

To the Members of CYP Overview & Scrutiny

Education & Skills Commission and Social Mobility Opportunity Area (SMOA)

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected
Councillor Nuala Fennelly Lead Member for Children, Young People and Schools	All

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report has been presented to update O&S on progress on the Education & Skills Commission and Social Mobility Opportunity Area (SMOA).
2. In January 2017, Mayor Ros Jones announced the formal response to the independent One Doncaster Report. In the same month, Doncaster was awarded SMOA status by the Department for Education. This report sets out the progress made to date in terms of implementing the recommendations of the One Doncaster report, and also how this aligns with the structure and intent of SMOA in the borough.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. It is recommended that O&S note the progress to date and endorse the direction of travel for the development of the two programmes of work.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. The Education & Skills Commission and SMOA seek to improve educational attainment in the borough, to increase social and cultural capital of children and young people, ensure that the skills that young people develop are well placed to meet the needs of the job market, and to make sure that schools in Doncaster can thrive.

BACKGROUND

5. The Education and Skills Programme was established as a result of the recommendations from the One Doncaster Commissioners Report, published in October 2016. Following Doncaster Council's response document to the One Doncaster report, the Programme was structured around three work-stream priorities: Improving Childhood, Strengthening Schools and Strengthening Routes to Work. Under each of these priorities, a series of projects were developed to deliver the programme objectives. All of this preceded the establishment of the Doncaster Opportunity Area as part of a wider drive by the Department for Education to improve social mobility.

6. The Education & Skills Programme Board was established in shadow form in July 2017, meeting monthly thereafter. The Board has carried out its duties and delivered the first phase of the programme including:
 - Bringing partners together to agree a common set of outcomes for education and skills in Doncaster.
 - Communicating with key stakeholders including politicians to provide information and raise the profile of Doncaster in the education and skills setting.
 - Providing a productive setting to debate and challenge issues to agree appropriate future approaches.
 - Producing the first stage of the delivery plan, to be developed further and delivered in phase 2.
 - Providing a framework to connect planning, decision making and resources.
 - Taking responsibility for commissioning activity to deliver agreed objectives.
 - Responding and aligning to the major DfE Opportunity Area programme announced in January 2017.
7. The status of delivery, and an assessment of the readiness of the Education & Skills programme to deliver, was presented to the Q2 Assurance Board for Learning. A copy of this report is attached to these papers.
8. The Delivery plan was shared with ESPB in the September and October Board meetings. As a consequence of the discussions that took place within the meetings, work is underway in order to:
 - Improve alignment to the Social Mobility Opportunity Area Programme and other programmes across the wider Doncaster Growing Together Learning policy area.
 - Avoid duplication.
 - Provide clarity regarding governance arrangements.
 - Provide assurance for the ongoing programme management.
9. The Social Mobility Opportunity Area Programme is focused on four priority themes: Building Solid Foundations at primary school; Brilliant Teaching and Leadership for all secondary school pupils; No Career Out of Bounds (post-16, careers IAG); and Opportunities extend to All (aspiration, ambition, character and resilience, including the more vulnerable children and those with high rates of exclusions). It is supported by two underpinning themes – collaboration and recruiting quality teachers.
10. Phase 2 of the programme is currently being finalised. A proposal on structure and governance will be taken to the Board meeting on 29th November which will set out a position for how the Education & Skills Programme and the SMOA will operate as we move from programme development to delivery in the new year. This phase will be supported by the newly recruited programme manager for the Opportunity Area, Robin MacNeill.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

11. There is strong correlation between the vision and ambition of the Education & Skills Commission and SMOA, and the council's key outcomes. The implications for these are set out below.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	<p>Young people are equipped to access education, employment or training</p>
	<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	
	<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	
	<p>All families thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	<p>Children and young people enjoy improved social mobility</p> <p>Diminish the difference between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children and young people</p>
	<p>Council services are modern and value for money.</p>	
	<p>Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.</p>	<p>The distributed leadership across the Education & Skills Commission between DMBC, Partners and Learning and Doncaster Chamber will ensure strong leadership and governance.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

12. There is a risk that without a co-ordinated plan of activity and investment for the next three years that social mobility will not improve for the children and young people of Doncaster. This risk is mitigated by the delivery plan that will be produced in January 2018 and supported by the working groups for each priority area, who will be responsible for the ongoing development and delivery of the Opportunity Area.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. Doncaster is one of the opportunity areas chosen by the government which will create local partnerships with early years providers, schools, colleges, universities, businesses, charities and LAs to encourage social mobility. The council can access the new £3.5 million programme that will see the Education Endowment Foundation establish a research school for each of the 12 opportunity areas.
14. The Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council as an education authority to promote high standards of education and fair access to education. It also has a general duty to secure sufficient schools in their area, and to consider the need to secure provision for children with SEN. This includes a duty to respond to parents' representations about school provision.
15. The local authority has a duty to make arrangements to establish the identities of children residing in the area who are not receiving suitable education (s436A Education Act 1996).
16. Under s10 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 a Local Education Authority must ensure its functions are (so far as they are capable of being exercised) exercised so as to promote the effective partnership in education and training of persons belonging to its areas who have left full time compulsory education but are not yet 18 and have not obtained a level 3 qualification (2 A levels).
17. To avoid clawback of the Social Mobility Opportunity Area funding, the terms and conditions attached to the funding must be complied with.
18. Further legal advice will be given as the project progresses.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

19. SMOA brings with it £6m of funding, which will be distributed over the 3 years of the programme, and released against the priorities which are established for in the Delivery Plan.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

20. There are no specific HR implications related to the content of this report. The council's recruitment and selection policies and procedures have been followed in recruiting to the Programme Manager post. If there are HR implications which relate to specific elements of the programme these will be addressed at the appropriate time.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

21. There are no technology implications.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

22. Narrowing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their more affluent peers lies at the heart of the Education & Skills Programme and the Social Mobility Opportunity Area. Both programmes have a focus on the need to ensure equity of access to opportunity for all pupils, whilst recognising the additional support that disadvantaged pupils need – be they from a low income household, a child in care, a young carer, or any other group that faces inequality due to their wider circumstances.

CONSULTATION

23. The pre-diagnostic assessment of the strengths and challenges for social mobility in the borough were consulted on with stakeholders at an event on the 25th September. This feedback was then be incorporated into the draft delivery plan and further refined through four working groups which were established to align to the priority areas for action.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Q2 Assurance Board: Learning (Education & Skills)

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

David Ayre, Head of Service,
Strategy & Performance Unit
Telephone: 01302 735412
Email: david.ayre@doncaster.gov.uk

Damian Allen
Director of People