Apprentices, 172 individuals to take Foundation Degrees and 50 graduates working towards a post-graduate qualification through the GRS.

4.2.2 Approach to evaluating the WFD for IYS workstream

Reflecting the aims of the workstream detailed above the diagram on page 60 traces out the 'theory of change' behind the intervention, hence providing a basis with which to assess the workstream overall. To inform this assessment, telephone interviews were undertaken with the nominated lead individual from each of the nine consortia areas receiving funding in phase one of the research.³⁶ This was complemented in phase two by the following elements:

- Visits to five of the WFD for IYS consortia areas, with each visit involving interviews with consortia leads and partners, participants supported to take AAs, FDs, and post-graduate qualifications, individuals mentoring participants, and employers providing placements. A total of 41 interviews were undertaken across these groups as part of the five visits.
- A Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) survey of a sample of 103 participants who have received support to undertake AAs (46 participants surveyed), FDs (41 participants surveyed), and post-graduate qualifications (16 participants surveyed).
- Assessment of performance against planned outputs from the workstream.

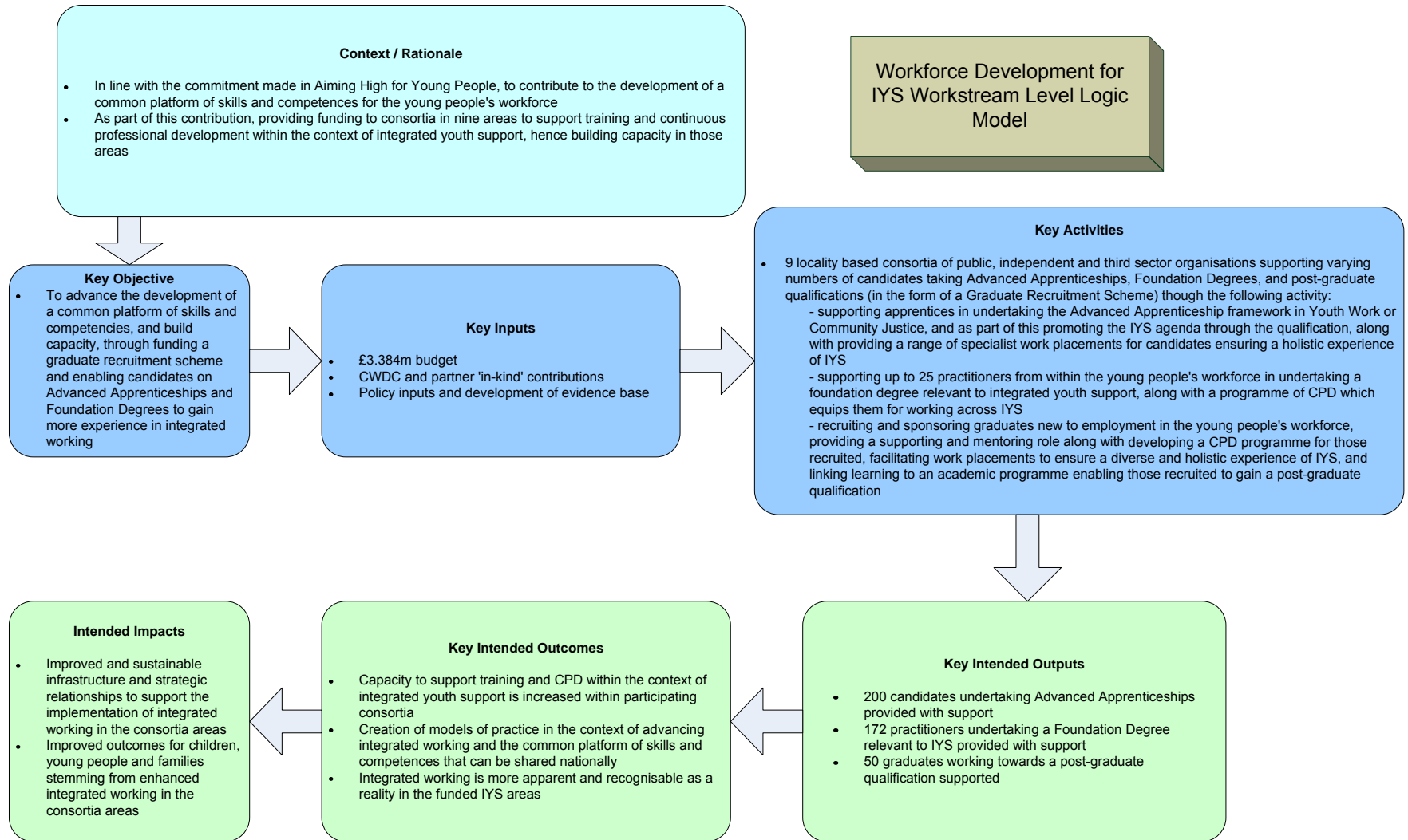
4.2.3 Outline of the remainder of the section

The remainder of the section focuses on the following areas in turn:

- The design and development of the WFD for IYS workstream.
- Implementation of the workstream.
- Outcomes from the workstream.
- Legacy and sustainability considerations in respect of the workstream.
- Conclusions from evaluating the workstream, with reference to its intended outcomes and impacts as per the diagram on page 60.

³⁶ Phase one of the research was undertaken in September and October 2010 leading to an interim report in November 2011. Phase two was undertaken in January and February 2011 to inform this final evaluation report.

Figure 4.2 WFD for IYS workstream level logic model



4.2.4 Design and initial development of the WFD for IYS workstream

In the main, evidence relating to initial design and development emerged in phase one of the research through interviews with the consortia leads. Different approaches were taken to consortia development, ranging from the pragmatic in terms of formalising existing steering groups to the development of new partnerships and relationships. The process of development varied, with some leads describing the experience as 'tough' and 'challenging', whereas in other instances initial development of the consortia and the activity involved went more smoothly.

Issues faced included differences between the culture and working practices of the statutory and voluntary sectors, and in a minority of cases a sense that the partnership was not fully equal and was being dominated by the statutory sector. Geography was also identified as an issue by those consortia leads where partnerships were spread across a large area. The political context at the time of the phase one research, along with uncertainty in relation to spending cuts, were additionally reported to have caused some issues. Specific difficulties were reported in some areas due to recruitment freezes. In the case study visits in phase two of the research it appeared that some of these issues had been resolved over time as the consortia and their relationships 'bedded in', though geography was again cited as a challenge for those consortia covering a large area. In addition, issues around budget cuts have remained a challenge to those implementing the workstream.

On the whole consortia leads and other consortia members consulted in both phases of the research felt that design and development of their approaches had gone relatively well. A number of aspects to the design of the approaches were viewed as significant in helping to develop and embed a focus on IYS and joint working. These included establishing a common induction process for learners supported, and using the approach adopted to facilitate greater understanding of the range of functions being undertaken amongst partnership members. The focus on designing an approach which sought to encompass partners from both the statutory and voluntary sectors was viewed as a positive aspect, despite some initial difficulties over understanding and use of different terminology between the sectors.

In terms of key learning points emerging from the experience, two main themes emerged consistently. Firstly the need for more attention at the outset around planning for successful delivery was noted, including placing greater emphasis on defining key roles for implementation within the consortia. Secondly, a number of consortia leads also identified the need for greater clarity around project objectives amongst consortia members, ensuring that all those involved in the process understood what delivery of the approach being developed would entail.

4.2.5 Implementation and performance of the WFD for IYS workstream

Consideration of implementation and performance is divided into a number of sub-sections:

- Initial commentary on the context surrounding the workstream's implementation.
- Examination of consortia lead and consortia members' perspectives around implementation.
- Examination of issues related to implementation from the perspective of other stakeholder groups – mainly learners on the AA, FD, and GRS but also mentors and employers.
- Assessment of workstream performance in terms of meeting target outputs.
- A summary of key findings relating to implementation.

4.2.5.1 The external context surrounding implementation

It is important to place the implementation of the workstream in context. At the time of phase one of the research, initial implementation was made difficult due to delays caused by the 2010 General Election. By the time of phase two, the context of large spending cuts in the public sector was widely acknowledged to have had an impact on the delivery of activity. In one area it was announced that universal youth services would no longer be provided by the Local Authority (LA), with provision offered where possible by the community and voluntary sector. This impacted on the consortium concerned given that some learners were at the time placed in LA provision under threat of closure. Overall therefore, as a number of those involved in consortia noted, ensuring that IYS and the approach taken remained a priority was a challenge.

4.2.5.2 Perspectives of consortia leads and members on implementation

In light of the above context, on the whole those with an overview of activity felt that implementation of activities had progressed well. In the phase two visits both consortia leads and representatives of other consortia members stated that there were relatively few implementation issues encountered. Those raised tended to relate to difficulties identified in the phase one consultations, notably problems in identifying suitable placements for some of the learners being supported. Again, this was related back to the external context noted above.

A number of other implementation challenges and issues were raised and discussed in both phases of the research. Some areas initially struggled to find providers for the courses being offered to learners, though in the main this was felt to have been resolved. However, it was also noted that some lessons could be drawn from this. Part of the issue was one of timing. For example, the timeframe for offering FD places was cited as a challenge in terms of having to fit with the academic year, which did not necessarily fit in with the contracted milestones to which consortia leads were working. Effective planning in light of such considerations was thus raised as a learning point. Likewise in areas where extensive pre-existing relationships with training providers were in place, the consortia involved were quicker to implement workstream activity and secure places for learners. Again this was seen as instructive for the future.

In some instances it was noted that employers were reluctant to allow employees time off from work to be able to study. While not seen as a major issue, this required some negotiation on the part of those involved with co-ordinating the consortia. In terms of implementation within the consortia themselves, the lack of capacity within some voluntary sector partners to absorb some of the additional work required to implement the approach was also cited. Specifically for the AA candidates, there was also a feeling amongst areas that had recruited particularly 'hard to reach' groups that the support required was greater than anticipated. Consortia leads and members raising these issues felt that they had managed to address them, but that there may be learning points around the amount of management and delivery co-ordination input required.

Another learning point highlighted was the need to ensure that a range of employers across the IYS localities not directly involved in co-ordinating activity have more input. This was viewed as significant to get feedback on the support offered to learners and how this was impacting on employees and their organisations. In those areas where such an approach was developed, it

was seen as useful in terms of gaining employer engagement and input into implementation. Where this engagement was less apparent it was recognised as having caused other issues, though the limits of the workstream in being able to force such engagement should be noted. Several interviewees nonetheless highlighted a need to find more effective routes to engage and communicate with the managers and employers of learners, and with employers who might be able to offer placements. This was linked to the issue of finding suitable placements for Advanced Apprentices in particular, with there being a perceived lack of understanding amongst some managers when this was not possible. The frustration caused is reflected in the comment:

"...people only seem to live in their own bubble, and they don't realise that we've got nearly forty people on this programme". (Consortia Lead)

Related to issues around engagement, the external context outlined above affected some areas in terms of securing the engagement of more senior staff in consortia member organisations. The perception of interviewees was that budget reductions and other pressures compromised this engagement, which they viewed as important for progressing some of the wider and more strategic aims of the WFD for IYS activity. As one interviewee noted:

"The project is not seen as core business anymore. While certain elements have given a really good insight into partnership arrangements and working, the ... council won't lead on it". (Consortia Lead).

Difficulties occasioned by budget reductions and restructuring in consortia organisations were clearly a wider challenge in some instances. In several cases there were redundancies or the threat of this amongst members of staff with direct responsibility for WFD for IYS activity. Where this was the case other staff members took responsibility for the activity, and other contingency plans were put in place. Despite this such difficulties were seen as hampering implementation.

Finally, there was a broadly positive reception with regards to the support offered from the contractor engaged by CWDC to oversee and assist with delivery. The majority of consortia leads noted that the contractor was supportive when needed. However, some consortia leads and members did comment that they would have benefited from a clearer remit and guidance from CWDC about how to 'best use' the support of the contractor.

4.2.5.3 Perspectives of other stakeholders around implementation

Both the case study visits and the CATI survey of learners taking AAs, FDs, and post-graduate qualifications provide some useful evidence on implementation from perspectives other than those of consortia representatives. In general, this evidence suggests that implementation relating to the support offered to learners was effective and worked well. In terms of recruitment and induction of learners, while a variety of approaches were taken to this from the perspective of the different groups of learners their experience of these aspects was broadly positive. Local inductions for Advanced Apprentices and those on the GRS were well received. As revealed by the CATI survey of 46 Advanced Apprentices, as table 4.1 shows 32 of those surveyed rated their initial induction as 'good' or 'very good'. Similarly, as shown in table 4.2, of the 16 GRS participants surveyed, all those who reported having an induction and who gave a response rated the induction as either 'average', 'good' or 'very good'. The perspectives of GRS and AA participants consulted during the case study visits reflected these positive views.

Table 4.1 Views of Advanced Apprentices on induction processes

Question	Response	Count
How would you rate the initial induction process for the Advanced Apprenticeship?	Very poor	1
	Poor	0
	Average	10
	Good	13
	Very good	19
	Don't know/Don't remember	1
	No induction received	2
	Total	46

Source: CATI survey of WFD for IYS Apprentices

Table 4.2 Views of GRS participants on induction processes

Question	Response	Count
How would you rate any local induction process for the Graduate Recruitment Scheme?	Very poor	0
	Poor	0
	Average	3
	Good	6
	Very good	5
	Don't know / Don't remember	1
	No induction received	1
	Total	16

Source: CATI survey of WFD for IYS GRS participants

Issues raised in relation to the induction process during the case study visits came mainly from those undertaking the Foundation Degree, wherein a dedicated local induction was not stipulated as a requirement to be provided by the consortia co-ordinating activity.³⁷ Concerns were raised by participants who had been away from education for a number of years, and had to adapt to a number of unfamiliar university procedures.

The mixed views of FD participants surveyed in the CATI survey around their experience of inductions at the institutions where they took their courses reflect these issues. As table 4.3 shows, of the 41 participants surveyed, seven rated their induction experience as 'poor' and a further 13 as 'average', with only seven rating this as 'very good'. This gives further evidence to suggest that the common induction delivered through the WFD for CATI consortia to those taking AAs and those on the GRS appears to be a suitable and beneficial approach.

³⁷ For clarity, it should be noted that 'Common Induction' in the case of the WFD for IYS workstream refers to local inductions organised by the consortia delivering activity. It is separate and distinct from the CWDC Common Induction Standards, details of which are at <http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/induction-standards/materials>

Table 4.3 Views of Foundation Degree participants on induction processes

Question	Response	Count
How would you rate any initial induction process for the Foundation Degree at the institution delivering the degree?	Very poor	0
	Poor	7
	Average	13
	Good	9
	Very good	7
	Don't know/Don't remember	1
	No induction received	4
	Total	41

Source: CATI survey of WFD for IYS Foundation Degree participants

In terms of learners interviewed as part of the case study visits, the majority were positive about their involvement with WFD for IYS activity. Issues raised were for the most part associated with difficulties with arranging placements for AA participants and the level of work required. This was noted across the three groups of learners but more commonly amongst those undertaking AAs and FDs. A number of learners stated that their workload was greater than they had anticipated, and the pressures of working and studying concurrently were also expressed.

It also seems apparent that suitable courses were arranged for learners, given that the CATI surveys reveal high levels of satisfaction with them across the three learner 'groups'. As table 4.4 shows, 42 of 46 Advanced Apprentices rated their course as either 'good' or 'very good'.

Table 4.4 Views of Advanced Apprentices on their course

Question	Response	Count
In terms of the Advanced Apprenticeship itself, how would you rate the course?	Very poor	0
	Poor	0
	Average	3
	Good	17
	Very good	25
	Don't know	1
	Total	46

Source: CATI survey of WFD for IYS Apprentices

Equivalent figures for those taking the FD were 34 out of 41 participants surveyed, and for the GRS participants in terms of post-graduate qualifications this figure was 12 out of the 13.³⁸ Additional CPD support for learners through WFD for IYS activity outside of the actual courses was similarly well received across all learner groups. Of 23 Advanced Apprentices who reported receiving such assistance and rated it, 19 saw this as either 'good' or 'very good'. Equivalent figures for those taking FDs were 22 out of 27 learners, and for the GRS 14 out of 15.³⁹

³⁸ Full details of the responses to all 'closed' CATI questions are at Annex one.

³⁹ See tables in Annex one for full details.

While there were some issues in sourcing work placements, the placements themselves were well received and seen as appropriate by AA and GRS learners.⁴⁰ Evidence gathered through the case study visits and CATI survey shows that Advanced Apprentices in particular were almost universally positive concerning their experiences and the range and variety they offered. In terms of the CATI survey, as table 4.5 shows of the 25 AA learners who had experienced work placements and rated them none saw these as 'very poor' or 'poor', with the majority (19 out of 25) rating them as 'very good'. Similarly, for those on the GRS 15 out of the 16 participants surveyed rated their work placements as either 'good' or 'very good'.⁴¹

Table 4.5 Views of Advanced Apprentices on their work placements

Question	Response	Count
Overall, how would you rate the work placements?	Very poor	0
	Poor	0
	Average	2
	Good	4
	Very good	19
	Don't know	1
	Total	26

Source: CATI survey of WFD for IYS Apprentices

The only area where some learners offered less positive views concerns the level and nature of information received prior to engaging with WFD for IYS. Prior to starting on the programme, a variety of different methods were used to contact learners and provide them with information. However, the level of information received was raised as an area of concern for at least some learners as part of the case study visits. There was often a gap between learners being accepted onto the programme and hearing any further information about it. However, many learners consulted were happy with the amount of information received, feeling that this enabled them to have a good understanding of the activity and what it entailed.

