

ITEM NO:11

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| DECISION-MAKER: | CABINET COUNCIL | | |
| SUBJECT: | THE CITY'S 14-19 LEARNING, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY 2009-2012 | | |
| DATE OF DECISION: | 20 APRIL 2009 15 JULY 2009 | | |
| REPORT OF: | CABINET MEMBER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND SKILLS | | |
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

SUMMARY

This report concerns two separate, but inter- related matters, seeking approval for the first and endorsement of progress made to date on the second:

(i) The 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employability Strategy, which sets out:

- A learning and skills vision and action plan for all young people in Southampton to be shared with learners, parents and carers, communities, learning and skills agencies and employers.
- Key issues and developments to raise achievement and participation for all at school and in post- 16 learning, skills and employment.
- Linkages with other key partnership strategies for the City, to promote planned and coherent services.

and:

(ii) Overarching transitional arrangements for the transfer of responsibility for commissioning post-16 learning to local authorities in 2010. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill will dissolve the Learning and Skills Council, establish the Skills Funding Agency, Young People's Learning Agency and National Apprenticeship Service, and transfer the responsibility for commissioning education and training for 16-18-year-olds to local authorities. This Bill is currently at Parliamentary committee stage, and full guidance and implications for local authorities is awaited. This report provides a brief overview regarding local progress to date to prepare for the new responsibilities, and recommends that a further report be received by Cabinet once the Bill has passed Royal Assent.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

COUNCIL:

- (i) To approve the Southampton 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employability Strategy as a Policy Framework document.

CABINET:

- (ii) To approve the draft 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employability Strategy 2009-12 (Document in Members Rooms).
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director for Children's Services and Learning, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Young People and Skills, and the Chair of the 14-19 Partnership, to make editorial changes, prior to the publication, which will not materially alter the strategic content of the plan.
- (iv) To endorse the progress made to date to prepare for the transfer of responsibilities from the Learning and Skills Council to local authorities for commissioning of post 16 learning and skills.
- (v) To receive a further report detailing the binding agreements and full legal and financial implications arising from the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill once enacted, including guidance on local implementation.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employability Strategy is one of six partnership plans to be adopted as a Policy Framework document.
2. The Council is required to put in place arrangements to promote co-operation between the local authority, its relevant partners and 14-19 providers as part of the Children and Young People's Trust arrangements.
3. The priorities in the Strategy have been determined by significant consultation with members of Southampton 14-19 Partnership, other local agencies and young people, local management information and data.
4. Initial progress has been made to identify partnership and commissioning requirements arising from the transfer of responsibility for post-16 learning. Once legislation is in place and national implementation guidance available, Cabinet will be requested to consider a more detailed report.
5. The Strategy supports three of the executive priorities for the council:
 1. Delivering value for money and efficient services and working with partner agencies.
 2. Promoting economic prosperity
 3. Raising educational standards and attainment in the City and promoting greater choice and diversity.

CONSULTATION

6. Consultation regarding the Strategy has been carried out with:
 - Cabinet 20 April 2009
 - Southampton 14-19 Partnership.

- Southampton Children and Young People's Trust and steering groups.
 - Jobcentre Plus, the Regional Development Agency, Learning and Skills Council, Business Link, Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, employers, training providers, Higher Education establishments
 - City Council directorates.
 - Lead officers of other major partnerships within the City including Southampton Partnership Policy Board, Safe City Partnership, Southampton Communities and Renewal Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Partnership, Schools' Forum.
 - Young people and their families.
7. Consultation regarding the transfer of responsibility for post-16 learning has been carried out with:
- Government Office of the South East.
 - Department for Children, Schools and Families.
 - Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council and Portsmouth City Council.
8. The matter was considered at Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 12 March 2009.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

9. Not to draft the 14-19 Learning and Skills Strategy. If the strategy is not drafted, agreed and delivered by all key stakeholders, the full learning entitlement for 14-19 year olds in the City will not be realised, and young people will not receive the skills and support needed for their own development and the local economy.
10. Not to form a sub-regional partnership and prepare for transfer of responsibility of Learning and Skills Council functions from 2010. If the partnership and preparations are not addressed, coherent and targeted commissioning of post 16 learning and skills will not be possible from 2010.

