



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 5th June 2018

To the Chair and Members of the Cabinet

POST 16 REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In January 2017, Mayor Ros Jones announced the formal response to the independent One Doncaster¹ Report. In the same month, Doncaster was awarded Social Mobility Opportunity Area (SMOA) status by the Department for Education. 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.
2. The One Doncaster report made a series of recommendations for local strategic partners in education, public services and business. One of the key recommendations from the Commission was to conduct a Post-16 review of the education landscape in Doncaster. The Commission found widespread evidence of confusion and dissatisfaction with the current arrangements. Young people, employers and the business community all spoke of the urgent need to put in place a simplified, more focused, more unified and more collaborative post-16 system that works in the interests of students, employers and providers. As such, in September 2017 Dr Paul Lally was commissioned by Team Doncaster to conduct an independent review of post 16 education in the borough.
3. In May 2017, the Children and Young People's Plan 2017-2020 was launched. This set out our ambition for children and young people across four key policy areas: achievement, safety, health & happy, and equality. This collective view of the partnership for children and young people acknowledged the need for clear learning pathways for children and young people, an inclusive education system at all key points of transition, and the importance of the development of the Organisation of Learning Provision Strategy.
4. In September 2017, the Doncaster Growing Together prospectus was approved by Full Council. Within this, plans for the Doncaster Learning theme were approved. This focuses on ensuring we prepare our young people for fulfilling lives, with bold reforms that will broaden their horizons and ambitions, and bringing our education system and business community together to give our young people more exposure and opportunities to flourish. These include the guarantee of meaningful experiences for all children aged under 11, the development of Doncaster as a University City, and to improve routes to work through the Doncaster Skills Academy.

¹ <http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/one-doncaster-report>

5. At the heart of the combination of these three key strategic documents is the intent to create clearer pathways and opportunities for progression. This paper provides detail regarding the completed post 16 review, a summary of the key findings and recommendations, and a timeline for dissemination, engagement and next steps.

EXEMPT REPORT

6. This report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - Note the significant progress made to date to deliver the report
 - Note the information in paragraph 12 about who is responsible for the changes being implemented
 - Endorse the recommendations for change and approach outlined
 - To agree to receive progress updates in July and September 2018 prior to the final arrangement being agreed in October 2018

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

8. The post-16 review builds on the recommendations of the Education & Skills Commission's report by covering the extent to which the borough-wide curriculum is geared towards future economic needs, including an assessment of the extent and nature of training for jobs that will be radically changed by automation and other new technologies.
9. The aim of the review is to enable Doncaster to make the best collective use of the entirety of its post-16 resources, and the opportunities presented by current government post-16 policy and funding reforms, to create the high skills, high wage economy that is predicted for the wider area over the next decade.

BACKGROUND

10. In September 2017, Dr Paul Lally was commissioned to undertake the post 16 review on behalf of Doncaster Council, with an interim report produced by December 2017 and a full report produced in April 2018.
11. The review focusses on three main areas: the principles of a good system of 16-18 education in Doncaster; alignment with wider strategic intent; and developing a vision for post 16 education. This ensures that we identify the principles of an effective system of education for 16-18, ensure planning and direction of 16-18 provision contribute to the wider economic agendas of the borough and sub region and lay the groundwork for the establishment of a vision for post 16 education in light of this review.
12. The solution cannot be mandated by the local authority, the DfE or the Regional Schools Commissioner, but rather has to be school led and supported by other partners and providers. As such, the review sets out a series of principles that act as a framework for the implementation of the recommendations, and the secondary working group of the Social Mobility Opportunity Area will be the core group that delivers the changes. The local authority is represented on this working group.

13. The review report outlines the current nature of post 16 education in Doncaster and some of the main challenges it faces. It has focused on four key areas which impact on young people in terms of their learning and its support:

- Academic education
- Participation and Inclusion
- Clarity of offer
- Strengthening vocational routes into employment

14. The report indicates that rates of post 16 education in Doncaster have historically been lower than national and regional averages for achievement at level 2 and 3 for 19 year olds. This performance has implications for progression to higher education and levels of employment among 18 to 25 year olds in the borough.

15. The report also indicates concerns about the balance of provision post 16. The decline in the academic route needs to be reversed. The report calls upon the collective leadership of secondary schools working with New College Doncaster and supported by the borough partnerships to address this issue.

16. The review sets out three key principles for a post 16 education and learning system to support a stronger learner focus:

1. Collaboration
2. Viability and value
3. Co-leadership

It is through the operation of these principles that all providers of post 16 education can work with wider strategic partners to ensure the effectiveness of their provision and the success of their learners.