Finally, in terms of implementation from the perspective of other stakeholders, the mentoring and additional support outside that discussed above appeared to have worked well. While mentoring and additional support for participants was undertaken differently within each consortia area, and amongst the different learner 'groups' involved, the perspectives of those acting as mentors and learners on this aspect of the activity were very positive. Mentors raised no concerns about the role, and the general perspective was that they had received adequate guidance and felt able to undertake the role effectively. A number of learners interviewed in the case study visits also commented positively on the individuals providing them with mentoring and other support. In terms of views on additional CPD support including mentoring, the CATI surveys again strongly support the positive views offered in this area in the case study visits. For AA learners, of the 23 who reported receiving additional CPD support 21 rated this as 'good'

⁴⁰ Work placements were not a contractual part of WFD for IYS activity for those taking Foundation Degrees.

⁴¹ See tables in Annex one for full details.

or 'very good'. The equivalent figure for FD learners was 22 out of 27, and for those on the GRS 14 out of 15 who reported receiving support from mentors rated this as 'good' or 'very good'.⁴²

4.2.5.4 Performance of the WFD for IYS workstream against output targets

Performance of the workstream in meeting output targets relating to candidate numbers was broadly positive. However, targets for AA and FD places had to be revised down from those initially set (initial figures are those detailed in the diagram on page 60 showing targets of 200 AAs, 172 FDs, and 50 participants for the GRS). This was due to local conditions changing amongst consortia partners resulting in reduced delivery capacity, allied to a small number of 'drop-outs' amongst Advanced Apprentices and those taking FDs. Final candidate numbers were 173 AAs against a revised target of 188, 157 FDs against a revised target of 165, and 53 GRS participants against the original target of 50.

4.2.5.5 Key findings concerning implementation

Despite considerable challenges in implementing the workstream resulting from external factors, on the whole the evidence indicates that implementation of WFD for IYS activity was both effective and efficient. The evidence from the perspective of learners supported through the workstream is particularly compelling in this regard. Accepting this, a number of lessons for future approaches of this type can be discerned, including:

- The need to engage employers as widely as possible in supporting implementation.
- The significant level of support certain learners engaged are likely to require.
- The notable efforts required for co-ordination and delivery amongst core partners involved.
- The need for effective planning that links delivery timescales to those of the academic year where particular courses are integral to the approach developed.
- Where possible ensuring the engagement of senior staff with decision making powers in order to maximise the wider intended strategic outcomes of such approaches.
- Ensuring learners receive clear and timely guidance on participation and what it will entail.

4.2.6 Outcomes from the WFD for IYS workstream

A range of evidence relating to outcomes can be drawn from the phase one interviews, phase two case study visits and CATI survey. This is considered in respect of three main areas:

- Outcomes for learners supported to undertake AAs, FDs, and post-graduate qualifications.
- Outcomes for employers of learners and organisations offering placements to them.
- Wider infrastructural, strategic partnership and relationship development.

4.2.6.1 Outcomes for learners supported through the workstream

Evidence suggests that engagement with the workstream had a range of positive outcomes for learners across each of the three learner 'groups'. The significance of these outcomes is heightened given that in many cases learners stated that they would not have been able to take the qualifications offered, or similar, in the absence of the WFD for IYS funding. This was particularly the case for those learners taking FDs and on the GRS, where the CATI survey

⁴² See tables in Annex One for full detail on the findings of the CATI surveys in this area.

revealed that 26 out of the 41 learners and 13 out of 16 learners respectively felt that they would not have taken a similar qualification (the equivalent AA figure was 19 out of the 46 learners).⁴³

As revealed through the case study visits, the flexibility of study arrangements and the ability to continue working were seen as especially important in enabling those with other commitments to receive the learning and support offered. Several learners also commented on the unique nature of the support offered, citing how unusual it was to see training opportunities funded in this way. A number of FD learners also commented that they had never thought they would be able to study at degree level. As one noted:

"The opportunity to do a degree was something that I'd never had when I was younger, so the opportunity to do it now was a brilliant opportunity." (Participant, FD).

For some learners interviewed in the case study visits, having the opportunity to get involved with the youth sector was seen as helping to fulfil a long held ambition. As one learner taking an AA noted: "I've wanted to be a youth worker since the age of twelve".

Through the 'open' questions in the CATI surveys and case study visits a variety of wider positive outcomes were identified by learners across all three learner 'groups' including:

- Increased confidence.
- Having the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills.
- Exposure to new or different environments.
- Gaining invaluable on-the-job experience.
- Increased understanding of working with young people.
- Gaining insight into different options for working with young people.
- Having the opportunity to network with other organisations within the voluntary sector and the ability to establish new relationships.
- The benefits of being able to link theory to practice.
- Developing greater understanding of Government policy and how this influences work.

The following learner comments from the case study visits are illustrative of some of these benefits: "I've gained a lot more information I can use with young people". (Participant, AA) "I'm more confident about being a youth worker". (Participant, FD) "[Involvement has] ... given me the courage of my convictions to make decisions". (Participant, GRS) Gathering direct evidence of outcomes for young people resulting from the engagement of learners with the workstream was largely beyond the scope of the evaluation. However, these comments along with the above discussion of outcomes do suggest that there are likely to be positive impacts for young people that can be traced from learner engagement with WFD for IYS activity.

A number of consortia representatives consulted on the case study visits also commented on positive impacts for learners, including gaining confidence in their every day work, establishing new friendships and raising expectations. As one consortia representative commented:

⁴³ See tables in Annex One for full detail on the findings of the CATI surveys in this area.

"It's given five or six naturally able employees an opportunity to get a leg up into professionalising and accrediting the natural skills that they have in being able to communicate with young people". (Consortia member representative)

Very few negative outcomes were cited by learners. Issues raised in a minority of cases tended to be connected to the unanticipated workload involved and the challenges this caused, a lack of information prior to becoming engaged with activity leading to a feeling that the experience was not exactly as expected, and some uncertainty and worry connected to communication issues. The latter was evident between those running the qualifications learners were enrolled on and their employers, and / or between learners and their contacts within the consortia.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence for positive outcomes for learners can be drawn from responses to the CATI survey wherein each learner 'group' was asked whether they felt that involvement would help their career. Of those surveyed, 45 out of 46 taking the AA qualification felt it would do so, as did 41 of the 42 taking the FD, and all 16 on the GRS.⁴⁴ Given the challenging economic conditions and budgetary reductions facing the sector at the time of the survey, such positive views can be considered as particularly notable.

The CATI survey also offered strong evidence to support the view that engagement with activity impacted positively on learners' ability to work in integrated youth support. Of the AA learners surveyed, 41 out of 46 rated their experience of the course and other support offered as being 'good' or 'very good' in these terms. Equivalent figures for the FD were 37 out of 41, and for the GRS 15 out of 16. In all cases where respondents did not rate the learning and support in this sense as 'good' or 'very good' the responses offered were 'average' or 'don't know'. No respondents across all three learner groups gave a rating of 'poor' or 'very poor'.⁴⁵

4.2.6.2 Outcomes for employers of learners and organisations offering placements

The case study visits offered an opportunity to consider outcomes for organisations connected to WFD for IYS activity from the perspective of their role as employers offering placements, and for those employers for whom learners worked. Employers releasing learners onto the courses offered tended to outline the benefits of being able to enrol their employees on programmes of higher level study without incurring the usual level of cost. Representatives commonly noted that without support from the workstream the ability to support this type of study could not have been afforded. In many instances employer representatives thus noted that their employees would not have received the support and engaged in the study available without the funding. As one representative noted of an employee accessing support to take an FD:

"She would never ever have thought of doing a degree or going to university. She did not consider herself bright enough". (Employer representative).

Employer representatives also stated that they were able to detect an increase in the confidence of their employees as a result of participation, with this having a positive effect on their work and employing organisations. As one representative noted this was helping to create a "more confident, more skilled workforce". Participation in activity on the part of their learners

⁴⁴ See tables in Annex One for full detail on the findings of the CATI surveys in this area.

⁴⁵ See tables in Annex One for full detail on the findings of the CATI surveys in this area.

was also noted by several interviewees to have had a positive impact on promoting integrated learning within their 'home' organisations. One employer representative noted of the learners engaged:

"It's been good for the rest of the team that others have come back and said 'oh, did you know about such as such?' [They] can see a bit more clearly the links that their work has to other areas." (Employer representative).

Positive outcomes were also noted by employer representatives from organisations offering placements to learners. Of those employers who had taken on an additional member of staff through the GRS or AA, representatives from the organisations concerned frequently cited increased capacity as one of the major benefits of engagement with the activity. One employer representative described the learners as "...a breath of fresh air..." within the organisation, while another highlighted how taking a learner on the GRS had helped to progress integrated working through introducing new ideas, learning and contacts to the organisation. In this case the representative commented: "It's helped to cement working together as an everyday thing".

Interestingly, employer representatives also often commented on the difference between those learners doing a short placement at their organisation and the benefit of having a learner on a longer term placement. The general perspective was that learners able to benefit from longer placements could become much more integrated into the organisation in question.

4.2.6.3 Wider outcomes on infrastructural, strategic partnership and relationship development

While much of the preceding discussion around outcomes has focused on learners benefitting from support, in light of the overall objectives of the workstream it is important to note that the research also highlighted a range of positive outcomes on infrastructural, strategic partnership and relationship development. Evidence for this is primarily drawn from the telephone interviews with consortia leads in phase one of the research, in addition to interviews with consortia leads and representatives of other consortia member organisations in the phase two case study visits.

In assessing these outcomes from the perspective of promoting integrated working, it is important to note that the localities involved were starting from a different level in terms of how far integrated or joint working was already evident. While in the majority of areas there was some evidence of existing integrated youth support, on the whole it was noted that there was not a clear focus or purpose to many of the existing arrangements. Only in a small minority of cases did interviewees indicate that good foundations for integrated and partnership working were already in place, and that approaches to develop this were well underway.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given this situation, in terms of overall outcomes those interviewed tended to state that the workstream had definitely helped to give impetus to the development of IYS in their areas. This was often related to the workstream providing an opportunity to strengthen links between the voluntary and statutory sectors. Where loose or informal procedures for IYS already existed, interviewees commented that the workstream had provided focus and structure to develop and embed the more informal practices already in place. In some instances, the workstream was used to embed pre-existing workforce development strategies into practice. A number of consortia representatives also commented that WFD for IYS activity

had helped to speed up the process of developing integrated youth support, in some cases building on existing relationships to facilitate this. As one interviewee noted:

"Pre existing relationships have blossomed under this initiative, and we have been able to showcase integration". (Consortia member representative)

In general, the approach taken was seen as heightening awareness of the possibilities for IYS and joint working amongst organisations involved in the consortia and more widely across local areas. This was viewed as being mainly facilitated by an increase in knowledge and networking opportunities provided. Some consortia members also noted that the workstream had provided impetus to support the development of IYS through making this, as one commented, "...a reality..." in their locality. As well as through relationship building at strategic levels, this was also generally connected to the ability to offer the funded training places through the workstream. As some of the consortia leads noted, the funding and opportunity to progress CPD in an integrated setting was particularly welcomed by a range of organisations.

Other ways the workstream was seen to have supported the development of IYS included helping to establish a common language and shared terminology across the voluntary and statutory sectors. Several interviewees noted how collaborative working had provided a much clearer understanding across sectors, opening up the possibility for consideration of cross sector career pathways. It was also widely noted that a 'community of learners' had developed, with support provided by those on the GRS to those taking AAs for example.

This theme of enhanced partnership working and the development of 'learning communities' reflects one of the most consistently cited and clear outcomes evident – a growth in strategic and operational partnerships widely perceived as offering evidence of an enhanced infrastructure to support integrated or joint working. Practical examples of this included:

- An increase in the number of local meetings catalysed through workstream activity.
- A greater realisation amongst partners of common interests and working practices.
- Enhanced understanding of the voluntary sector, and its strengths and capacity, on the part of those from the statutory sector.
- Partners submitting joint bids for additional delivery activities.
- Relationships stimulated with new providers and employers in some areas.
- The development of new networking opportunities and chances to transfer skills.

Connected to these examples, in the main interviewees from the consortia felt there was some evidence of the 'new models of practice' that the workstream sought to promote as an outcome emerging. However, it was clear that these 'new models' were often only apparent in a somewhat intangible way, encompassing a range of subtle changes to working practice and new developments rather than representing specific singular models that might be transferrable. In line with this some interviewees noted that it was perhaps too optimistic to think that wholesale differences in the way that IYS (and service delivery more broadly) functioned would be evident through workstream activity, accepting the fact that in a number of cases it had led to developments in this direction. These developments included:

- Activity by one consortium helping to inform redesign of a workforce development strategy.

- A wider stimulation of a new consideration of the role of CPD.
- Wider understanding of potential entry and cross-sectoral progression pathways.
- The development of an infrastructure to support IYS more generally.

As such, some of the 'building blocks' for the development of more integrated practice and joint working were seen as having been put in place. Likewise, the presence of concrete examples of more joined up working were widely noted. However, it was acknowledged that fully formed new models of practice and approaches would take a longer time to emerge. Interviewees also commonly felt that while considerable progress had been made, full achievement of some of the more ambitious intended workstream outcomes was compromised by the external pressures and factors discussed earlier. In some areas higher level strategic engagement in both statutory and voluntary sector organisations had been lessened due to a focus on dealing with budget restrictions and service restructuring. The loss of key staff involved with activity was also identified as a hindrance.

4.2.7 Legacy and sustainability considerations

As the above discussion suggests, a key legacy of WFD for IYS activity related to the notable growth in partnership and joint working at strategic and operational levels facilitated through the workstream. Increased understanding of the requirements for effective integrated and joint working, strategically and practically, was also widely cited. In this sense aspects of a legacy infrastructure to support joint working were generally acknowledged to be in place. The benefits for individual learners engaged, and subsequent positive effects for their organisations and service delivery to young people, represented the other main legacy widely agreed upon.

Views on the likely sustainability of these legacies were slightly more mixed. Some interviewees noted that whether or not funding to support learners to undertake qualifications remained, there would nonetheless be sustained outcomes in terms of partnerships and relationships. Others were more sanguine about the potential for this aspect to be sustained in the absence of funding and in light of the difficult current context surrounding youth services. There was thus a clear division of views around the extent to which partnerships and the focus on developing joint working would continue without dedicated funding and policy support.

As this discussion indicates, while there are clear positive legacies from the workstream likely to bring sustained benefits for individuals, organisations, and for wider service delivery, in other respects the full sustainability of positive outcomes is less certain. In particular, there is likely to be limited sustainability in terms of the model developed to support learners to gain qualifications and access other support around integrated working. The sustainability of some of the relationships and approaches to developing joint working established may also be lessened in the absence of the impetus provided by the workstream, and in light of a less clear external policy context around the value of integrated working itself.

4.2.8 WFD for IYS areas conclusion

Across the nine consortia areas the design and development of WFD for IYS activity was clearly challenging, though to varying degrees. Overall the development of the consortia and their approaches worked well, though with hindsight the need for more planning and a clearer

articulation of partner roles and responsibilities emerge as key learning points. Despite considerable challenges, evidence indicates that implementation of WFD for IYS activity was both effective and efficient. The perspective of learners supported through the workstream and their broadly positive experience is particularly compelling in this regard. A number of lessons for implementation of approaches of this type can be identified. These include the need to engage employers as widely as possible in supporting such activity, the notable efforts in terms of co-ordination and delivery of activity required, and the importance of engaging senior staff to maximise positive wider strategic outcomes around joint working.

Evidence also shows that the workstream led to a range of positive outcomes. These include notable outcomes for the individuals accessing support and training in enhancing their knowledge and skills, confidence, career development opportunities, understanding of requirements for joint working, and the ability to undertake work roles effectively. Some strong indicative evidence around likely enhanced outcomes for young people is also evident. The workstream also led to positive outcomes for employers releasing employees to take advantage of the training on offer, and for employers offering placements to learners. Finally, some of the most significant outcomes relate to the impetus provided to developing IYS in the consortia areas. These involve heightened awareness of joint working, and the development of a range of strategic and operational relationships contributing to an enhanced infrastructure with which to support such working.

In terms of achievement of the workstream's intended outcomes, capacity to support training and CPD in the consortia areas was certainly enhanced. Evidence of the creation of transferrable 'models of practice' was less tangible. Developments in this area encompassed a range of subtle changes to working practice and new activity rather than leading to specific singular models that might be transferrable nationally. It is fair to say however that integrated working is certainly more apparent and recognisable as a 'reality' in the consortia areas. There is also clear evidence of the workstream's contribution to developing an infrastructure and strategic relationships to support integrated working. Assessing impacts on young people was largely beyond the evaluation's scope. However, there is nonetheless some good indicative evidence that positive outcomes are likely to accrue through the training received by those working with young people, and through the positive effects apparent on service delivery.

There are clear positive legacies from the workstream that are likely to bring sustained benefits for individuals, organisations, and for wider service delivery around integrated working. In other respects the full sustainability of the positive outcomes noted is less certain. In particular, there is likely to be limited sustainability of the model developed around supporting learners to gain qualifications and other support. The sustainability of some of the relationships and approaches to developing joint working may also be lessened in the absence of the impetus provided by the workstream, and in light of a less clear policy context around the value of integrated working.

4.3 Skills Development Framework (SDF) workstream

4.3.1 Overview of the SDF workstream

The main workstream objective was the production of a SDF intended to support wider Common Platform strand objectives as detailed in the diagram on page 58. The SDF sought to define the skills and competences workers require as part of delivering integrated youth services, thus promoting greater coherence and unity. In its focus on integrated working, the SDF responded to existing sector specific skills and qualifications frameworks only partially reflecting the competences required in this area. The SDF seeks to: highlight career pathways; illustrate the skills, knowledge and competences individuals need to move up and across the workforce; and support workers to progress their careers. The SDF is intended to gain widespread acceptance amongst key stakeholders within the workforce, and to be reflected in standards and qualifications revision undertaken by relevant Sector Skills Councils (SSCs).

