

REPORT TO:	NHS SOMERSET INTEGRATED CARE BOARD ICB Board Part A	ENCLOSURE:
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DATE OF MEETING:	22 May 2025	
REPORT TITLE:	'Get Britain Working' – Partnership Working to Reduce Economic Inactivity	
REPORT AUTHOR:	Mel Roberts, Work, Health & Skills Lead, Somerset Council and Oli Fletcher, Workforce Programme Lead, NHS Somerset	
EXECUTIVE SPONSOR:	Alison Bell, Director of Public Health, Somerset Council and Graham Atkins, Chief People Officer, NHS Somerset	
PRESENTED BY:	Mel Roberts, Work, Health & Skills Lead, Somerset Council and Oli Fletcher, Workforce Programme Lead, NHS Somerset	

PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION	SELECT (Place an 'X' in relevant box(es) below)
Approve	To formally receive a report and approve its recommendations, (authorising body/committee for the final decision)	
Endorse	To support the recommendation (not the authorising body/committee for the final decision)	
Discuss	To discuss, in depth, a report noting its implications	X
Note	To note, without the need for discussion	
Assurance	To assure the Board/Committee that systems and processes are in place, or to advise of a gap along with mitigations	

SELECT (Place an 'X' in relevant box(es) below)	LINKS TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (Please select any which are impacted on / relevant to this paper)
X	Objective 1: Improve the health and wellbeing of the population
X	Objective 2: Reduce inequalities
	Objective 3: Provide the best care and support to children and adults
	Objective 4: Strengthen care and support in local communities
	Objective 5: Respond well to complex needs
X	Objective 6: Enable broader social and economic development
	Objective 7: Enhance productivity and value for money

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION / ENGAGEMENT
Somerset Board received this report on 11 March 2025, noted and discussed, supportive of approach and no further action taken.

REPORT TO COMMITTEE / BOARD
<p>Overview of the Get Britain Working White Paper (November 2024) and key considerations, for the system, within Somerset including the Connect to Work Programme and the development of a local Get Britain Working plan [Get Somerset Working]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board to consider alignment of health services in the development and implementation of the Connect to Work programme, specifically the alignment to the Individualised Placement Support (IPS) supported employment model which will support individuals with a health consideration into, or to stay in, work. • Board to discuss their priorities for the Get Somerset Working Plan based on the Economic Inactivity Needs Assessment: Breaking Barriers.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS – KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED
(please enter 'N/A' where not applicable)

Reducing Inequalities/Equality & Diversity	The Council has prepared an Equality Impact Assessment as part of its formal governance processes for Connect to Work. A similar EIA will be produced as the Get Somerset Working plan is progressed through governance. Both programmes focus on reducing economic inactivity ensuring that all individuals have access to “good work” regardless of their background and personal circumstances.
Quality	There is potential that individuals supported through Connect to Work, and longer term through Get Somerset Working programmes, will be able to fulfil Health and Care workforce needs.
Safeguarding	In delivering the Connect to Work programme individuals will be protected. Safeguarding policies, and processes, will be embedded into delivery arrangements and will be considered through ongoing review of delivery.
Financial/Resource/ Value for Money	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Governance/Legal/ Privacy	Information sharing with delivery partners, including health services, are currently being considered in respect of Connect to Work delivery. Data Protection legislation will apply and management of data will be in compliance with appropriate processes.
Confidentiality	N/A
Risk Description	The Connect to Work programme has a risk register with key risks being around engagement of individuals in the programme and employers being able to offer appropriate work. Risks have not been aligned with the ICB Corporate Risk Register.