DETAIL

11. The draft 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employability Strategy has been produced by the City Council and Learning and Skills Council with, and on behalf of the Southampton 14-19 Partnership, which has responsibility for overseeing its implementation over the three year period, April 2009 – March 2012. The 14-19 Partnership is the Lead for this strategy. The partnership is directly linked to the Children and Young People's Trust Board through the Achieve Economic Well-being sub-group. The Partnership is also represented on the Economy and Enterprise Board, and the Southampton Skills and Employability Board.

12. The Plan is prepared within the context of a period of significant development as a result of the proposal for local authorities to act as the strategic and planning lead for all 14 – 19 provision within their area. This will include the transfer of the commissioning and funding responsibility from the Learning and Skills Council. At the same time, major curriculum changes are being implemented, in particular the development of diplomas. The Strategy provides the direction for the next three years and the delivery objectives for the year ahead which are set against SMART outputs.
13. The 14-19 vision is to ensure all young people in Southampton *make a full economic and social contribution through access to high quality learning and skills provision informed by labour market need and the demands of a rapidly changing economy and society*. To achieve this vision, the partnership has identified eight priorities as detailed below:
14. To develop a world class learning infrastructure and environment where modernised and accessible institutions work together to identify and respond to the needs of young people, employers and local communities, linked to the capital opportunities of Building Schools for the Future and the Further Education Modernisation Programme.
15. To manage the planning, monitoring and commissioning of 14-19 learning and skills provision and ensure a smooth transfer of responsibility of post 16 learning from the Learning and Skills Council to the Local Authority in 2010. To take this forward, a Sub-Regional Grouping of Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council and the Cities of Portsmouth and Southampton has formed to consider wider commissioning implications. A submission has been made by this Grouping to the Government Office for the South East and Department for Children, Schools and Families outlining preliminary considerations, subject to further clarification once the legislation is enacted. Further details will be included in a future report to Cabinet.
16. To develop a consistent and shared approach to employer engagement, enterprise and work experience across the City and ensure the delivery of the 14-9 Strategy will enable young people to succeed in the workplace.
17. To continue to increase participation, retention and achievement across the 14-19 phase including targeted interventions to address under-achievement in our priority neighbourhoods and priority groups of vulnerable learners, including teenage parents, children looked after and those not in education, employment or training (NEET).
18. To ensure that by the time they are 14 every young person should have received good quality information, advice and guidance (IAG) from a trusted source and to ensure that the high quality of IAG remains in place throughout the 14-19 phase, to enable them to make informed choices.
19. To provide access to the full range of learning pathways that meet and challenges the needs, demands and aspirations of young people, their parents and carers and the needs of local employers in the City, and to ensure the effective delivery of the Learning Entitlement. This will include a significant expansion in Apprenticeships, Diplomas, Functional Skills and the Foundation Learning Tier, linked to sector initiatives including the development of Skills Development Zones.

20. To promote the continuous improvement of teaching and learning where best practice is identified and adopted, and where robust systems for monitoring of progress and the evaluation of impact are put in place.
21. To develop and consolidate partnership working, broaden representation to inform decision making, which in turn will allow 14-19 learning provision to be planned collaboratively across the City, supported by sound and comprehensive common systems, data and processes.
22. These priorities are linked to the five strategic plans of the City:
 - Safer City Partnership Plan.
 - Health and Well-being Plan.
 - Children and Young People's Plan
 - Economic Development Plan.
 - Local Regeneration and Renewal Strategy.

Capital

23. Capital opportunities including Building Schools for the Future and the Further Education Modernisation programme (funded by the LSC and the colleges themselves) would contribute to the implementation of the strategy, including helping to raise participation and attainment, and respond to the needs of learners, communities and employers.
24. There is also specific capital allocation for 14-19 Diplomas, Special Educational Needs and disabilities, totalling £8,000,000 over 2009-11. Detailed plans for the use of capital funds associated with these projects will be presented for decision to cabinet as required.