4.3.2 Approach to evaluating the SDF workstream

Reflecting the aims of the workstream, the diagram on page 75 traces out the 'theory of change' behind the development of the SDF. It thus identifies the rationale behind the framework's development, along with the key inputs, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes and impacts connected to it. This provides a basis with which to assess the workstream in terms of the processes leading to production of the SDF, and in terms of the SDF's utility for intended audiences and its potential to gain widespread acceptance. It should be noted that the second edition of the SDF was published in March 2011. The analysis that follows draws upon stakeholder views of the processes connected to its production, along with perspectives on the framework itself based on the first edition published in September 2010.

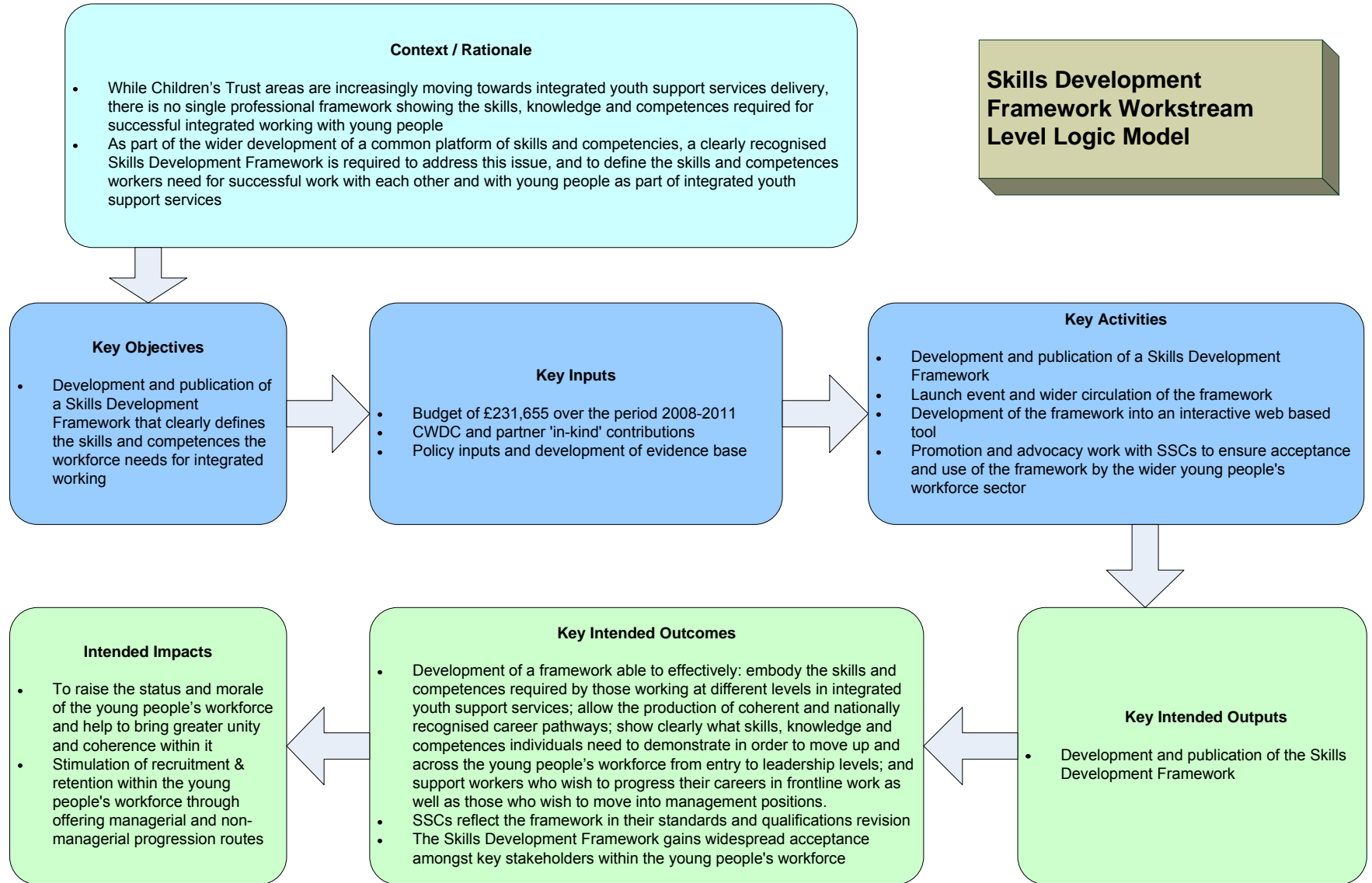
To inform this analysis, in depth telephone and face-to-face interviews were undertaken with stakeholders from relevant SSCs and sectoral bodies, the reference groups which played a role in developing the SDF, and wider stakeholders. This latter group included representatives of statutory and voluntary sector services along with representative organisations within the youth sector. Nine interviews were undertaken in phase one of the research with a further ten in phase two. These were complemented by consultations in both phases around other elements of the Common Platform strand, including those at the strand level.⁴⁶ Programme level interviews were also drawn on where appropriate. The assessment was completed through observation at two 'review events' held as part of the SDF's development in phase one.

4.3.3 Design and development of the SDF

Across all stakeholder groups, views on the design and development of the SDF were broadly positive. The role of the reference group established to support development was frequently highlighted as embodying a positive collaborative process. The group was seen as successful in ensuring different sectoral views were taken on board, facilitating a good relationship between academic thinking and practice requirements, ensuring that the framework was reflective of wider policy developments, and enabling open debate. However, in the phase two research some interviewees connected with SDF development noted that this involvement had lessened.

⁴⁶ See section 1.2 for an explanation of the 'levels' of the evaluation, including the Common Platform strand 'level'

Figure 4.3 Skills Development Framework logic model



The consultation and engagement in informing the SDF more broadly was also viewed positively. One representative from academia commented favourably on the fact that an effort was made to expand this process beyond the scope of those who would customarily be engaged. In respect of the consultation events another interviewee from a SSC noted that holding joint SDF and Apprenticeships events had proved useful given their inter-linkages.

Views of stakeholders on the promotion and advocacy work connected to the development and launch of the SDF were more mixed, though in phase two interviews the restrictions placed on communications and promotion activity were cited as a key aspect in this. However, accepting these constraints, in many cases interviewees in both phases of the research felt that the extent to which the SDF had received a wider profile outside of those closely connected to its development was uncertain or limited. Some interviewees did, however, feel that the promotional and advocacy work undertaken had positive elements. Several noted that the consultation events provided a good forum for promoting awareness, while one interviewee from the HE sector noted the use of CWDC's website as being "...effective and authoritative...".

4.3.4 Views on the SDF and its potential future use

4.3.4.1 Perspectives on the framework itself

In general, those interviewed in both phases of research and across the stakeholder groups covered viewed the SDF document as a positive development and a good tool for highlighting possible career progression routes. The majority of interviewees felt that the framework had been successful in terms of clearly reflecting and expressing the skills, knowledge and understanding required at different levels within the workforce. The document was also viewed as well structured and as having useful linkages to the QCF level descriptors. Accepting this, it was also noted that the framework needs employers, SSCs, and learning providers to map it to qualification requirements as an additional step.

The flexible and non-prescriptive nature of the framework was also commented on positively by some interviewees, particularly those from the academic sector. As one interviewee noted, it is important that the framework should represent an 'aspirational' model, commenting that:

"It is intended as something to aim towards, but not telling people exactly how to do it ... People remember the Connexions PA programme, which was very prescriptive and was parachuted-in ... The SDF is different because it provides that room for flexibility, creativity".
(HEI representative)

However, a number of interviewees from the different stakeholder groups consulted also noted this flexibility and non-prescriptive nature is somewhat 'double-edged'. In particular, the non-prescriptive and non-imposed nature of the framework was seen as potentially compromising the likelihood of widespread use. This was cited as particularly true in relation to some sectors within the workforce where as one interviewee from a SSC noted, "...people won't use things unless they are forced to...".

A number of those consulted felt that the framework set out clearly who its intended users are, and gave valuable practical examples of how it might be used. The incorporation of CWDC's Youth Professional Standards and the Common Core into the framework was also viewed

positively by those interviewees who commented on this. In general most of those consulted felt that the SDF had achieved its intended outcome around effectively embodying the skills and competences required of the workforce and highlighting career pathways.

The 'review events' following the publication of the first edition of the SDF attended by the evaluation team broadly confirmed the positive views highlighted. The flexibility of the SDF was cited, as was the view that the framework had a good potential to underpin approaches to integrated working in a number of respects. These included the potential to inform the job descriptions, to support transitions within and across the workforce, to enhance knowledge transfer and to support joint working. The SDF's format in clearly setting out skills expectations at different levels, and the ability to dip into the framework in a flexible way, was also noted.

More negative views in relation to the SDF tended to come from those interviewees with a strong link to a particular part of the young people's workforce, particularly those areas that might already be considered to have a strong and distinct professional identity. Such views were certainly in the minority and tended to revolve around questioning whether the SDF was actually required, or had utility in respect of the particular sector concerned because equivalent sector specific frameworks were already in existence. As one interviewee from a particular sector noted: "...from our [sectoral] perspective the SDF is unnecessary and ... more bureaucracy...". Another interviewee representing part of the workforce noted that the SDF was "great in theory but in practice an administrative nightmare", given that it would mean the levels of skills described would need to be translated into each discipline across the workforce.

However, views in relation to these themes were actually quite varied. Most interviewees who discussed this issue felt that there was a place for the SDF alongside existing equivalent sector specific frameworks. The issue was thus raised as to whether the SDF should have been more ambitious in terms of encompassing specialist as well as more generic skills. However, interviewees that raised this did recognise that such an approach would be very challenging. In general most interviewees felt that an appropriate balance was struck between promoting integrated working from a more unified perspective and recognising sectoral difference.

4.3.4.2 Use of the SDF

Despite the broadly positive views discussed, there was a tendency for interviewees to praise the SDF but to be less sanguine about its potential for ongoing use. A range of issues and concerns were raised in respect of this. These covered the external environment in which the framework was being launched, its current format in terms of length and complexity, uncertainty for some over the degree to which SSCs had 'bought in' to the framework and would reflect it in their work, the essentially 'voluntary' nature of its use, and a concern as to the degree to which employers would understand and use the SDF that stems from this. Again, these issues chimed closely with those raised at the 'review events' attended by the evaluation team

The main issue consistently raised concerning the likely utility and widespread adoption of the SDF related to perceptions of how usable it is in its current format. More specifically, not having an interactive e-tool version of the SDF was widely seen as potentially compromising the level of success such interviewees otherwise felt it might have. As one interviewee consulted at the programme level commented: "...it's a big issue and it's a big shame that it [the SDF] didn't go

to the next stage and become interactive...". In addition, an interviewee from one of the WFD for IYS area lead consortia partners noted that the SDF's relative complexity meant that, in their view, it was more likely to be understood and used by the academic community and providers involved in qualification development as opposed to employers.

In relation to these issues, at the time of the phase one research one of the interviewees from the academic sector noted that it might be possible to encourage use through providing practical 'case studies' of how the framework could be used. Another interviewee from an SSC reflected this view with the comment that: "...there is a need to imbue it [the SDF] with what happens on the ground and make it real...". At the time of writing in March 2011, the second edition of the framework had been published and it should be noted that some of these suggestions are reflected in added content including case studies and examples of use.

Another issue raised by several interviewees and attendees at the SDF consultation events was the essentially 'voluntary' nature of the framework in the sense that there was nothing 'forcing' it to be used. While this was recognised as being realistic given the character and varied nature of the workforce, the perspective of some interviewees was that nonetheless where use of similar products was voluntary they tended to be much less widely used. Connected to this is the view that employers would not necessarily have a driver to encourage them to engage with, understand, and use the framework. As a result, a number of interviewees from different stakeholder groups cited that ideally the SDF needed 'champions' in different areas of the workforce. The need for policy backing to encourage use was similarly raised by several interviewees who noted that the DfE had a potential role in promoting the SDF and its use.

A number of interviewees and SDF consultation event attendees also felt that external factors might hamper the SDF and its widespread use and adoption. These included the perception that if budgetary restrictions lead to workforce development becoming less of a priority support for and use of the framework might be affected. In addition, a small number of interviewees noted that ongoing flux and (in their view) confusion in the qualifications system as a whole meant that the SDF was being launched into an environment that was not particularly helpful. Finally, there was concern that a policy shift away from integrated working might mean that the SDF would not remain as useful as it otherwise might, this again linking to the point made above around the need for 'policy backing'.

While the evaluation elicited some evidence around planned use of the SDF by SSCs in terms of reflecting the framework in standards and qualifications revision, as a number of interviewees noted the degree of buy-in and support of key SSCs remains uncertain. In terms of actual and planned use, while the scope of the evaluation means that only an indicative snapshot can be provided, it is clear that the framework has been used in a number of contexts. These include use by HEIs in revising youth work courses and other related qualifications, and use in some of the WFD for IYS areas visited around revising job descriptions along with use in supervision and appraisal arrangements. Case studies included in the recently published version of the SDF in March 2011 also provide examples of use.

However, a number of interviewees consulted under the SDF workstream itself and those consulted in other parts of the evaluation reported limited or no use to date and / or no plans to

use the framework in future. Reasons for this tended to be related to uncertainty around backing for the framework and its place in Government policy, a view that other frameworks specific to certain sectors of the workforce were more applicable, and in a smaller number of instances a perception that the document was too complex for practical use. Thus, while the SDF certainly has been used, gaining a sense of the extent of this is difficult and there is some evidence to suggest that particular barriers are lessening the likelihood of use going forward.

4.3.5 SDF conclusion

The process leading to the development of the SDF appears to have been both effective and efficient in terms of gathering different perspectives to inform its production, and in ensuring that the framework was well received upon initial publication in terms of content and focus. The reference group established to support the SDF's development was clearly important in this. It is also evident that the framework itself is viewed very positively across a range of key stakeholders. Specifically, the framework was widely cited to be an effective tool for highlighting possible career progression, effective in embodying required skills and competences for the young people's workforce, and being clear and well structured in terms of its presentation. The framework can thus be seen as meeting its intended outcomes in this area to a high degree.

In respect of another intended outcome there is clearly evident concern that despite its strengths the likelihood of widespread use of the SDF is difficult to assess and uncertain. The environment into which it has been launched is a factor in this, as is reluctance on the part of some sectors within the workforce to engage fully with the framework. Evidence suggests that lack of encouragement for its use by key organisational stakeholders including representative bodies of particular sectors may, along with the SDF's uncertain place in relation to Government policy, be hindering widespread implementation. Accepting this, evidence suggests that relevant SSCs do intend to reflect the framework in standards and qualifications revision. However, it would appear that the framework is in need of 'champions' in different workforce areas, along with clear policy backing, to encourage use and implementation. In light of this the extent to which intended impacts around raising status and morale, stimulating recruitment and retention, and supporting skills development and progression will be achieved remains uncertain.

4.4 Apprenticeship Framework for Integrated Youth Support (AFIYS) workstream

4.4.1 Overview of the AFIYS workstream and the approach to its evaluation

The main objective of the AFIYS workstream was to develop a Qualifications and Curriculum Framework (QCF) compliant Apprenticeship framework for integrated youth support at Levels 2 and 3. The process for this involved an initial feasibility study into developing a common Apprenticeship for the youth workforce, supplemented by ongoing research and consultation. The diagram on page 81 sets out the rationale for the framework's development, along with the key inputs, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes and impacts connected to it. The intention was that the process of development described would lead to the production of a finalised framework and its subsequent launch following submission for approval. At the time of writing in March 2011 delays in producing a final version of the framework, connected to difficulties faced by the contractor developing it, has meant that the AFIYS has not been launched.

The analysis that follows is thus based principally on a small number of dedicated stakeholder interviews with individuals connected to production of the framework in phase one of the research, allied to evidence gathered from interviews with a wider set of stakeholders at the Common Platform and YPWRP levels⁴⁷ in both research phases. These interviews were supplemented by observation at two AFIYS consultation events in phase one of the research, along with a review of a summary report based on the consultation events. Given the delays in producing draft and final versions of the AFIYS, the evaluation largely focused on the process involved in its production along with the potential for the AFIYS to be taken up and used. Very few of those consulted had actually seen or read the draft AFIYS framework. As such, perspectives offered tended to be on the basis of what interviewees understood the AFIYS to involve, and their more general perceptions around the utility of the planned framework.

4.4.2 Design and implementation of AFIYS

Where those consulted in phase one of the research had an awareness of the design and development of the AFIYS, there was recognition that there had been some delays in developing the framework but that a number of internal and external factors had made this challenging. It was noted that initial development took place in a shifting landscape in the sense that guidance on the requirements for Apprenticeships had changed, and that policy in this area was still developing in respect of the recently elected Coalition Government. The framework was nonetheless viewed as having been effectively based on available research. Moreover, the role of the reference group was generally seen as positive and helpful in terms of facilitating an exchange of views. At the time of the phase one research, the observation undertaken at AFIYS consultation events indicated that at this point understanding of the AFIYS and its potential appeared to be less advanced than in respect of the SDF.