'Get Britain Working'

Working in Partnership to Reduce Economic Inactivity

22 May 2025



“Lived Experience” Story

Mark Catton - Now in a substantive post – Administrator for Estates Facilities in YDH

[Mark Catton - Future Workforce SWAP Programme - YouTube](#)

<https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2024-04-22/job-rejections-left-man-with-sight-problems-feeling-on-the-scrapheap>

Get Britain Working: Overview

- Get Britain Working White Paper (November 2024) set out Government ambitions to reduce economic inactivity and achieve an 80% employment rate
NHSE set a target for 1.2% reduction in health-driven economic inactivity
- Connect to Work programme to support individuals with disabilities, long-term health conditions and other complex barriers into, or to stay in, work
- Local Get Britain Working Plans to be developed, in partnership with ICBs and JCP, setting out how areas will address the labour market challenges identified within the white paper



Somerset Key Facts and Figures

- 58% of Somerset's population were of working age (between 16 and 64 years) meaning a significantly higher dependency ratio between working and non-working age residents
- Out migration of young people in their early 20's probably to attend Higher Education
- 56,700 people are economically inactive in Somerset (APS, 2023)
- 16,900 of these people are inactive due to long term illness (APS, 2023)
- Economic inactivity correlates with areas of deprivation
- NHSE target for 1.2% reduction in health-driven economic inactivity = 606 people across 2025-2028
- Somerset is an outlier for economic inactivity in 16-29 year olds – due to a mix of skills shortages and ill health
- 4.1% of 16-18 year olds are NEET in Somerset (2024)



Working Age Population

(Annual Population Survey 2023)

58% of Somerset's population were of working age (between 16 and 64 years). This is a smaller proportion of the population than in England as a whole (63%) and means there is a significantly higher dependency ratio between working and non-working age residents.



Population estimates - local authority based by five year age band

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2023

Age	Male		Female		Total	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
Total	284,237	100.0	296,908	100.0	581,145	100.0
Aged 0 - 15	50,060	17.6	47,844	16.1	97,904	16.8
Aged 65 and over	68,032	23.9	79,075	26.6	147,107	25.3
Aged 15 - 19 years	16,583	5.8	15,390	5.2	31,973	5.5
Aged 20 - 24 years	12,751	4.5	11,114	3.7	23,865	4.1
Aged 25 - 29 years	15,210	5.4	14,979	5.0	30,189	5.2
Aged 30 - 34 years	16,316	5.7	17,300	5.8	33,616	5.8
Aged 35 - 39 years	16,485	5.8	17,240	5.8	33,725	5.8
Aged 40 - 44 years	16,060	5.7	16,687	5.6	32,747	5.6
Aged 45 - 49 years	15,392	5.4	16,331	5.5	31,723	5.5
Aged 50 - 54 years	19,310	6.8	20,507	6.9	39,817	6.9
Aged 55 - 59 years	21,444	7.5	22,467	7.6	43,911	7.6
Aged 60 - 64 years	20,203	7.1	21,385	7.2	41,588	7.2



NEETs (16-18 years)

	Cornwall	Devon	Plymouth	Torbay	Peninsula	Somerset	Somerset
	2023						2024
NEET	4.5%	3.7%	4.5%	4.5%	4.1%	3.5%	4.1%*
Not Known	3.7%	2.5%	2.1%	3%	2.7%	5.3%	3.0 %
NEET & Not Known	7.7%	6.3%	6.5%	7.5%	6.9%	8.8%	7.1%
Year 12 NEET & NK	5.3%	4.5%	4.5%	6.1%	5.2%	5.3%	4.4%
Year 13 NEET & NK	9.1%	8.1%	8.6%	8.7%	8.5%	12.4%	9.8 %
Participating	87.9%	89.3%	89.8%	89.2%	88.9%	87.9%	88.7%

*equating to approximately 410 young people in 2024



Economic Inactivity Rates

(Annual Population Survey 2023)

	Total (male + female)	Females	Males
Student	11,400	3,600	7,800
Looking after family/home	9,000	8,500	0
<i>Long-term sick</i>	16,900	11,400	5,500
Retired	8,700	5,700	3,000
Other (incl Temporary sick and Discouraged)	10,700	7,000	4,200
Total	56,700	36,200	20,500