Revenue

25. There are a range of resources dedicated to the development and delivery of the 14-19 agenda. Responsibility for some discreet functions is already transferring from the Learning and Skills Council to the local authority, including Young Apprenticeships, Education Business Links, Teenage Pregnancy Learning Programme and Key Stage 4 Engagement. The City's Property and Procurement is being consulted regarding commissioning and contractual arrangements for these and other emerging funding streams.
26. The City's annual figure for 14-19 delivery is estimated to be £47 million. This includes approximately £20 million of funding for years 10 and 11 in Southampton's secondary and special schools, and a further £20 million of funding to the three colleges in the City. The main City Council budgets supporting 14-19 are summarised in the table below:

| Budget | 2009/10 |
|---|-------------------|
| Children & Youth Support Teams | £3,008,700 |
| Young People & Community Support Management | £808,600 |
| 14 -16 Practical Learning Options | £446,000 |
| Youth Offending Team | £644,600 |
| Teenage Pregnancies | £187,000 |
| Positive Action for Young People | £268,400 |
| Substance Misuse | £98,500 |
| Southampton City Training | £94,700 |
| Youth Opportunities Fund | £139,000 |
| Extended Schools | £659,261 |
| TOTAL | £6,354,761 |

The Plan will be resourced from these existing budgets. The action plan shows the current resources allocated to each strategic objective.

27. In terms of the post 16 transfer of responsibilities, current guidance states that funding will go direct to providers via the local authority through a single transparent funding formula, providing funding for places identified through commissioning, which will be applied across most of the funding strands. This contractual relationship requires further guidance to enable local authorities and the sub regional grouping to develop appropriate procedures. Information will be included in a further report to Cabinet.

Property

28. Property implications will largely be included in capital developments, as indicated in Section 21. above.
29. Plans will be presented to cabinet for decision as required and following consultation with the Head of Property and Procurement, in relation to the future use of property resources to support these priorities. Where property implications arise from this report they will be the subject of further detailed consideration in the normal way, including the results of any formal option appraisals where the investment is over £2 million (as required by Financial Regulations).

Other

30. There is likely to be a transfer of employees from the Learning and Skills Council to local authorities under TUPE transfer arrangements. Current Learning and Skills Council compliment is 3,300 and guidance indicates a transfer of staff to the new organisations those being:
- Young Peoples Learning Agency.
 - Skills Funding Agency.
 - National Apprenticeship Service.
 - Local authorities.

31. There is currently no guidance from central government regarding the calculation of staff to transfer to local authorities. Regional pressure is being applied so that local authorities can be as clear as possible with local Executives prior to the end of July 2009.
32. Human Resources will continue to be consulted as transfer arrangements become clearer.
33. The Plan supports the priorities within the Safe City Plan, which the Council is required to have under the Police and Justice Act 2006, particularly in relation to children and young people. The priorities in the plan have been produced having regard to the provisions of equalities legislation and the Human Rights Act 1998 together with the impact of the priorities on children and families in this regard.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

34. The 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper and the Youth Matters Green Paper published in 2005 began the process of transforming services for young people, followed by the 14-19 Implementation Plan and Youth Matters Next Steps document. The Education and Skills Bill received Royal Assent in 2008, and raised the compulsory participation age to 18 by 2015.
35. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill will transfer responsibility for commissioning post 16 learning to local authorities from April 2010. The relevant legal powers result from royal assent to the bill currently being drafted.

Other Legal Implications:

36. Legal Services will be consulted regarding all contractual and decision making implications relating to the new duties.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

37. The Plan will help progress the aims of the:

Children and Young Peoples Plan
 Local Regeneration and Renewal Plan
 Health and Wellbeing Plan
 Safe City Plan
 Economic Development Plan
 Adult Learning and Skills Plan.

The following Council priorities are also supported:

Raising educational standards, reducing crime and anti social behaviour and improving well-being.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

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| 1. | None. |
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Documents In Members' Rooms

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| 1. | Draft 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employability Strategy. |
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Background Documents

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the
Access to Information
Procedure Rules / Schedule
12A allowing document to be
Exempt/Confidential (if
applicable)

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| 1. | None | |
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Background documents available for inspection at: N/A

FORWARD PLAN No: YP03086 **KEY DECISION?** Yes

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| WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: | All |
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