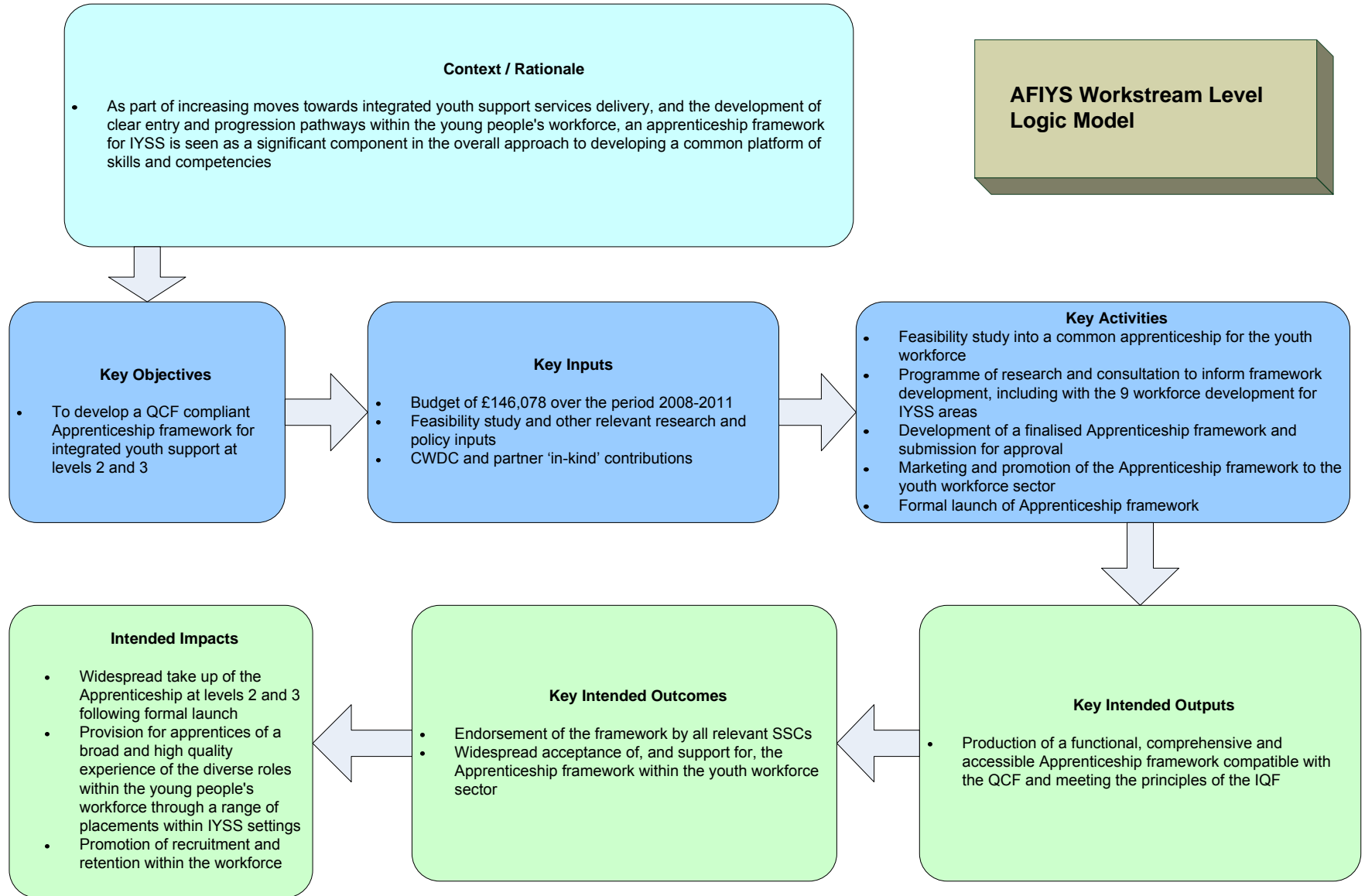
4.4.3 Views on the AFIYS and its future potential

Views on potential outcomes from the work undertaken to develop the framework varied considerably, not least due to what a number of interviewees felt was an uncertain external environment in terms of funding and policy direction. While some interviewees felt this offered an opportunity given Governmental support for Apprenticeships, others noted that uncertainty facing the sector could lead to new developments such as the AFIYS being given less priority and being less likely to be taken on. It was also noted that the difference in how integrated working and IYS is interpreted in different areas could prove to be a challenge moving forward.

Where the framework was seen as having less potential by interviewees this was sometimes due to the particular area of the workforce with which they were involved already having more specific Apprenticeship qualifications, or requiring (in their view) more specific and tailored qualifications. However, such interviewees nevertheless often felt that a more generic qualification was potentially useful and was likely, as one SSC representative interviewed noted, to be "...attractive to young people themselves". Accepting this in both research phases a number of interviewees, notably those from SSCs or representative organisations concerned with particular sectors, did question the likely utility and take-up of qualifications that could emerge from the process of AFIYS development in their particular sectors.

⁴⁷ See section 1.2 for an explanation the Common Platform strand 'level' and YPWRP 'programme level'.

Figure 4.4 AFIYS workstream level logic model



Conversely, in parts of the workforce where existing qualifications were not widely taken up or seen as useful the framework was viewed as having considerable potential. Several interviewees noted that there may well be a demand in the youth work sector, and that the framework and its integrated focus would enable the development of suitable and improved qualifications. Similarly, consultation evidence shows the same is true of the creative and cultural sector from a young people's workforce perspective. The potential to engage young people to enter the workforce through the Apprenticeship route was also noted. Another interviewee from the HE sector noted that the development of the framework represented "...a real opportunity that could definitely influence future recruitment..." in some sectors.

For a number of interviewees the issue of engaging employers and promoting the framework amongst them was seen as key factor in ensuring that the qualifications that could emerge gained widespread acceptance and take-up. This was reflected at the AFIYS consultation event attended by the evaluation team. The general perception was that young people themselves would be likely to be attracted by the framework, but that employer support for integrated qualifications of the type likely to be developed was at present less clear and harder to predict.

More specifically in relation to the AFIYS itself, the perception of the few interviewees with awareness of the draft framework was that it offered a good basis for developing integrated Apprenticeship qualifications at levels 2 and 3. Reflections included the view that the framework offered a good basis for continuity and progression, and that the flexibility embedded in it would be attractive to employers in terms of employees being able to select from a range of appropriate units. However, these findings need to be treated with some caution due to the fact that very few interviewees gave the impression of being aware of the framework's detail.

In general, therefore, some interviewees were certainly positive about the potential benefits that the framework could bring if it did gain widespread acceptance and take up. However, in many cases those interviewed felt it was too early to say what the likely outcomes from the workstream would be. On balance the general view was that such a framework certainly has the potential to be used, and to help develop a useful part of the qualifications landscape, though predicting take-up fully was difficult.

4.4.4 AFIYS conclusion

There have clearly been challenges and difficulties in developing the AFIYS which has meant that, at the time of reporting, a finalised framework has not yet been produced or approved. Amongst the few stakeholders aware of the draft framework views are generally positive. The perception is that it has the potential to lead to qualifications that are attractive to learners, and that there are sections of the young people's workforce where such integrated qualifications have the potential to garner support and take-up. The potential to enhance recruitment and entry to the workforce was recognised as a potential outcome from work in this area in particular. In general, however, it is still too early to fully assess the likely acceptance and take-up of the framework and associated qualifications, though there is evident concern that the framework will require effective promotion if it is to achieve its potential. As a result, the degree to which the AFIYS workstream met its intended outcomes is at present limited, though the potential for these to be met in future remains.

4.5 Foundation Degree Framework for Working Together for Young People

4.5.1 Overview of the FD framework workstream and the approach to its evaluation

The FD framework workstream involved a series of activities intended to lead to the development of a framework for the young people's workforce focused on integrated or 'joint' working. These key activities encompassed a feasibility study into demand for a FD with common elements for the young people's workforce, consultation on and promotion of the framework, and development and publishing of the framework. The diagram on page 84 sets out the rationale behind the framework's development, along with the key inputs, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes and impacts connected to it. The key output from the workstream was the production of the FD framework itself, with this framework being intended to reflect the skills, competences and knowledge required to operate within integrated youth services. Beyond this, the workstream is intended to achieve broader outcomes in terms of ensuring the framework is adopted by relevant Higher Education (HE) institutions, and the achievement of widespread support for it across the workforce. As with the intended impacts of the FD framework as detailed in the diagram overleaf, to a large extent these outcomes can only be judged in the longer term beyond the timescale for this evaluation.

The analysis that follows focuses on the processes leading to the production of the framework, perspectives on the framework itself, and views on the potential for the framework to achieve the longer term outcomes and impacts envisioned. The analysis is based on a small number of dedicated consultations, largely with individuals connected with the framework's development. Three such interviews were undertaken in phase one of the research, with a further six being undertaken in phase two. These interviews are complemented where possible with perspectives gathered from other aspects of the YPWRP evaluation process, notably the Common Platform strand level and YPWRP programme level consultations with a range of stakeholders.⁴⁸

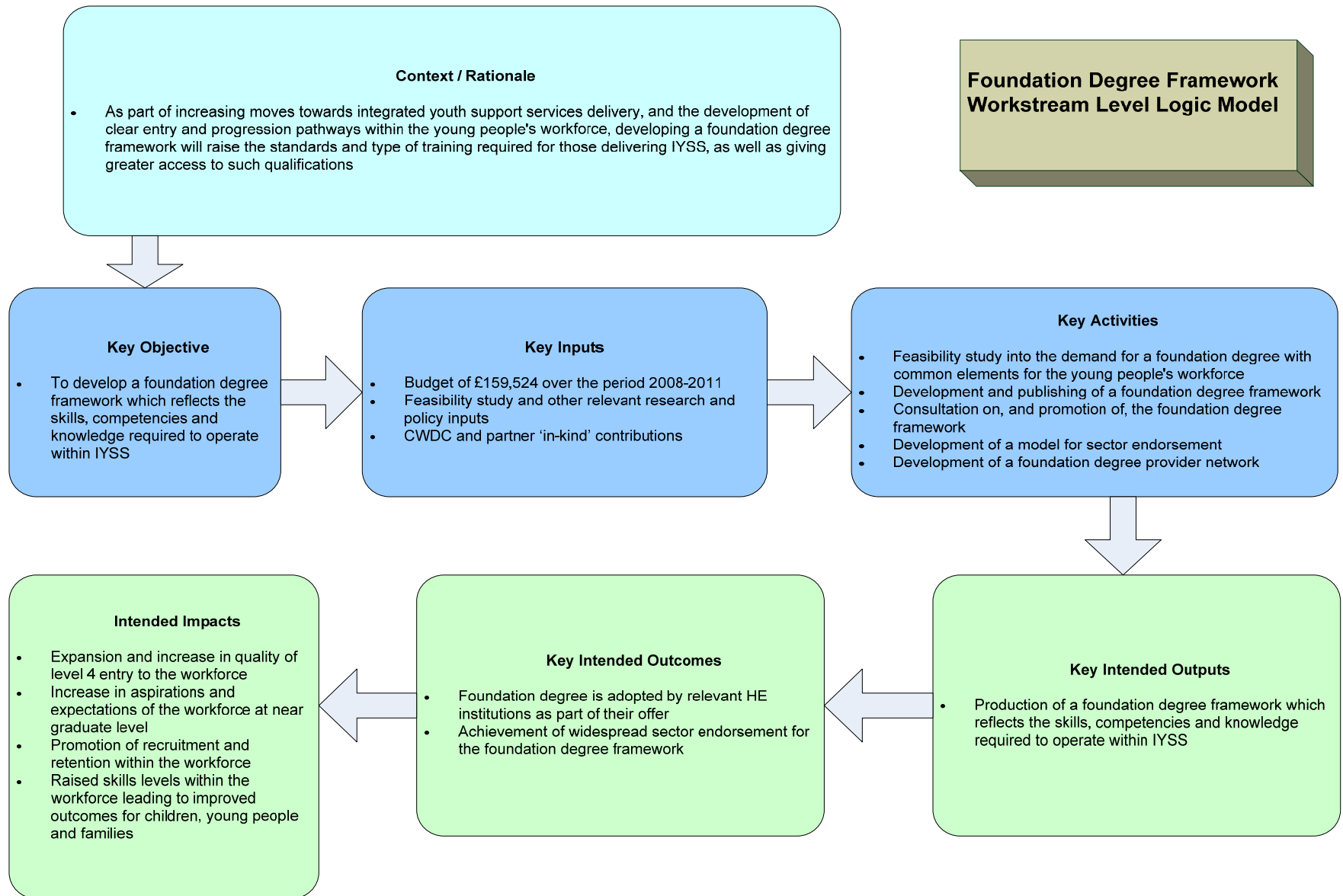
4.5.2 Design and implementation of the FD framework

Of those interviewees involved with or aware of the process leading to development of the FD framework, views were broadly positive in terms of the approach taken. The establishment of a reference group including potential FD providers was seen as an effective approach given the importance of HE institutions in taking on the framework and developing qualifications within it. Those involved in the group commented positively on it, with one interviewee from the academic sector noting that it involved a good level of discussion and debate "...with a like-minded group of people committed to integrated youth support". Likewise, the decision to engage a lead contractor from the HE sector to develop the framework was noted as sensible and appropriate on the grounds of their existing experience and expertise.

While it was acknowledged that there had been useful consultation with potential providers, a number of interviewees felt that wider consultation would ideally have been developed beyond that undertaken for the FD framework feasibility study. Although the informal consultation undertaken by reference group members themselves was seen as being useful, in general the perspective offered was that consultation might have been more extensive.

⁴⁸ See section 1.2 of the report for detail on, and explanation of, the Common Platform 'strand level' and YPWRP 'programme level' consultations.

Figure 4.5 FD framework logic model



In particular, more ongoing consultation with employers in terms of their likelihood of supporting the framework was noted as a potential area that might have been further developed, and in one instance an interviewee felt that there should have been more consultation with young people themselves. However, on this latter point there were also alternative views questioning whether this would have been appropriate or effective given the framework's technical nature.

In terms of the development of the FD framework, at the time of the phase one interviews several interviewees noted that there had been some delays in arriving at the point of a draft for consultation. As a result, one interviewee on the reference group did note that development of the framework felt a little rushed, principally as a result of delays due to Purdah around the 2010 General Election. However, in general, the reasons for these delays were seen as being largely beyond the control of those involved, and principally related to the external factors noted.

While interviewees who commented on development of the framework in phase two of the research broadly accepted this point, a small number felt that development had been delayed more than they expected. In one instance an interviewee noted that they felt this compromised the opportunity for consultation on the draft framework produced. Accepting this, most interviewees who were close to the development process acknowledged the scale of the task involved, and felt that production of the final framework for publication had worked well overall.

4.5.3 Views on the Foundation Degree framework and its future potential

Views on the final framework produced for publication amongst interviewees who were aware of it and had considered it in detail were broadly positive. In particular, interviewees felt that the document effectively captured the skills and competences required for integrated or joint working at an appropriate level. One of the HE representatives interviewed noted that the result was a document which could easily be translated into an FD programme by training providers. A key strength was noted as being the framework's flexibility, in terms of lending itself to a variety of delivery methods and having the potential to lead to qualifications adaptable to the needs of employers and local circumstances. As HE representatives commented:

"... [it's a] good document that balances the needs of the different stakeholders - students, higher education institutions and employers." (HE representative)

"It's easy for me to translate it [the framework] into a programme and employers are happy with the underpinning framework, competences and knowledge base covered. It fits the bill." (HE representative)

While a minority view, not all those interviewed were in favour of the flexibility described, at least in the sense of the view of one interviewee from the HE sector that the framework did not "...nail down..." the required skills and competences as was the case with equivalent NVQ frameworks.

In terms of the potential offered by the framework, similar to the issues raised with the AFIYS several interviewees noted that its future would in large part depend on acceptance by employers. As one HE sector interviewee commented, the "...big issue..." around the framework is whether employers will buy into it as the required qualification for working with young people. This was seen as an as yet unresolved issue which related to wider policy guidance and questions over whether the framework would achieve appropriate sector

endorsement. As a result, several interviewees commented on the need for the FD to gain a 'champion' in policy circles. In respect of issues related to employer acceptance it was also noted by one interviewee that while employers are aware of the framework, they are too busy restructuring provision to look to the future at present.

Related to this, a number of interviewees felt that the current economic and political climate puts a question mark over the FD development the framework is intended to facilitate. As noted by several interviewees, HEI take-up will be significantly influenced by funding streams and the availability of students. Employer take-up was likewise seen as being potentially influenced by pressures arising from budget restrictions, and the availability or otherwise of funding to support the integration of FDs as a route to career progression. There were also concerns raised as to the place of the framework in relation to government policy, the implication being that without political support for the significance of FDs take-up by providers, employers and individuals was likely to be compromised. As one interviewee outlined, the framework needs to be "...discussed and digested across different professional areas", noting that this type of embedding is harder to achieve in the current uncertain policy climate.

Several interviewees also made the point that the FD framework is likely to get different levels of support from different sectors. This was seen as depending on their respective resourcing for workforce development activity, the suitability of FD level qualifications for the sectors in question, and the presence or otherwise of existing suitable qualifications.

While the above discussion serves to illustrate some of the potential barriers to the widespread take up and adoption of the FD framework, most interviewees commented that there did seem to be an appetite for the type and level of qualification the framework could facilitate. Several interviewees also noted that the framework effectively establishes the rationale for the development of FDs focused on integrated working. As one HE sector interviewee commented, in this sense the document "...absolutely addresses the gap". Equally, another noted:

"There is a body of information there which could be taken up and promoted as a coherent statement of the education and training needed for effective working with young people". (HE representative)

Likewise, in the main those interviewed felt that the framework did address a gap in current available qualifications and had the potential to address the needs of a key group of staff who have hitherto have missed out on HE. Accepting this, there was a minority view that, in reality, the gap for qualifications developed under the framework may not be as large as some stakeholders believe, with a number of existing (though more specific) qualifications already being in place.

Overall, as the above discussion suggests, most of those interviewed felt that it was still too early to fully assess the potential use of the framework and the development of qualifications within it. While the FD framework was seen as having the potential to play a positive role in, for example, promoting recruitment and retention, at present this is generally viewed as uncertain and as being likely to require further support and attention.