17. The key findings and recommendations from the report are:

Key findings:

1. The viability and value for money of a number of sixth forms across the borough appears to be in question based on the DfE guidance for pupil numbers and breadth of curriculum
2. The introduction of New College Doncaster has seen numbers of pupils in schools sixth forms fall overall, but only a small net increase in the total number of learners
3. The number of young people achieving both Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications is lower than the national average in Doncaster, and has been declining slowly over the past four years
4. More work needs to be done to improve the contribution that apprenticeships make to increasing employment and access to higher education

Recommendations:

1. **Consolidation of school sixth forms In Doncaster:** Consolidate sixth form provision across the borough, to provide a tertiary town centre offer alongside a geographically distributed sixth form model that sees fewer sixth forms offering better breadth of curriculum and with higher student numbers – **responsibility for delivery to sit with secondary heads**
2. **Inclusion:** That any consolidation of provision in the borough takes into account sufficiency of places, quality of provision and support and the preparation for transition to adult life of young people with special educational needs and disabilities – **responsibility for delivery to sit with special heads, in partnership with secondary heads**

- 3. Extending careers education, information, advice and guidance:** Extend careers education, information, advice and guidance so that young people (and their families/advisors) can access effective and timely information, advice and guidance both about post 16 options and the careers that can be supported through them – **to be considered in line with broader work of priority 3 of the Social Mobility Opportunity Area, in particular the development of open data based solution to CIAG**
- 4. Strengthening the vocational routes into employment and higher education:** The development of a collaboration to support apprenticeships in the borough with a view to enhancing the quality of provision and the number of apprentices going to university – **responsibility to sit with schools and training providers to improve transitions between academic and vocational education & training**

Next Steps

18. The next stage of the review will see a launch event on Thursday 24th May, which will bring together key strategic partners to endorse the recommendations of the review.
19. As the solution cannot be mandated by the local authority, the DfE or the Regional Schools Commissioner, the secondary working group will be responsible for delivering the changes set out in the principles of the review.
20. The response to the review will need to be agreed and in place by October half term in the 2018/19 academic year as so to be effective for the next round of sixth form recruitment in 2019. An update on progress will be provided to Cabinet at the end of the summer term, and again in the first half term of the 2018/19 school year. (A comms plan for the dissemination and engagement linked to the review is attached with these papers).

Risks and issues

21. There is a risk that partners across the system do not accept the findings of the final post 16 review and that there is a lack of collaboration between academies to effectively co-ordinate the response necessary to initiate change. To mitigate against this, significant time has been invested in stakeholder engagement with key players in the system, including schools, the colleges, and the Regional Schools Commissioner. The work is also being communicated through the post 16 working group for the Social Mobility Opportunity Area, which brings together colleagues working in careers information, advice and guidance, along with providers.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

22. There is strong correlation between the priorities of the post 16 review, and the council's key outcomes. The implications for these are set out below:

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inward Investment 	
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	<p>Young people, particularly those from a disadvantaged background are equipped to access education, employment or training with a view to moving into further or higher education and employment.</p> <p>Families from disadvantaged backgrounds encouraged to engage in their children's education.</p> <p>The system for post 16 education coalesces around the recommendations for change and works together to ensure successful implementation.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer 	

	<p>interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	
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LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [H Potts 3.5.18]

23. The report assists the Local Authority to ensure it fulfil its responsibilities as set out in the Education and Skills Act 2008 and statutory guidance 'Participation of young people in education, employment or training (September 2016)' in supporting young people post 16 to access education and training.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [DB 3.5.18]

24. There are no specific financial implications relating to the recommendations listed and actions resulting from these recommendations will be school led, as outlined in the next steps and risks section. Post 16 pupil funding is provided directly to Academies by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

25. The cost to commission Dr Paul Lally to undertake the post 16 review on behalf of Doncaster Council for a 6 month period, from September 2017, was funded from the 2017/18 financial year revenue budget for LOCYP.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [MLV 3/05/18]

26. While there are no specific HR implications related to the content of this report there may be HR implications arising from the outcomes and these will be addressed at the appropriate time through relevant reports and governance arrangements.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

27. There are no specific technology implications related to the content of this report.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [RS 02.05.18]

28. Education outcomes for children and young people have a direct bearing on their health and wellbeing and the health and wellbeing of future generations. This proposal seeks to improve education outcomes and would be strengthened by linking to wider health and wellbeing outcomes and officers should consider approaches to combine health and education data to improve the implementation and maximise the social value from this approach. Decision makers will want to consider how other parts of the system including public health, health and employers can maximise the impact of the recommendations.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

29. The post 16 review's explicit aspiration is to improve the quality and sufficiency of the post 16 education system in Doncaster. This will mean that there are appropriate options for children and young people across the borough, regardless of their background or aspiration.

CONSULTATION

30. Extensive work has been taken throughout as shown in Appendix 1.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- One Doncaster report
<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/schools/one-doncaster-report>
- Social Mobility Opportunity Area Plan
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/696827/Social_Mobility_Delivery_Plan_Doncaster_v10_FINAL_WEB.PDF.pdf

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