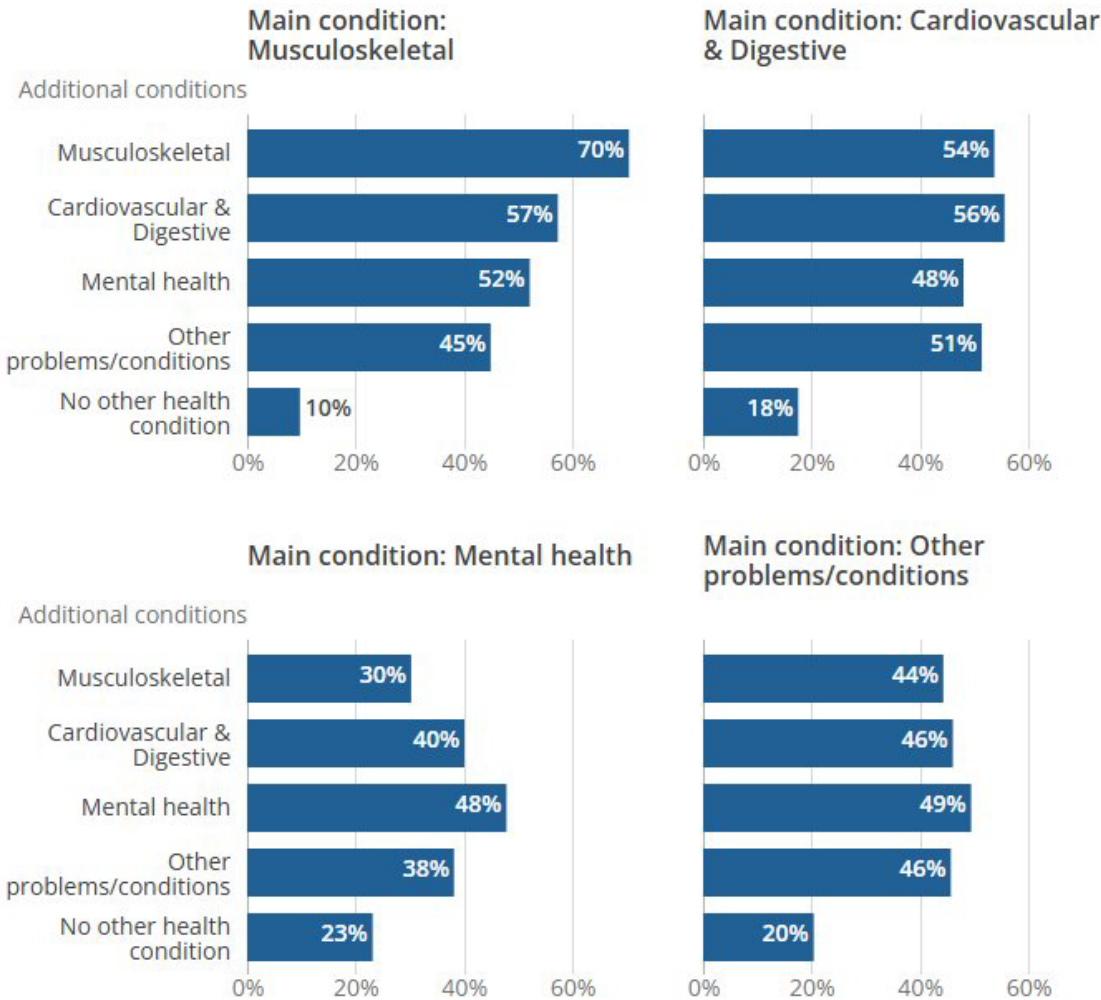


Most prevalent conditions associated with economic inactivity



Figure 5: Over 70% of those inactive because of long-term sickness and with a main health condition that is musculoskeletal self-report a further musculoskeletal condition

Combinations of health conditions for people aged 16 to 64 years and economically inactive because of long-term sickness, UK, January to March 2023