4.5.4 Foundation Degree for the Young People's Workforce Conclusion

The available evidence indicates that, allowing for delays caused mainly by external factors, the process of design and development of the FD framework was broadly effective. This process has resulted in a document that is viewed positively, and is seen as having the potential to gain a useful and required place in the young people's workforce qualifications landscape. However, the evidence suggests that there remain a number of likely challenges to widespread acceptance and take up of qualifications developed in light of the framework. These encompass external challenges in the current budgetary context allied to a perceived need to further promote and 'champion' the framework amongst relevant stakeholders, notably providers and employers. While the workstream has been effective in producing its key output in the shape of the FD framework itself, which has been well received, achievement of some of the wider intended outcomes and impacts from the activity is difficult to judge. The degree of achievement of broader outcomes will only be clearer in the longer term.

4.6 Common Platform of Skills and Competences strand overall

This final section builds on the preceding analysis through adopting a focus on the Common Platform strand overall. It is based principally on interviews undertaken with a series of key stakeholders with an overview of the strand. The discussion covers design and development, implementation and outcomes. Following this, a conclusion is offered which draws on the analysis of the workstreams considered in previous sections. In concluding, issues relating to the legacy of strand outcomes and their sustainability are also considered.

4.6.1 Design and development of the Common Platform strand

In terms of the overall focus of the Common Platform strand and what it sought to achieve, views of interviewees consulted at the strand level tended to be broadly positive. As one interviewee noted, "...we got the right focus within the available level of resource...". Similarly, the broad perception of interviewees at the Common Platform strand level was that the different elements of the strand had been combined in an effective fashion to form a coherent whole. Accepting this, several interviewees noted that the different elements appeared to have been fully integrated and brought together as a coherent whole only part way through the programme. As one commented: "...there wasn't necessarily as clear a vision until towards the end...". Interviewees also raised what they saw as inevitable limitations to the strand's focus and design given the disparate nature of the young people's workforce itself. The complexity of integrated working and the different interpretations attached to it was similarly noted.

Views were again broadly positive in terms of the range of engagement routes used and the efforts that had been made in terms of consulting on the strand and its focus. Interviewees tended to reference the YPWRP Board, reference groups established as part of implementation, and consultation events as useful routes for this. However, some interviewees felt that it was sometimes less clear that the perspectives offered had been taken on. Where this was the case though, there tended to be recognition that some compromise was inevitable and required from the perspective of developing a coherent Common Platform approach.

4.6.2 Implementation of the Common Platform strand

In terms of implementation of the Common Platform strand a number of interviewees at the 'strand level' felt that they were too far removed from developments across the totality of workstreams involved to comment. Where interviewees did offer views the general perception was that implementation had progressed well once it had begun in earnest, but that a number of factors had notably compromised implementation. Delays caused by Purdah were principally cited here. For one interviewee, future uncertainty for the young people's workforce and key agencies within it had caused further issues. While interviewees raised a number of such issues, the general perception was that the causes and consequences of these were beyond the control of CWDC and its strategic and delivery partners. One interviewee's comment that the implementation of the strand as a whole had "...gone as well as could be expected given all the problems..." was reflective of the general view.

4.6.3 Outcomes from the Common Platform strand

Interviewees at the Common Platform strand level were asked to provide their perceptions and any available evidence on how the strand had performed in terms of meeting the outcomes intended to stem from Common Platform activity. These can be summarised as:

- Developing a clearer entry and progression picture for those seeking careers in the workforce.
- Developing a more consistent set of training and qualifications.
- Raising workforce status and profile.
- Contributing to a stronger sense of professional identity amongst the workforce.
- Enhancing the capacity of the workforce to deliver integrated youth support services.
- Raising skill levels and quality of practice across the workforce.

The views of interviewees at the Common Platform level closely mirror the picture discussed above in terms of its component workstreams. Overall, the general perception was that progress had been made against most intended outcomes, but in many instances it was still too early to fully judge the nature and extent of actual achievement. This was related to a feeling that the outcomes represented longer term ambitions. As one interviewee noted, assessing them in this sense could thus be considered reductive as they were developed in the context of what was intended to be a ten year programme. From this perspective, given that delivery was over three years it was unlikely that any of the outcomes would be met fully.

Equally, it was commonly noted that while there had been identifiable progress against what was often described as a complex and ambitious agenda, this would require ongoing investment to, in the words of one interviewee, "...make it stick...". Contextual factors acting as a challenge to current and ongoing achievement of the outcomes discussed, such as policy shifts and an uncertain climate in terms of investment, were commonly noted.

In terms of progress against the specific outcomes examined, the development of a clearer entry and progression picture for the workforce was the area in which interviewees at the strand level were generally most positive. The SDF and AFIYS were referenced here but it was again seen as relatively early to make a full assessment of achievement. There was a general acceptance that Common Platform activity was likely to enhance access to and progression

within the workforce, but that quantifying the extent of this in the near term would be difficult. It was also noted that the degree to which this occurs is likely to depend on the extent to which different parts of the workforce identify with integrated or joint working.

Interviewees were generally less positive concerning current or potential progress in terms of improving status, morale and professional identity through Common Platform activity. The general view was that the external environment facing the workforce in terms of potential job losses, allied to the already fragmented nature of professional identity across different sectors, acted as considerable barriers in this area.

A similar story emerged in respect of the degree to which activity had or potentially would enhance the capacity of the workforce to deliver integrated services. While Common Platform activity was considered by some to have helped to lay a basis for this, there was a perception that as one stakeholder interviewee put it: "...its going to be a long term game...". A perceived shift away from a focus on IYS towards concentrating on sectoral specialisms was also noted, as was the view that frontline workers generally had less understanding of IYS and saw it as less significant to their everyday work in several sectors. While interviewees who raised such points acknowledged that progress was evident, they equally felt that any real change in this area would be long term and partly dependent on external factors and ongoing policy development.

In terms of improving the consistency of training and qualifications, the general view was that some progress had been made, but that the limited scale of activity when placed against the size and scope of the workforce needed to be taken into account. The development of integrated qualifications frameworks was seen by a number of interviewees as signifying progress, though again the extent to which any Apprenticeship and Foundation Degree qualifications emerged from this or otherwise was seen as a truer test of long term outcomes.

In terms of the final area of intended outcomes examined, that of raising skills levels and the quality of practice, the views of those consulted at the Common Platform strand level were again mixed. Several interviewees noted that the WFD for IYS areas strand was almost certainly having an effect here, though this was seen as being difficult to quantify and would be necessarily limited given the overall size of the workforce. It was also noted that while any form of skills development such as might be facilitated through the AFIYS and Foundation Degree frameworks has to be a positive thing, considerable investment and political backing would be required to ensure this was spread across the workforce. The investment and campaigns to raise teaching quality were referenced here as an example of what would be required. Without this, the general view was again that the extent of outcomes generated through the strand's activity would be limited, though a useful base had been laid for progress in this area.

While direct identifiable outcomes from Common Platform activity, when looked at from this level and perspective were generally seen as being relatively limited (at least at present), some interviewees felt that looking at the strand's activity in this sense did not necessarily tell the full story. Several made the point that, taken collectively, the products produced under the strand offered a solid basis for the sort of broader developments and cultural change amongst the workforce that the YPWRP sought to achieve.

Some interviewees also noted that in assessing overall strand outcomes it was important not only to consider the products and activities involved as ends in themselves, but to also recognise their catalytic effects on the ground in particular areas. Thus, for example, one interviewee noted how in their area the SDF and qualifications frameworks had been used as a lever through existing networks to stimulate discussions around integrated working between different sectors. Again, the catalytic effects of the WFD for IYS areas workstream discussed above can be seen as further evidence in this area. Such catalytic effects were also seen as being evident at a more strategic level in that Common Platform strand activity had led to positive debate over the direction of workforce development.

4.7 Conclusion

For the Common Platform strand and its component workstreams the evidence suggests that while design, development and implementation have posed challenges, for the most part the approaches taken in these areas have been effective and efficient. Of the Common Platform workstreams, identifiable positive outcomes are most apparent through the WFD for IYS areas workstream. As noted earlier, this has unquestionably led to increased capacity to support integrated working in the localities benefitting. The fact that outcomes are clearer in this sense is perhaps unsurprising given the nature of the workstreams involved, and the fact that the Common Platform products developed are in many ways intended to lay the basis for the longer term outcomes and impacts the strand as a whole seeks to achieve.

In respect of these intended outcomes and impacts, the range of activity under the strand has led to progress being made against all of the main strand objectives. This is most evident in relation to the outcome of developing a clearer entry and progression picture for the workforce, and that relating to developing more consistent training and qualifications. However, as in relation to the other intended outcomes and impacts it is still too early to fully judge the nature and extent of actual achievement of intended outcomes and impacts. This is to be expected in that in many ways these outcomes represent longer term ambitions and aspirations, originally intended to be delivered in the context of a ten year strategy. The conclusions cited earlier in respect of the Common Platform products mirror those for the strand as a whole therefore. There is potential to achieve considerable progress, but this will depend on the extent to which the activity and products developed gain widespread traction within the workforce.

It thus seems fair to observe that the strand has delivered a significant legacy in respect of workforce development and the promotion of integrated working. This relates both to the sort of positive outcomes evident through the WFD for IYS workstream and to the Common Platform products themselves. In maximising the potential of this legacy, however, there is a need to further promote and 'champion' the ways of working and products developed under the strand. Sustaining the legacy will undoubtedly be a challenge in many instances, and is likely to depend on developments around policy direction and the context within which young people's services are operating.

5.0 YPWRP Cross Cutting Activity

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the cross cutting activity developed within the YPWRP. It first considers the communications approach and activity established to support the programme and its implementation. The State of the Young People's Workforce Reports (SYPWR(s), titled A Picture Worth Millions), developed as part of the supporting data collation strand of YPWRP activity are then considered.⁴⁹ In respect of both areas of activity, perspectives from a small number of dedicated communications or SYPWR - focused consultations are complemented by evidence gathered in the course of conducting interviews for other elements of the evaluation.

5.2 Communications

5.2.1 Overview of YPWRP communications activity and the approach to evaluation

The main objective of communications activity connected to the YPWRP was to support the implementation of the programme through promoting the need for, and benefits of, the YPWRP to the young people's workforce. The key activities connected to this objective focused on awareness raising of the programme and its different elements. To inform the assessment of communications activity, face to face stakeholder interviews were undertaken with three individuals closely involved with the activity. These dedicated consultations were complemented by gathering relevant evidence through other consultations undertaken for the evaluation.

5.2.2 Assessment of the effectiveness of communications activity

Overall, perceptions of the communications approach and its relative effectiveness in supporting programme implementation were somewhat mixed. Across the range of stakeholders consulted, while some interviewees cited elements of the approach and activities as having been effective, others felt that when judged overall the approach taken had been less effective than they had anticipated. The budgetary and operational constraints placed on communications activity, both in the General Election period of 2010 and following it, were seen as a significant factor in lessening this effectiveness by many of those interviewed. Where interviewees were more positive in their views, key successes cited in relation to the communications approach developed and the activities involved included:

- The explicit, planned and targeted approach to addressing the concerns of groups and parts of the workforce less convinced by the concept of the YPWRP.
- The inclusion of voluntary sector considerations in developing communications approaches and the consideration of particular messages and materials suitable for this.
- The programme 'launch event' and other promotional events (which were generally seen as successful and well attended by a range of stakeholders consulted).
- Persuading a number of senior figures in key sectoral organisations of the YPWRP's merit.

⁴⁹ The State of the Young People's Workforce Reports comprise two reports developed to collate available data relating to the young people's workforce. The reports were produced in 2009 and 2010 respectively. For clarity, the 2009 report is referred to as SYPWR 2009 and the 2010 update as SYPWR 2010.

Areas where the approach and activity were viewed as less successful included:

- The extent to which the workforce at all levels had been successfully persuaded of the merits and importance of the programme, particularly in respect of frontline workers.
- The extent to which partner organisations had been persuaded to take on and reinforce key programme messages within their constituencies (though it was recognised that progress in this area had been made and there were examples of successes).
- The degree to which all elements of the programme gained the profile hoped for amongst the wider workforce.
- In the view of a small number of those consulted the lack of senior CWDC Board level engagement in the communications process and in putting out key programme messages.
- The degree to which promotional materials in terms of case studies and so on were able to reflect and capture the imagination of workers in particular sections of the workforce (the perception was that not enough attention was paid to getting a balance between generic materials and those developed and designed with particular parts of the workforce in mind).
- The time sometimes taken to agree and sign off communications approaches and messages between key partners.

Where interviewees were more negative over the development of the communications approach and its relative success, they were generally keen to put this in context. In addition to the constraints and limiting factors noted, other contextual challenges commonly raised included:

- The perception that the large, multi-faceted and multi-stranded nature of the YPWRP meant that developing a clear and coherent 'narrative' to promote the programme was challenging.
- The necessary reliance on partner organisations to play a role in communication and promoting the YPWRP which, understandably, could not always be a priority.
- The amount of attention and resources that had to be applied to countering negative and (in the view of interviewees who raised this) ill-founded views of the programme and its aims.
- Delays in starting some programme elements which meant that the amount of clear outcomes and 'good news stories' to communicate to the workforce was limited.

With hindsight, suggested improvements to communications included the potential for adopting a more direct approach to communicating face to face with particular targeted groups – for example, workforce development managers at strategic levels in local authorities. Equally, some interviewees held the view that the balance between indirect and direct, face-to-face communication should have been shifted more in favour of the latter. However, such interviewees generally conceded that such approaches may have been difficult in the context of available resources, and in particular, the constraints and restrictions faced by the programme in this area in the final phases of its delivery.

5.3 State of the Young People's Workforce Reports

5.3.1 Overview of the reports and the approach taken to evaluation

The intention behind production of the two State of the Young People's Workforce reports, SYPWR 2009 and SYPWR 2010, was to collate available data on the young people's workforce

into single accessible reports – something which had previously not been attempted in this way. In doing so the aim was also to highlight gaps in existing data to inform potential future data collection. The objective of the SYPWR element of the YPWRP was thus both to inform the approach taken to developing and implementing the programme itself, and to provide a reference source relating to young people's workforce data able to be accessed by relevant stakeholders with a role or interest in the workforce. The SYPWR 2010 essentially updated the information contained in SYPWR 2009, using the same structure and focus of the first report.

To maximise the evidence base in relation to SYPWR 2009 and SYPWR 2010, telephone and face to face stakeholder interviews were undertaken with three individuals with a close involvement with activity leading to the reports' production. As with the communications element, these dedicated consultations with key stakeholders close to the development of the reports were complemented by gathering perspectives from those interviewed for other strands and workstreams (including programme level interviewees).⁵⁰ SYPWR 2010 was published close to the writing of this report. Therefore, analysis mostly focuses on the SYPWR 2009.

5.3.2 Development, production and use of the reports

The development and production of the reports was widely seen amongst those interviewed as a difficult challenge given the range, variety and inconsistency of available data sets. In the words of one programme level interviewee, "...there's so much out there and its like trying to compare apples with oranges...". In light of this, interviewees were generally keen to note that the contractor appointed to produce the SYPWR 2009 had done an effective job in managing to produce the report that resulted. The general perspective was that the reference group established to support the reports' development had also functioned effectively and was able to play a useful role in monitoring progress and commenting on drafts produced. It was also noted that the group managed to incorporate a number of individuals with specific expertise in the areas covered, which was seen as being particularly significant given the complexity of the task and the range and types of data in existence.

Views across the stakeholder groups consulted on the SYPWR 2009 were relatively positive on the whole. In particular positive views on the report revolved around the following themes:

- The role of the report in highlighting the size, range and capacity of the young people's workforce, including what it revealed around the significance of the volunteering workforce.
- The simple fact that the report represented the first attempt at achieving a more coherent overview of the workforce.
- The role of the report in contributing to, as one interviewee phrased it, "...putting the concept of a young people's workforce on the map".
- The report's effectiveness in summarising the available data and providing clear caveats where required concerning limitations to the approach taken.
- Deciding to disseminate a separate 'summary document' to accompany the full report.

In terms of the level of use of the reports, evidence suggests that the SYPWR 2009 was certainly received with interest and has gained widespread visibility across a number of sectors

⁵⁰ See section 1.2 for an explanation of the different evaluation 'levels' and approaches taken to them.

within the workforce. In the main, the use of the report discussed by interviewees related principally to the overarching messages and findings it presented about the workforce. Several interviewees noted that the report contained some useful overall statistics that can be easily used and referenced by a range of stakeholders, with a number of particular examples being provided of how and when the report was used in this way. This included, in one case, to inform separate ongoing research connected to workforce development.

Where interviewees felt that the report had been used less in terms of the workforce area with which they were familiar, this was often due to the sector in question producing its own workforce development data and intelligence. In addition, interviewees were generally less convinced or clear on the extent to which the SYPWR 2009 had contributed to, or supported the development of, the YPWRP itself. The general theme that emerged was that the report seemed to operate slightly in isolation compared to the rest of the programme. Equally, most interviewees were less convinced of the reports' practical utility as workforce planning tools, given the level of specificity required for such a task according to different sectors and locations.

It was also noted by several interviewees that if the recommendations for further data collection made in the SYPWR 2009 were taken forward, developments towards practical workforce planning uses could be envisaged, though limited funding and commitment of the type required were again seen as potential barriers to this. Indeed, in general, the concern over whether and how the recommendations over future data collection and collation could be taken forward was the main issue raised in respect of the utility of the approach developed going forward.

5.4 Cross Cutting Activity Conclusion

The available evidence suggests that the effectiveness of communications activity in supporting the implementation of the YPWRP varied. While aspects of the overall approach were widely recognised as being useful and appropriate, it is clear that the level of support for the YPWRP and its implementation intended to be generated perhaps failed to fully emerge. Several factors compromised the overall effectiveness of the approach taken. These included the difficulty of developing a clear and coherent overarching narrative, the reliance on partner organisations to communicate messages in the context of competing priorities, and difficulties due to restrictions on communications during the pre-election period and following the General Election.

In terms of the SYPWR 2009 and 2010, evidence suggests that the development of the reports was relatively successful in the context of the challenge faced in relation to available data. While views on the reports varied, on the whole these were broadly positive in light of the nature of the task. While only an anecdotal snapshot of the use of the SYPWR 2009 is available, the evidence suggests that it has certainly been used in a number of different ways and contexts by individuals and organisations connected to the workforce. However, there is general recognition of the limits to the utility of the reports in respect of their potential as practical workforce planning tools. To enhance this utility, more detail would be required as per the recommendations for further data collection included in the SYPWR 2009 itself.

6.0 The YPWRP at the Programme Level

6.1 Introduction

Building on the analysis in previous chapters, this chapter focuses on the YPWRP overall from the perspective of considering its design, implementation and outcomes at the whole programme level. The legacy of the YPWRP and the sustainability of this is also considered. The chapter draws principally on evidence gathered through the programme level consultations held with key stakeholders, including representatives from the Department for Education, CWDC, Sector Skills Councils, trade unions, and representative organisations connected to the young people's workforce. Where applicable, evidence from these consultations is combined with the findings of previous chapters. The remainder of the chapter analyses:

- The context within which the YPWRP was developed and implemented, including the scale and nature of the challenges faced.
- The contribution and role of the YPWRP Board in aiding the development of the programme and its approach, and how well it functioned in doing this.
- The overall design of the YPWRP.
- The overall implementation of the YPWRP.
- The 'strategic added value' (SAV) occasioned by CWDC and core partners in terms of their contribution to the design, development and implementation of the programme.
- Overall outcomes from the YPWRP.
- Legacy and sustainability considerations in relation to the YPWRP.

The chapter concludes by summarising the key findings from this analysis.

6.2 The context and challenges of implementing the YPWRP

As the preceding chapters highlight, a key recurring consideration relating to the overall development and implementation of the YPWRP relates to the broader context that surrounded it. Unquestionably, this had an impact on the programme at a number of levels. In particular, the calling of the 2010 General Election at a key point in the programme's implementation and the extended effects of 'Purdah' restrictions are a key factor, as are ongoing policy changes and developments. Likewise, spending restrictions and the effects of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) settlement have led to a less than favourable external context within which to implement the programme and the component strands and workstreams within it.

These issues were widely referenced in the programme level consultations. From the perspective of understanding the situation within which the YPWRP has been implemented, and being able to contextualise judgements on its achievements, one aspect to these consultations involved gathering perceptions on the nature and scale of the challenge. Phrases used in response included: "...huge scale...", "...daunting challenge...", "...hugely ambitious with little money...", and "...attempting to knit porridge...". The nature of the young people's workforce itself, and the large variety and differences within it, was frequently cited as one of the main challenges.

A related issue commonly raised was that the concept of a coherent 'young people's workforce' is not widely recognised or accepted across the workforce itself. This resulted in the start of the programme necessarily involving lengthy discussions between partners as to what the 'young people's workforce' meant as a concept and in reality. The nature and scale of the challenge around lack of initial understanding and acceptance of such a concept, and the implications that arose as a result, were widely noted. For example, a number of interviewees discussed the level of suspicion and resistance attached to the programme from some quarters.

Several interviewees at the programme level also discussed the challenge faced in relation to the degree of resources allocated to the programme. While there was recognition on the part of a number of interviewees that the investment was welcome and significant, there was also a common feeling that £25 million over three years for a workforce of six million was always likely to present challenges. In line with this the difference in the scale of investment when compared to the related Early Years reforms undertaken under the previous Government was cited, the feeling being that the YPWRP had limited resources in comparison, particularly when viewed in the light of its wide-ranging ambition.

The final main area of challenges and difficulties raised concerned the context in which CWDC itself was working in relation to its role, remit and, in SSC terms, 'footprint' in respect of the young people's workforce. As a number of interviewees commented, in effect CWDC was trying to drive forward a programme in the context of multiple and overlapping policy areas involving a range of key agencies and organisations. Thus, the relatively small footprint of CWDC in SSC terms compared to the areas of the workforce falling within the YPWRP's scope was noted, as was the consequent lack of leverage given the voluntary nature of the programme that results from this.

When discussing the above context, it should also be noted that a minority of stakeholders felt that, in hindsight, the above factors meant that the YPWRP was perhaps over ambitious in terms of its scope. There was some variation as to the implications interviewees drew from this. For some, this indicated that the approach taken may have worked better in a more piece-meal fashion, enabling a more gradual and graduated approach to workforce reform. In contrast, others felt that even with hindsight this ambition was as one interviewee put it, "...not necessarily a bad thing...". A number of programme level interviewees felt that there were advantages to being ambitious in this way, and to having maintained the approach of developing and implementing an overarching and unified programme.

6.3 The YPWRP Board and its role in the programme

A specific issue considered in relation to the programme as a whole concerns the role of the YPWRP Board in terms of aiding the development and implementation of the programme, and how well it functioned in doing this. It should be noted that initially, the programme Board comprised a wide range of partners drawn from organisations with a stake in the young people's workforce. In early 2010 the Board was reconstituted with fewer organisations and their representatives being involved as the YPWRP moved to an accelerated implementation phase.

The overall view of those interviewed who had knowledge of the Board and its operation was that it had functioned relatively well. It was also commonly cited that, prior to the reconstitution of the Board in early 2010, a good level of partner contribution had been channelled through the governance structure established. This theme of acting as a mechanism for effective partner engagement and contribution was also reflected in terms of views on the reconstituted Board, though some representatives of partners no longer involved felt that this restructuring had left them feeling less effectively engaged with the programme on an ongoing basis.

The most common view amongst interviewees at the programme level was that the Board had been well managed. One interviewee noted that a reflection of this was that, despite the challenges and sensitivities surrounding the programme and its development, all partners remained engaged until the Board was reconfigured into a smaller partnership. The comment of one interviewee that the experience of involvement with the Board was "...challenging but rewarding..." reflects the general perspective. The point was also made that it should be seen as an achievement that the Board had been able to guide the design and development of a complex but, as reflected elsewhere in this report, nonetheless coherent programme.

There were a number of specific issues highlighted by some interviewees at the programme level who were less positive about particular aspects of the Board's functioning. These included a view that the individual Board members did not always have the level of seniority required, causing issues in terms of their ability to make decisions within meetings and not have to gain approval for this outside of the structure. A number of interviewees also noted that the size of the Board meant that it was sometimes a challenge to achieve agreement. However, many of those who raised this issue noted that the initial size of the Board and its composition was also a strength and necessary to encourage widespread buy-in. There was also a minority view to the contrary, with some interviewees holding the perspective that a sub-group or similar might have been more suitable for engaging a wider range of partners in the programme from a governance point of view, hence (from this perspective) enhancing the efficiency of the Board.

6.4 Overall design of the YPWRP

The programme level consultations indicated a widespread view that the overall design of the programme was effective, coherent and covered the key areas requiring attention. The scope of the programme in particular, in terms of encompassing different areas and sectors of the workforce, was cited as particularly positive. As one of those consulted commented:

"...at every level, from entry through leadership and management, there was something for somebody...". (Programme level stakeholder)

There was a minority view that the programme was too complex and multi-stranded to be able to offer a fully coherent approach, and / or that it had taken a longer time than it should to get the programme to a stage where it appeared to hold together effectively. Generally, however, the coherence cited at the programme level mirrored the general perception reported earlier that the key strands of the YPWRP represented in themselves a coherent approach.

While most interviewees felt that all the key areas requiring attention were present in the programme, a small number felt that some things that were included potentially should not have been. The most commonly noted issue here was the decision to include the development and piloting of a Youth Professional Status within the programme. As one interviewee commented, "...it was a mistake to try and immediately create a tranche of 'youth professionals'...", while another noted that this had acted as a rallying cry for people afraid of the erosion of professional boundaries. In the view of some stakeholders representing particular sectors of the workforce, therefore, opposition to the programme as a whole would have been lessened in the absence of such elements.

In terms of factors seen as important to the widely recognised coherent and effective overall design of the programme, a number of points were cited. The role of the Board in gathering perspectives from senior stakeholders in key partner organisations was noted as significant. Wider consultation was likewise seen as important to the development of the programme, and a key factor in ensuring that its design and focus were able to reflect key requirements for workforce development in an informed manner. Similarly, commissioning and utilising key pieces of research such as feasibility studies and consultative work to gather and codify wider views was cited as important. As reflected in previous chapters, the decision to implement reference groups to guide the programme's development was also viewed positively.

It should be noted, however, that a minority of programme level interviewees did feel that such consultation might have been wider and deeper to ensure that workforce views at all levels in different sectors were considered. In particular, the degree to which the employer perspectives were successfully tapped into and used to inform programme design (accepting that there was representation of the Board through the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) for example) was mentioned as a weakness. On a more specific level there was recognition that face-to-face consultation events were often more successful than electronic means of gathering responses, with consultation around the development of the SDF and Youth Professional Standards being noted in particular.

The recognition and appreciation of the programme's attempt to be as inclusive as possible in designing approaches able to include the voluntary sector was another commonly cited theme. In addition to the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand being regularly discussed, interviewees felt that the way the Leadership and Management strand and WFD for IYS workstream were reflective of the importance of the voluntary sector was a positive development. In particular, the design of the Leadership and Management programmes was singled out in several instances as a positive example of consciously seeking to bring the statutory and voluntary sectors together to support and develop integrated or joint working.

While most perspectives relating to the overall design of the programme were relatively positive, a limited number of interviewees at the programme level raised issues relating to design where they felt things might have been done differently. One such view was that a more extended initial planning and development phase was required given the nature and scale of the programme and what it sought to achieve. Conversely, some interviewees were critical of what they felt were delays in progress towards finalising the design of the programme, hence leaving

less time for implementation. In some instances this was mediated by recognition of the difficulties and challenges faced given the programme's ambitions and complex nature.

Overall, however, the impression of effective design at the YPWRP 'whole programme' level mirrors the broadly positive findings throughout the preceding chapters relating to the design of its component strands and workstreams. Finally, in respect of design, it should be noted that some interviewees made the point that the first three years of the YPWRP were meant to be part of a ten year strategy, and that if such a timescale had remained then more time could have been allocated to initial design and development. This point was also commonly noted as being significant in assessing the implementation and outcomes of the programme, as is returned to in the sections that follow.

6.5 Overall implementation of the YPWRP

In terms of the overall implementation of the YPWRP, the establishment and use of reference groups was widely viewed by interviewees at the programme level as representing a particular strength and success. As is similarly reflected in the preceding chapters, the use of contractors and consultants by CWDC to assist with the implementation of the YPWRP's workstreams was also generally viewed as having been an effective and efficient approach to take. The only negative comment in respect of this came from a small number of interviewees at programme, strand, and workstream levels that they sometimes found it unclear whether to liaise with contractors or CWDC project managers around particular issues.

Although most perspectives on implementation at the programme level were broadly positive, with the general view being that this had gone relatively well when placed in context, some issues relating to implementation were raised. While there was widespread recognition that those responsible for ensuring implementation had worked very hard consistently over the programme's lifetime, for some implementation was seen as not having been as timely as it might have been. In particular, some interviewees felt that the time taken to implement key programme elements had inevitably compromised its ability to generate intended outcomes.

The fact that the programme launch came two years into the initial three year period of activity was cited in relation to this. However, other interviewees also made the point that the programme was originally intended for delivery as part of a ten year strategy, and that this needed to be placed in context as a result. In addition, as evidence from the preceding chapters indicates, across the programme as a whole the impression is one of broadly effective approaches to implementation that were seriously challenged by external factors impinging on delivery at key times.

Accepting these factors, several of those interviewed at the programme level felt that the YPWRP had been implemented, as one interviewee described it, "...in a bit of an ad-hoc way...". The view of a small number of those interviewed was thus that the different elements of the programme had not necessarily been implemented at the right times, or in the right order. For example, one interviewee noted that the SDF should have been developed earlier in the programme to tie together other Common Platform elements. Likewise, several interviewees felt that the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building workstream should have been a prioritised earlier,

though it should be noted here that there was general support for the approach of prioritising leadership and management activities early on.

Specifically in terms of the efficiency of implementation, the view given consistently in relation to the strands and workstreams considered in previous chapters – namely that on the whole effective procurement processes and good use of available resources were evident – was broadly confirmed by consultations at the programme level. For the most part, interviewees who felt they had the knowledge to offer a view felt that resources had been used efficiently, with evidence offered for this perspective referring to solid use of procurement processes along with good management of delivery contractors and / or programme resources themselves.

Some interviewees did note, however, that the efficient use of resources was inevitably challenged by restrictions on when available budgets could be spent. A perceived lack of flexibility in, for example, moving funds from one year to the next was cited. It was noted that the consequence of this was that at certain times there was a pressure to spend available budgets where ideally they might have been rolled over to a subsequent accounting period. In these instances, while this was felt to have been a significant challenge that caused difficulties for the programme, the interviewees in question reflected the generally positive views offered around effective and efficient resource use.

6.6 Strategic Added Value at the programme level

Part of the approach to evaluating the YPWRP at the programme level relates to the 'strategic added value'⁵¹ (SAV) occasioned by CWDC and core partners (principally partner organisations involved in the YPWRP Board at different points) in terms of their contribution to design, development and implementation. The programme level consultations were used to gather views around the SAV occasioned in respect of a series of defined areas:

- **Strategic leadership and catalytic effects** – articulating the need for workforce development across the sector and the significance of the YPWRP in this.
- **Strategic influence** – influencing wider stakeholders to support the YPWRP and its aims, and to undertake activity which demonstrates such support.
- **Leverage** – mobilising partner and wider stakeholder resources (whether in terms of financial, human, or other 'in-kind' resources) to support the aims of the YPWRP.
- **Synergy** – encouraging wider partners and stakeholders to align and co-ordinate activity to support the YPWRP.
- **Engagement** – developing processes, structures and systems able to effectively engage wider partners and stakeholders as part of developing and implementing the YPWRP.

Views on the extent to which SAV had been generated through CWDC and core partners in terms of strategic leadership were mixed. In the main, programme level interviewees felt that a good general articulation and promotion of the need for workforce development had been

⁵¹ The approach to assessing SAV is based on that set out for assessing the impact of Regional Development Agencies outlined in the DTI Occasional Paper (2006): *Evaluating the Impact of England's Regional Development Agencies*. See the analytical framework for assessing SAV at Annex two.

achieved. As one noted, the YPWRP was "...a serious investment approached in a serious way...". As another interviewee noted, however, success or otherwise in this sense needs to be understood in the context of a workforce where there are a lot of different perspectives of what the priorities are, and how workforce development might best be taken forward. Partly as a result of this, along with other perceived factors such as limited high profile political backing, some interviewees felt that the strategic leadership role of promoting the programme was not as effective as it might have been.

Suggestions for how this might have been improved included more direct engagement on the part of senior CWDC Board members in visibly supporting the programme, and a more conscious effort on the part of the then DCSF to play a supporting leadership role in articulating and persuading other organisations of the programme's significance. As one interviewee noted, "...all the ducks were not in a line...", with the implication being that more would have needed to be done at senior levels to facilitate a more effective strategic leadership role in supporting the programme. In retrospect, some interviewees also felt that there should have been increased focus on developing a more limited and focused series of key messages about the programme. The difficulty of achieving this was noted, however, and as one interviewee commented, "...it wasn't for the want of trying...".

Similar issues were raised in terms of the success, or otherwise, of encouraging wider stakeholders to support the YPWRP and undertake activity reflecting this – in SAV terms 'strategic influence'. This was certainly recognised as a challenging task. Even in light of this, there was a widespread view that achievements were not always evident in this area across all key sectors and in respect of all relevant organisations. Despite this, interviewees felt that there had been some good achievements in respect of this element of SAV. This was seen as being evidenced, for example, by partners using networks to disseminate information about the YPWRP, in addition to opportunities in relation to the programme. The use of senior staff from some organisations to highlight the programme and its aims through a number of high profile platforms and forums was also cited. Evidence of success in this area was also raised by one interviewee with the comment that:

"...the clearest example of success is the fact that the SDF went out with all the badges [of key partner agencies and organisations] on it...". (Programme level interviewee)

Accepting this, in retrospect, some interviewees felt that more could have been done to engage key parts of the workforce in supporting the YPWRP, for example through having developed a targeted strategy to engage Directors of Children's Services in local authorities more directly.

In respect of leverage, interviewees noted that the programme had achieved a good level of participation in the reference groups set up to help guide the development and implementation of the YPWRP. Such engagement, and encouragement of partner organisations to offer 'in-kind' resources, was likewise seen as important in enabling the use of a range of communication channels to provide information about the programme. In the main, it was acknowledged that leverage in SAV terms was most commonly observable in respect of such 'in kind' rather than financial resources. Accepting this, some interviewees did note that, in respect of the leadership and management programmes, some local authorities had offered to use their resources to buy

extra places. In general, therefore, leverage emerges as an area where SAV has been demonstrably and effectively generated.

In terms of synergy effects, examples of success cited included the view of several interviewees that, through the lead delivery contractor for the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building workstream, a range of organisations, networks and resources had been brought in to support the approach being developed. The extent to which different elements of the YPWRP were felt to have synergy with each other was also frequently highlighted. In SAV terms, therefore, synergy was often seen as more observable in respect of the programme itself, rather than with other programmes occurring in relation to the workforce. Interviewees generally pointed out though that the lack of funding for workforce development approaches and initiatives outside of the YPWRP meant that in reality there was, as one put it, "...little to synergise with!". As such, the general view was that synergies had been created where possible.