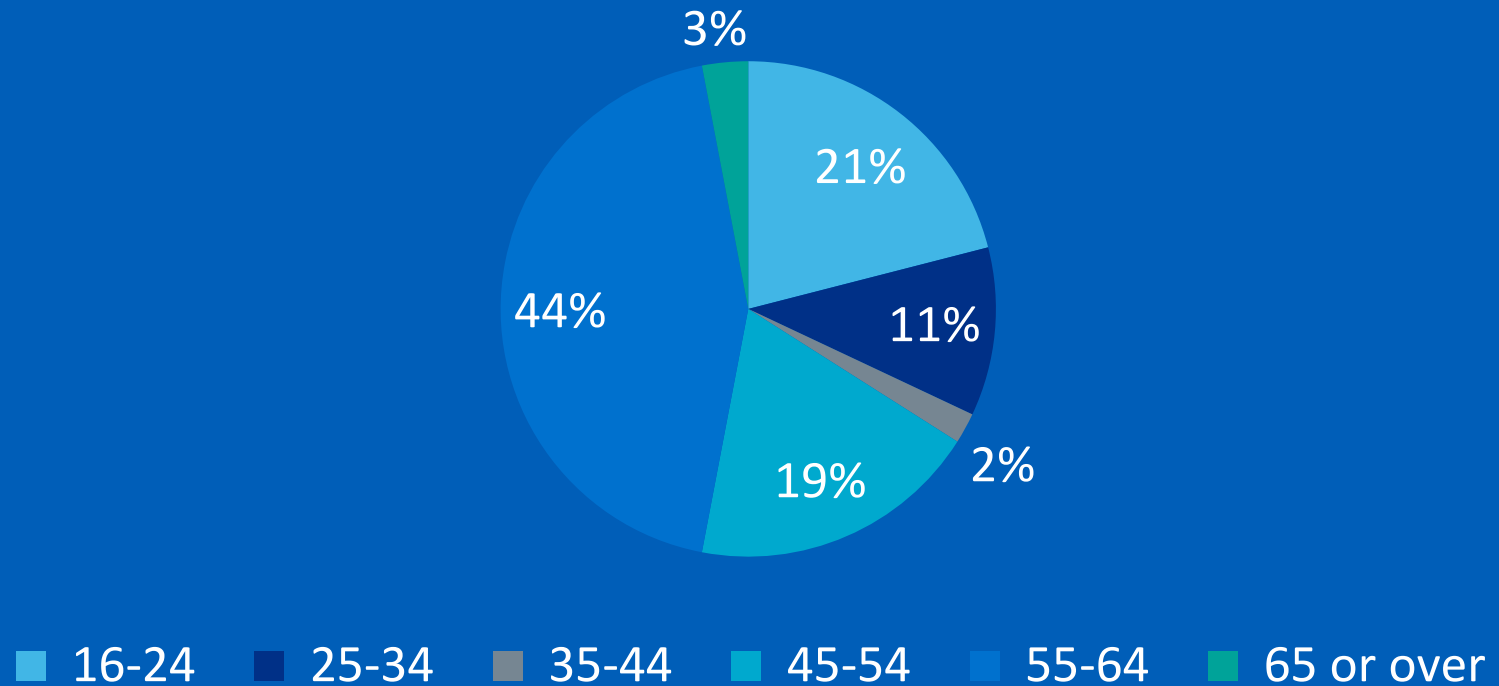
Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics



Economic inactivity due to long-term health condition: distribution among females

- Among EI females due to long-term sick/disabled, 34% is attributed to the young working age adults (16-44 years) with substantial higher proportion (21%) among 16-24 years.
- Causes of the long-term sickness/disability across specific age groups is to be explored in further research.