In terms of the final dimension of SAV considered – that of engagement – the majority of interviewees who commented in this area gave very positive views. In particular, the YPWRP Board along with the range of reference groups mentioned above were seen as evidence of a commitment to, and success in, promoting engagement in this sense. As one interviewee noted:

"...we were constantly encouraged in the Board and working groups to give our perspectives ... there were networks and channels and opportunities...". (Programme level interviewee)

The consultation events held at various points throughout the programme in addition to the formal launch event were also frequently cited as effective examples of a successful approach to engagement. Finally, the use of web-based engagement mechanisms was also discussed by a small number of interviewees, though it was noted that this route had probably been less successful than hoped for as an approach to promoting and facilitating engagement.

6.7 Achievement of overall YPWRP outcomes

6.7.1 Progress against the main intended programme outcomes

While it is possible to gain a sense of the range of outcomes occasioned by the YPWRP, the full range of outcomes and impacts arising will only be visible in the medium to long term. There is also a need to contextualise assessment of the achievement of programme outcomes given that the YPWRP was initially intended to be delivered as part of a ten year strategy. Interviewees at the programme level were asked to provide perceptions and evidence on how the programme performed in terms of meeting its intended outcomes. These can be summarised as follows:

- Developing a clearer entry and progression picture for those seeking a career in the workforce.
- Developing a more consistent set of training and qualifications.
- Raising workforce status, morale and aspirations by putting the young people's workforce more on a par with other professions.
- Contributing to a stronger sense of professional identity amongst the workforce.
- Enhancing the capacity of the workforce to deliver integrated youth support services.
- Raising skill levels and quality of practice across the workforce (including leadership and management skills).

Those consulted at the programme level felt that most progress against achieving the above outcomes occurred in respect of raising skill levels and quality of practice (particularly at leadership and management levels). In general, this reflects the findings of previous chapters concerning outcomes in respect of the YPWRP's component strands and workstreams. As chapter two highlights, it is clear that the Leadership and Management strand played a significant role in raising and developing skills at higher levels. Evidence collated on the strand also points strongly to the beneficial outcomes resulting in terms of raising the quality of practice within the workforce, and in impacting positively on service delivery in a range of settings.

Contributions to raised skill levels were also cited by programme level interviewees in respect of the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand and the WFD for IYS areas workstream, though they often felt too removed from delivery to fully judge the nature or extent of this. As the evidence presented in chapters three and four show, positive outcomes in the sense of raised skill levels and quality of practice can certainly be ascribed to this strand and workstream. However, it should be noted that both the YPWRP's Progress project within the VSCB strand and the WFD for IYS workstream are only able to cover a part of the workforce. The extent of these outcomes, whilst significant, is thus unavoidably limited in terms of scale (accepting that over 25,000 training units delivered through YPWRP's Progress is unquestionably a significant achievement).

In the main, interviewees indicated that developing a clearer entry and progression picture for the workforce was another area of the YPWRP where significant progress was evident, principally in relation to the development of the SDF. However, views tended to be qualified in a similar way to the earlier specific discussion of the SDF in section 4.3. While the framework was seen as useful and well constructed, hence making a significant contribution around entry and progression, there was uncertainty as to the extent to which it would be widely used.

A similar picture emerges in relation to developing a more consistent set of qualifications and training. As reflected in programme level interviews, notable progress has certainly been made against this objective through several workstreams. The work undertaken towards developing Apprenticeship and Foundation Degree frameworks, along with the development of a training curriculum for the voluntary sector, were cited as the main positive achievements by interviewees. However, it was noted that the level of contribution to this outcome will depend on the degree to which the qualifications frameworks are taken up. On the basis of the analysis in chapter three, contributions towards this outcome appear particularly evident through YPWRP's Progress projects' development of a qualification unit database and training curriculum for the voluntary sector. Overall, therefore, there has been significant progress against this outcome.

In respect of the intended outcome of enhancing workforce capacity to deliver IYS, the most common view of programme level interviewees was that progress had been made in a number of areas. The focus of the Leadership and Management strand on engaging participants from different sectors and workforce areas was commonly cited, as was the development of consortia working in partnership within the WFD for IYS strand. Certainly, the evidence collated in chapters two and four serves to demonstrate that both the leadership and management training and the WFD for IYS activity have had positive effects for the delivery of IYS. While the

extent of this is inevitably difficult to fully quantify, the analysis undertaken suggests that these effects have certainly been significant. As several programme level interviewees noted, the specific focus on 'integrated working' as a policy aim has perhaps lessened over the YPWRP's lifetime. However, if this aspect of intended outcomes is considered in terms of 'joint working' the above noted strands and workstreams undoubtedly made significant contributions here.

Similarly, evidence submitted to the evaluators drawing on Local Authority (LA) feedback in response to Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) grants given to all LAs⁵² suggests that a number of positive outcomes accrued in terms of integrated working. These stem from a range of activities grants were used for including:

- Funding additional training to build the capacity of staff to deliver integrated working (both in respect of statutory and voluntary sector staff).
- Developing training strategies or specific course schedules around joint working.
- Holding events and workshops to discuss and share good practice.
- Using mentors to support staff in their development.
- Improving common induction procedures for new staff.
- Undertaking research to support the local development of integrated working.

Evidence of outcomes from the above activities chimes with many of the themes discussed throughout the report. Outcomes stated by LAs included: improved understanding of, and capacity for, joint working; development of staff skills and competences around joint working; strengthening leadership and management; and supporting more effective service delivery as a result of these outcomes. While the relatively small size of the grants means that overall outcomes will necessarily be limited, provision of the grants appears from the evidence provided to have generated some useful catalytic effects beyond the scale of the investment. While quantifying the changes in culture and focus around integrated working reported by some areas is obviously difficult, nonetheless these outcomes can be added to the overall assessment of the progress made by the YPWRP in advancing, and enhancing, joint working.

Amongst the intended outcomes discussed, contributing to a stronger sense of professional identity was an area where most programme level interviewees felt less progress was made. The context for this was the view that generating a sense of professional identity for the workforce as a whole was problematic, and that having this as an intended programme outcome was perhaps a little flawed given its potential to be interpreted as meaning 'one workforce'. As one interviewee noted, "...most people are a long way from any idea of 'one workforce'...", while another commented that "...the idea of 'one workforce' didn't quite chime with the workforce itself...". Evidence collated in previous chapters tends to reflect the view of limited progress against this intended outcome. However, a partial counterpoint is that the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand may have contributed to shared identity through reflecting the sector's significance, and by developing a unified training curriculum aimed at professional development.

⁵² Grants of between £21,000 and £25,000 were given to all LAs in February 2009 to enable them to take early advantage of the programme. The grants provided opportunities to develop local plans for young people's workforce development based on the reform programme and local needs.

The intended outcome of raising workforce status, morale and aspirations was the other main area where programme level interviewees tended to be less positive. Several noted that the development of Youth Professional Standards, embedded in the SDF, went some way towards promoting workforce status. However, the general perception was that a number of factors had challenged progress in this area, leading to limited success. Difficulties in progressing the Youth Professional Status workstream, and the subsequent dropping of this, were seen as removing a key driver to promote the outcome. More commonly, interviewees felt that external factors affecting status, morale and aspirations were so significant over the period of the YPWRP's operation that there was little scope for positive impacts in this area.

While the analysis in previous chapters tends to support the limitations inherent in seeking to raise status and morale in such a context, there is evidence to suggest that aspirations have at least been raised. The various training elements of the YPWRP (relating to leadership and management, YPWRP's Progress, and the WFD for IYS workstream) have undoubtedly had some impact here, although the external context facing the workforce has also been a challenge. The sense gained from assessment of the YPWRP's Progress project and WFD for IYS workstream is that those receiving training have found it also benefitted their morale to some extent. Likewise, status is also likely to have been enhanced for those benefitting from YPWRP's Progress in the sense of recognition of the importance of the voluntary sector and volunteering within the workforce. Thus, while for the YPWRP as a whole, raising status, morale and aspirations in challenging times has made achievement of the objective more difficult, there is evidence of positive effects in this area.

As the above analysis indicates, progress against the intended outcomes of the YPWRP is perhaps evident most clearly and significantly in terms of raising skill levels and the quality of practice. However, significant progress has been made against the other outcomes discussed, accepting the caveats mentioned around uncertainty over longer term effects and the difficulty of quantifying the level or extent of these outcomes. In particular, there is a need to be realistic as to the extent to which the YPWRP can fully meet all of its intended outcomes in light of the size of the workforce, and the aspirational nature of the goals set for the programme. Within this context significant positive outcomes have certainly been occasioned, and the intended outcomes for the programme have been achieved to a considerable extent.

6.7.2 Progress against wider and longer term intended impacts

Key stakeholders interviewed at the programme level were also asked to consider whether and to what extent evidence is available on some of the wider, longer term and 'further downstream' impacts that the programme is intended to promote. The main longer term impacts considered revolved around the aspiration for the programme to positively enhance the life chances and opportunities of young people, its ultimate beneficiaries. Perhaps unsurprisingly, in the main interviewees felt that assessing the programme's impact on young people themselves was problematic for two main reasons. Firstly, that impacts on young people that may stem from enhancing skills and capacity amongst the workforce would only be able to be judged in the longer term. Secondly, the view that capturing, assessing and disaggregating impacts stemming from YPWRP activity as distinct from other changes in the operation and approach of those in the young people's workforce would be extremely difficult and subjective.

These issues notwithstanding, several interviewees did feel that positive impacts for young people would certainly have accrued from at least some of the programme's strands and workstreams. Most commonly noted was the view that developing more effective service approaches through individuals' participation in the leadership and management programmes, including a specific focus on how to more effectively engage young people in service design and delivery, is likely to have had a positive impact.

Again, the evidence gathered and assessed in chapter three of this report around the Leadership and Management strand strongly confirms this feeling. Likewise, the evidence collated in previous chapters around improvements in service delivery, not only in respect of the leadership and management programmes but also through the YPWRP's Progress project and the WFD for IYS workstream, similarly serves to highlight the likely benefits for young people accruing. While quantifying and disaggregating such effects is beyond the scope of this evaluation, it is fair to note that some evidence of actual positive impacts for young people can be drawn from the preceding analysis. Likewise, as reflected consistently in previous chapters, the evaluation has served to highlight a range of available evidence around the strong likelihood of such positive impacts accruing from programme activity, both in the near and longer term.

6.8 Legacy and sustainability considerations in respect of the YPWRP

Consultations undertaken with programme level stakeholders were used particularly, though not exclusively, in stage two of the evaluation to gather perceptions around the legacy that would be left by the YPWRP, along with the sustainability of this legacy. While perceptions varied, the overall view was that the YPWRP has built up a significant legacy. This legacy was identified and discussed principally in respect of two main areas: firstly, the products developed through the different strands of the programme; and, secondly, the legacy offered to individuals, organisations, particular localities, and the workforce as a whole through the leadership and management programmes, the YPWRP's Progress project, and the WFD for IYS workstream.

Again, the evidence available in respect of the programme's legacy in respect of each of the workstreams discussed earlier tends to support and confirm these impressions. The training elements of the YPWRP – notably the Leadership and Management programmes, the YPWRP's Progress project and WFD for IYS workstream – have undoubtedly left a considerable beneficial legacy for those individuals and organisations involved. Evidence gathered also suggests that there will be a wider legacy in many instances for the voluntary sector as a whole stemming from the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building workstream, and that positive legacy effects have been occasioned in particular localities through the leadership and management and WFD for IYS elements of the programme.

Overall views expressed by programme level interviewees, and supported by the evidence gathered in previous chapters of this report, was that the extent of sustainability in respect of the positive legacy and outcomes evident from the programme is somewhat uncertain. As analysis of the outcomes of the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand illustrates, for example, sustainability has certainly been achieved in the sense of an infrastructure, approach and products with the potential to support up-skilling of the workforce on a longer term basis. However, the sustainability of these aspects will depend, in part, on future policy direction, the

availability of ongoing resources, and the wider context within which the young people's workforce finds itself.

The potential for sustained benefits to accrue from component elements of the programme is undoubtedly apparent, therefore, but the actual achievement of such benefits is less certain. The products developed under the Common Platform strand – the SDF, FD framework, and the AFIYS – are a case in point, in terms of their wider adoption by the workforce being key to the potential for sustained benefits to accrue. What is clear, however, is that the basis has in many senses been laid by the YPWRP to achieve a longer term legacy, and for the positive outcomes already generated to be sustained into the future.

6.9 Conclusion

In assessing the YPWRP as a whole, it is important to note the scope and scale of the challenge facing the programme in seeking to implement an ambitious set of workforce development activity in the context of a varied, disparate and large young people's workforce. The challenge faced has grown over the period of the programme's implementation, as external factors around a change in Government and budgetary constraints affected the workforce. In light of this, the achievement of designing a coherent programme that reflects key workforce development needs, and implementing it in a broadly effective and efficient way, should not be underestimated. While the YPWRP Board played a significant role here, so did all involved in programme delivery through those managing it to those implementing it 'on the ground'.

The programme has also led to a wide range of positive outcomes at a number of levels and in a number of ways in respect of the young people's workforce. These encompass positive outcomes for individuals and organisations benefitting from the training and infrastructure development involved; benefits for localities and particular sectors within the workforce; and gains for the workforce as a whole in terms of the legacy offered around a series of products, materials and infrastructure with potential for use into the future. While there are challenges to ensuring the sustainability of programme outcomes, the basis has been laid to achieve a longer term legacy and for the positive outcomes generated to be sustained.

Specifically in respect of achievement of planned outcomes, such achievement is perhaps evident most clearly and significantly in terms of raising skill levels and the quality of practice within the workforce. However, significant achievements are also evident in respect of each of the other intended outcomes established for the YPWRP. Accepting this, there is a need to be realistic as to the extent to which the YPWRP could have fully met all of its intended outcomes for the workforce as a whole, in light of the size of that workforce and the aspirational nature of the goals set for the programme. Likewise, achievement against the intended outcomes of the programme is sometimes difficult to quantify, due not least to the fact that the full range and extent of such outcomes will take some time to emerge.

Despite this, the evaluation also offers good evidence in terms of the degree to which the YPWRP met some of the more 'downstream' impacts intended – particularly those around improving service delivery for young people, and the experience of young people of those services. Likewise, evaluating the YPWRP and its workstreams has served to highlight a range

of evidence around the strong likelihood of positive impacts accruing from programme activity in respect of young people's opportunities and life chances, both in the near and longer term.

7.0 Conclusion

By way of concluding the evaluation, this closing chapter seeks to briefly highlight the key overall findings that emerge from the preceding chapters, prior to offering some overall concluding remarks.

7.1 Key overall findings

A selection of key overall findings that emerge from the foregoing analysis can be highlighted as follows:

- At the programme, strand and workstream level it is evident that the YPWRP has been well developed and designed, focuses on the right areas and themes in terms of promoting workforce development, and represents a broadly coherent approach towards this.
- The prominent place of the voluntary sector within the YPWRP's design considerations and the focus of its activity has been well received, and has had some notable positive benefits for the sector as a whole.
- All those involved in designing and implementing the YPWRP have worked hard in a difficult context, and the broadly efficient and effective implementation of the programme and its workstreams can be viewed as a major achievement in light of the challenges faced.
- The success of the Leadership and Management strand and the beneficial outcomes that can be traced to it are likely to leave a strong and continuing legacy for individuals, organisations providing services to young people, and in terms of improvements to service delivery.
- While the Voluntary Sector Capacity Building strand faced significant implementation challenges, the approach developed has achieved significant gains – in terms of the training units delivered and the positive outcomes for individuals accessing them, and in the sense of developing a strong infrastructural legacy able to support workforce development in the sector into the future.
- The WFD for IYS workstream has led to a range of beneficial outcomes for the learners supported through it, for the consortia involved in delivering it, and for the localities involved in terms of the development of enhanced approaches to joint working.
- The products developed under the Common Platform strand – the SDF and qualifications frameworks – have been well received in general and have met the broad outcomes set for them, though there remains some uncertainty over the extent to which they will achieve widespread adoption and use.
- While the programme's cross cutting themes can be viewed as effectively supporting the YPWRP's implementation and development, the communications approach and activity developed through the programme has had mixed results.
- The YPWRP met its main intended outcomes to a significant degree, though fully quantifying the extent of this achievement is difficult and will only be fully evident in the longer term.
- The YPWRP as a whole has left a significant legacy in terms of workforce development, though further work will be needed to secure that legacy and ensure that the gains made are sustained.

7.2 Concluding remarks

As this evaluation makes clear, the YPWRP has undoubtedly generated a range of positive outcomes and occasioned change that would otherwise not have occurred in its absence. The sustained efforts and hard work of those involved with the programme at all levels – through CWDC and its partners, external stakeholders that have inputted to development, delivery contractors, and those supporting programme elements on the ground – should certainly be recognised. Moreover, in terms of what has been achieved, much of the basis is certainly there to continue to promote and advance workforce development across the young people's workforce. However, those connected to the programme – both strategically and operationally – may well need to focus on how, and in what ways, to most effectively advance the sustainability of the positive outcomes generated, and ensure that the legacy offered by the programme is maximised.