% of females economically inactive due to long-term health condition by age group in Somerset



Area of Need

Top 10 Areas for Economic Inactivity due to ill health

Highbridge South West (19.3%)**	Williton North (19.1%)
Wellington North (18.9%)**	Bridgwater Chilton Street (17.6%)**
Highbridge South East (16.7%)**	Bridgwater Town Centre (16.0%)**
Taunton Halcon East (15.9%)**	Bridgwater Sydenham Central (15.4%)**
Taunton Town Centre (15.2%)**	Wellington Monument (15.2%)

[Source: ONS, Census 2021 data, 16-64 year olds (weighted: long-term health condition/disability)]

** Areas that are Core20 areas



Current Investment

NHS funding	Source of funding
Workwell Leadership & Capacity Funding	DWP
Individualised Placement Support for SMI	NHS England
Employment Advisors in Talking Therapies	NHS England
Local Authority Funding	
Connect to Work	DWP
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	MHCLG
Community Learning (Health & Wellbeing)	DfE
Employment Hubs	Somerset Council Initiative
Get Britain Working capacity funding	DWP
Other potential NHS funding (not sought)	<i>MSK Employment Advisors, Primary Care IPS, Workwell Pilot</i>



2024/25 Achievements

- Evidence base jointly funded by Council & ICB – Final Report March 2025
- 296 patients supported by Talking Therapies employment advisors August 24 to February 25
- Clinical Lead appointed October 2024 – Engaged with SPLWs/Health Coaches across 7 PCNs
- Community Learning for Health & Wellbeing supported 1,059 people in year
- First Employment Advisors in MSK Community Appointment Day February 2025



Community Appointment Days

In Bridgwater at Victoria Park Community Centre

- 'What Matters to You' conversation
- advice and guidance
- rehabilitation
- 1:1 physiotherapy assessment (if required)
- local community services – including Employment Advice



Connect to Work: Summary

- Intensive Supported Employment to help individuals with disabilities, long-term health conditions and **other complex barriers** into to, or to stay in, work:
 - Ex Offenders
 - Homeless Persons
 - Carers
 - Ex-Carer
 - Veterans
 - Care experienced young person or care leaver
 - Individuals with drug or alcohol dependency
 - Refugees
 - A person on the Ukrainian scheme
 - An Afghan resettler
 - A victim or survivor of domestic abuse
 - Victims of modern slavery
- Ramping up to support 700 individuals per year from 2027, then winding down in 2029/30



Get Somerset Working: Local Plan

- How we will tackle the 6 key issues identified in the White Paper:
 - Labour market exclusion – including those with health conditions
 - Young people unable to access further learning or move into employment
 - Insecure, poor quality, low paying jobs affecting health and wellbeing
 - Women carers facing challenges getting into work
 - Employers can not fill vacancies
 - Disparity in labour market outcomes
- Intended to develop a whole system approach to tackling labour market challenges
- Align to other plans, including Local Skills Improvement Plans
- Plan must be approved by:
 - Somerset Council
 - Integrated Care Board
 - Job Centre Plus



Get Somerset Working: Plan Requirements

- Plans to be published in July, or September
- Full scope of plan is broad – Somerset not ready to respond within timeframe
- However, initial plans can focus on economic inactivity and:
 - Establishing formal governance arrangements
 - Agreeing ways of working with partners
 - Analysing economic inactivity data and causes
 - Mapping existing provision for inactive cohorts
 - Identifying any duplication, gaps and opportunities for future action



Discussion



What are the key labour market challenges in Somerset?

- Which groups of people are most disadvantaged?
- What are the geographical, including infrastructure, challenges?
- Are there any specific sectoral challenges?



What should our short-term priorities be?

- Analysing economic inactivity data and causes
- Mapping existing provision for inactive cohorts
- Identifying any duplication, gaps and opportunities for future action



How do the Board want to engage going forward?

- Establishing formal governance arrangements
- Agreeing ways of working with partners

Nominate a representative for the partnership board



Next Steps

- Continue stakeholder engagement through May/June
- Complete and analyse the evidence base
- Prepare outline of Plan for submission by 27 June
- Finalise draft Plan for stakeholder consultation July
- Seek Governance approvals for publication of Plan by September
- Prepare for an early review of Plan pending Autumn statement outcomes



Any other questions?

For further information contact:

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