Annex One: Tables of Responses to the Closed Questions in the CATI Surveys

Survey of Progress Participants – Closed Questions¹

		Count	Column N %
Q1 When you accessed the training, which of the following best describes your situation?	In employment with an organisation working with young people	69	33.7%
	Volunteering for an organisation working with young people	95	46.3%
	Both of the above	25	12.2%
	Neither of the above/Other (specify)	16	7.8%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.2 Which of the following factors encouraged you to apply for the training?	To help with career development	114	55.6%
	In response to a particular training need	64	31.2%
	Training on offer seemed interesting	80	39.0%
	Funding being available to take the training	72	35.1%
	Encouragement from employer/organisation you volunteer for	103	50.2%
	As a result of taking the 'self assessment' on the 'ticket to progress' website.	10	4.9%
	Other (specify)	8	3.9%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q3 Of those factors, which one would you say was most significant?	To help with career development	85	41.5%
	In response to a particular training need	27	13.2%
	Training on offer seemed interesting	20	9.8%
	Funding being available to take the training	18	8.8%
	Encouragement from employer/organisation you volunteer for	49	23.9%
	Other	6	2.9%
	Total	205	100.0%

¹ Please note that responses do not always add up to exactly 100% due to rounding. Results presented are from a survey of 205 participants undertaking training through the Progress project, undertaken in March 2011.

		Count	Column N %
Q4 How did you find out about the training?	Through the organisation you work or volunteer for	136	66.3%
	National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS)	1	.5%
	Regional Delivery Agent (RDA)	3	1.5%
	Local Training Provider	2	1.0%
	Other (specify)	35	17.1%
	Don't know	1	.5%
	Word of mouth/ Work colleague	21	10.2%
	College	6	2.9%
Total	205	100.0%	

		Count	Column N %
Q5 If the opportunity to take the training had not been available through the Progress project at this time, do you think you would have been able to access similar training elsewhere?	Yes	61	29.8%
	No	109	53.2%
	Don't know	35	17.1%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q6 When deciding whether to register to access the training, how would you rate any written information and guidance available to support you in making this decision?	Very poor	2	1.0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	25	12.2%
	Good	74	36.1%
	Very good	68	33.2%
	Don't know/Don't remember	6	2.9%
	No information or guidance accessed	30	14.6%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q7 Did you access any additional information, advice or guidance concerning the training and what it would involve through any other route, e.g. contacting a training provider or other organisation to discuss the training?	Yes	40	19.5%
	No	157	76.6%
	Don't know	8	3.9%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q8 How would you rate any additional information, advice or guidance concerning the training and what it would involve?	Very poor	2	5.0%
	Poor	1	2.5%
	Average	4	10.0%
	Good	16	40.0%
	Very good	17	42.5%
	Don't know / Don't remember	0	0%
	No support or guidance accessed	0	0%
	Total	40	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q9 How would you rate any support and guidance provided to help with the process of registering for and accessing the training?	Very poor	3	1.5%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	19	9.3%
	Good	57	27.8%
	Very good	64	31.2%
	Don't know/Don't remember	11	5.4%
	No support or guidance accessed	51	24.9%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q10 Overall, how would you rate the ease with which you were able to register for and access the training?	Very poor	2	1.0%
	Poor	3	1.5%
	Average	15	7.3%
	Good	58	28.3%
	Very good	114	55.6%
	Don't know/don't remember	13	6.3%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q11 Have you used the 'ticket to progress' online system as part of the process of accessing and undertaking the training?	Yes	62	30.2%
	No	133	64.9%
	Don't know	10	4.9%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q12 Please rate how useful you feel the 'ticket to progress' online system is in terms of accessing and undertaking the training.	Very poor	4	6.5%
	Poor	6	9.7%
	Average	6	9.7%
	Good	25	40.3%
	Very good	17	27.4%
	Don't know/Don't remember	4	6.5%
	Total	62	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.13 Which of the following best describes why you did not use the ticket to progress online system?	Not aware of it	68	51.1%
	Did not find it useful	5	3.8%
	Unable to access the system online	26	19.5%
	Other (specify)	12	9.0%
	Time constraints/ Too busy	19	14.3%
	Don't know how to use it/ Training needed	5	3.8%
	Total	133	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q14 Did you use the 'self assessment tool' on the 'ticket to progress' website to help you with choosing the particular training courses you accessed?	Yes	20	9.8%
	No	163	79.5%
	Don't know	22	10.7%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q15 How would you rate the 'self assessment tool' in terms of helping to identify what training you would benefit from?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	0	0%
	Good	12	60.0%
	Very good	7	35.0%
	Don't know/Don't remember	1	5.0%
	Total	20	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q16 How would you rate the range of different types of training and training units available through the Progress project in terms of the level of choice this offered you?	Very poor	5	2.4%
	Poor	11	5.4%
	Average	18	8.8%
	Good	73	35.6%
	Very good	66	32.2%
	Don't know/Don't remember	32	15.6%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q17 How would you rate the suitability of training options available in terms of meeting your training needs?	Very poor	1	0.5%
	Poor	4	2.0%
	Average	15	7.3%
	Good	85	41.5%
	Very good	86	42.0%
	Don't know/Don't remember	14	6.8%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q18 How many units of training did you undertake?	One unit	84	41.0%
	Two units	36	17.6%
	Three units	18	8.8%
	Four units	12	5.9%
	Five units	27	13.2%
	Don't know/Don't remember	28	13.7%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q19 In terms of the training itself, how would you rate this overall?	Very poor	3	1.5%
	Poor	2	1.0%
	Average	12	5.9%
	Good	52	25.4%
	Very good	132	64.4%
	Don't know/Don't remember	4	2.0%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q22 Do you feel that the training received will help you improve in your work or volunteering activity?	Yes	195	95.1%
	No	4	2.0%
	Don't know	6	2.9%
	Total	205	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q25 Based on your experience overall, would you recommend that other people working or volunteering with young people should try and access similar training?	Yes	200	97.6%
	No	3	1.5%
	Don't know	2	1.0%
	Total	205	100.0%

Survey of individuals taking Advanced Apprenticeships under the WFD for IYS workstream¹

		Count	Column N %
Q2 Which of the following factors encouraged you to apply for an Advanced Apprenticeship	To help with career development	37	80.4%
	Apprenticeship on offer seemed interesting	23	50.0%
	Funding being available to take the qualification	21	45.7%
	Support being available as part of the taking the qualification	14	30.4%
	Encouragement from school/college/employer	13	28.3%
	Other (please specify)	4	8.7%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q3 Which factor would you say was most significant?	To help with career development	29	63.0%
	Apprenticeship on offer seemed interesting	6	13.0%
	Funding being available to take the qualification	3	6.5%
	Support being available as part of the taking the qualification	1	2.2%
	Encouragement from school/college/employer	4	8.7%
	Other	3	6.5%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q4 If funding and support had not been available in the way it was to take the Apprenticeship, do you think you would have taken a similar qualification?	Yes	27	58.7%
	No	19	41.3%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q5 If the opportunity provided had not been available, do you feel you would have entered the young people's workforce?	Yes	25	54.3%
	No	18	39.1%
	Already in young people's workforce	3	6.5%
	Not sure	0	0%
	Total	46	100.0%

¹ Please note that responses do not always add up to exactly 100% due to rounding. Results are from a survey of 46 individuals supported to take Advanced Apprenticeships through the WFD for IYS workstream. The survey was undertaken between February and March 2011.

		Count	Column N %
Q6 When deciding whether to take the Advanced Apprenticeship, how would you rate any information and guidance provided about the Apprenticeship?	Very poor	3	6.5%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	5	10.9%
	Good	17	37.0%
	Very good	20	43.5%
	Don't know/Don't remember	1	2.2%
	No information or guidance provided	0	0%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q7 How would you rate the initial induction process for the Advanced Apprenticeship?	Very poor	1	2.2%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	10	21.7%
	Good	13	28.3%
	Very good	19	41.3%
	Don't know/Don't remember	1	2.2%
	No induction received	2	4.3%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q8 In terms of the Advanced Apprenticeship itself, how would you rate the course?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	3	6.5%
	Good	17	37.0%
	Very good	25	54.3%
	Don't know	1	2.2%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q9 Outside of the Advanced Apprenticeship course itself, are you receiving any other CPD support and help, such as mentoring support?	Yes	23	50.0%
	No	22	47.8%
	Not sure	1	2.2%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q10 How would you rate this additional CPD support and help?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	1	4.3%
	Average	1	4.3%
	Good	9	39.1%
	Very good	12	52.2%
	Don't know	0	0%
	Total	23	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q11 Have you undertaken any work placements as part of the Advanced Apprenticeship?	Yes	26	56.5%
	No	20	43.5%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q13 Overall, how would you rate the work placements?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	2	7.7%
	Good	4	15.4%
	Very good	19	73.1%
	Don't know	1	3.8%
	Total	26	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q16 Do you feel that taking the Apprenticeship will help you develop your career?	Yes	45	97.8%
	No	1	2.2%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q19 How would you rate your experience of the Advanced Apprenticeship and other support received in terms of helping you to work in integrated youth support?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	5	10.9%
	Good	19	41.3%
	Very good	22	47.8%
	Don't know	0	0%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q20 Based on your experience overall, would you recommend that other people involved in, or interested in, careers in this area should undertake a similar course or participate in a similar scheme?	Yes	45	97.8%
	No	1	2.2%
	Total	46	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q21 Do you think you will continue on to a career in the young people's workforce?	Yes	45	97.8%
	No	1	2.2%
	Total	46	100.0%

Survey of individuals taking Foundation Degrees under the WFD for IYS workstream¹

		Count	Column N %
Q.2 Which of the following factors encouraged you to apply for a Foundation Degree?	To help with career development	36	87.8%
	Foundation Degree on offer seemed interesting	16	39.0%
	Funding being available to take the qualification	27	65.9%
	Support being available as part of taking the qualification	12	29.3%
	Encouragement from College/Employer	20	48.8%
	Other (please specify)	1	2.4%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q4 Of those factors, which would you say was the most significant?	To help with career development	25	61.0%
	Foundation Degree on offer seemed interesting	3	7.3%
	Funding being available to take the qualification	10	24.4%
	Encouragement from College/Employer	2	4.9%
	Other (please specify)	1	2.4%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q5 If funding and support had not been available in the way it was to take the Foundation Degree, do you think you would have taken a similar qualification?	Yes	15	36.6%
	No	26	63.4%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q6 When deciding whether to take the Foundation Degree, how would you rate any information and guidance provided about the degree from your employer?	Very poor	5	12.2%
	Poor	6	14.6%
	Average	8	19.5%
	Good	9	22.0%
	Very good	6	14.6%
	Don't know/Don't remember	1	2.4%
	No information or guidance provided	6	14.6%
	Total	41	100.0%

¹ Please note that responses do not always add up to exactly 100% due to rounding. Results are from a survey of 41 individuals supported to take Foundation Degrees through the WFD for IYS workstream. The survey was undertaken between February and March 2011.

		Count	Column N %
Q7 Equally, when deciding whether to take the Foundation Degree, how would you rate any information and guidance provided by the institution delivering the degree?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	7	17.1%
	Average	5	12.2%
	Good	15	36.6%
	Very good	13	31.7%
	Don't know / Don't remember	0	0%
	No information or guidance provided	1	2.4%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q8 How would you rate any initial induction process for the Foundation Degree at the institution delivering the degree?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	7	17.1%
	Average	13	31.7%
	Good	9	22.0%
	Very good	7	17.1%
	Don't know/Don't remember	1	2.4%
	No induction received	4	9.8%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q9 In terms of the Foundation Degree itself, how would you rate the course?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	1	2.4%
	Average	6	14.6%
	Good	14	34.1%
	Very good	20	48.8%
	Don't know	0	0%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q10 Outside of the Foundation Degree course itself, are you receiving any other CPD support and help, such as mentoring support?	Yes	29	70.7%
	No	12	29.3%
	Not sure	0	0%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q11 How would you rate this additional CPD support and help?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	1	3.4%
	Average	4	13.8%
	Good	8	27.6%
	Very good	14	48.3%
	Don't know	2	6.9%
	Total	29	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q14 Do you feel that taking the Foundation Degree will help you develop your career?	Yes	40	97.6%
	No	1	2.4%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q17 How would you rate your experience of the Foundation Degree and other support in terms of helping you to work in integrated youth support?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	2	4.9%
	Good	15	36.6%
	Very good	22	53.7%
	Don't know	2	4.9%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q18 Based on your experience overall, would you recommend that other people working in the young people's workforce should undertake a similar course or participate in a similar scheme?	Yes	41	100.0%
	No	0	0%
	Total	41	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q19 Do you think you will continue on in your career in the young people's workforce?	Yes	41	100.0%
	No	0	0%
	Total	41	100.0%

Survey of individuals participating in a Graduate Recruitment Scheme under the WFD for IYS workstream¹

		Count	Column N %
Q.2 Which of the following factors encouraged you to apply for a place on the Graduate Recruitment Scheme?	To help with career development	15	93.8%
	Graduate Recruitment Scheme on offer seemed interesting	8	50.0%
	Funding being available to take the place on the scheme	10	62.5%
	Support being available as part of taking part in the scheme	8	50.0%
	Encouragement from University/Employer	7	43.8%
	None of the above	0	0%
	Other (please specify)	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.3 Of those factors, which would you say was most significant?	To help with career development	12	75.0%
	Graduate Recruitment Scheme on offer seemed interesting	0	0%
	Funding being available to take the place on the scheme	3	18.8%
	Support being available as part of taking part in the scheme	1	6.3%
	Encouragement from University/Employer	0	0%
	None of the above	0	0%
	Other (please specify)	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.4 If funding and support had not been available in the way it was to take the place on the Graduate Recruitment Scheme, do you think you would have had access to a similar opportunity?	Yes	3	18.8%
	No	13	81.3%
	Total	16	100.0%

¹ Please note that responses do not always add up to exactly 100% due to rounding. Results are from a survey of 16 individuals participating in a Graduate Recruitment Scheme through the WFD for IYS workstream. The survey was undertaken between February and March 2011.

		Count	Column N %
Q.5 If the opportunity provided had not been available, do you feel you would have entered the young people's workforce?	Yes	10	62.5%
	No	1	6.3%
	Already in young people's workforce	3	18.8%
	Not sure	2	12.5%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.6 When deciding whether to take part in the Graduate Recruitment Scheme, how would you rate any information and guidance provided about the scheme?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	2	12.5%
	Average	3	18.8%
	Good	6	37.5%
	Very good	5	31.3%
	Don't know / Don't remember	0	0%
	No information or guidance provided	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.7 How would you rate any local induction process for the Graduate Recruitment Scheme?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	3	18.8%
	Good	6	37.5%
	Very good	5	31.3%
	Don't know / Don't remember	1	6.3%
	No induction received	1	6.3%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.8 How would you rate the CPD support received from your employer through the scheme?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	0	0%
	Good	7	43.8%
	Very good	6	37.5%
	Don't know / Don't remember	0	0%
	No CPD support received from employer	3	18.8%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.9 How would you rate the support received from the work based mentor or mentors attached to the scheme?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	1	6.3%
	Average	0	0%
	Good	6	37.5%
	Very good	8	50.0%
	Don't know / Don't remember	0	0%
	No mentor support received	1	6.3%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.10 As part of the scheme did you undertake a Master's Degree or other relevant postgraduate qualification?	Yes	13	81.3%
	No	3	18.8%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.11 How would you rate the training and support received through the Master's Degree or other postgraduate qualification?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	1	7.7%
	Good	6	46.2%
	Very good	6	46.2%
	Don't know	0	0%
	Total	13	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.12 Have you undertaken any work placements as part of the Graduate Recruitment Scheme?	Yes	16	100.0%
	No	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.14 Overall, how would you rate the work placements?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	1	6.3%
	Good	4	25.0%
	Very good	11	68.8%
	Don't know	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.17 Do you feel that participating in the scheme will help you develop your career?	Yes	16	100.0%
	No	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.20 How would you rate your experience of the Graduate Recruitment Scheme in terms of helping you to work in integrated youth support?	Very poor	0	0%
	Poor	0	0%
	Average	1	6.3%
	Good	6	37.5%
	Very good	9	56.3%
	Don't know	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.21 Based on your experience overall, would you recommend that other people involved in, or interested in, careers in this area should undertake a similar scheme?	Yes	15	93.8%
	No	1	6.3%
	Total	16	100.0%

		Count	Column N %
Q.22 Do you think you will continue your career in the young people's workforce?	Yes	16	100.0%
	No	0	0%
	Total	16	100.0%

Annex Two: Framework for Assessing Strategic Added Value

RDA Impact Evaluation Framework - Analytical Framework for Assessing SAV

RDA SAV functions	SAV outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic leadership & catalyst: Articulating and communicating regional development needs, opportunities and solutions to partners and stakeholders in the region and elsewhere; • Strategic influence: Carrying out or stimulating activity that defines the distinctive roles of partners, gets them to commit to shared strategic objectives and to behave and allocate their funds accordingly; • Leverage: Providing financial and other incentives to mobilise partner and stakeholder resources – equipment, people as well as funding • Synergy: Using organisational capacity, knowledge and expertise to improve information exchange and knowledge transfer and coordination and/or integration of the design and delivery of interventions between partners; • Engagement: Setting up the mechanisms and incentives for more effective and deliberative engagement of stakeholders in the design and delivery of regional and sub-regional priorities and programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating confidence in the prospects for economic growth and in the capacity of partners and stakeholders to realise the potential for growth and improved regional performance; • Generating cross-regional partnerships of mutual benefit to the growth prospects of each participating region; • Achieving alignment and inter-locking of the priorities and investment plans of partners with the RES and with other partners; • Levered funding and other resources from partners and stakeholders in support of RES objectives • Reduced duplication of service provision from regional partners – e.g. in business development support • Scaling up of projects and programmes to beneficial levels that achieve scale economies and provide for critical mass in securing benefits; • Introducing quality and innovation in RDA and partner interventions through the transfer of good practice, the development and use of benchmarks and the adoption of new processes and methods.
<p>Source: Adapted from the Guidance Note on SAV prepared by SEEDA for the RDAs' Performance Management Group and from the ECOTEC Scoping Study for <i>emda</i> (2004)</p>	

Source: *Evaluating the Impact of England's Regional Development Agencies*, DTI 2006

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