



# Doncaster Council

To the Chair and Members of the  
Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## SOCIAL MOBILITY OPPORTUNITY AREA PROGRAMME

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Nuala Fennelly Lead Member Children, Young People and Schools	All	Yes

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This paper provides detail regarding the Doncaster Opportunity Area Programme, the progress that has been made since the plan was published in January '18.
2. The programme has made significant progress since you were last briefed on this work, in total over £6m has been allocated to a variety of projects and programmes aligned with our priorities and the ambition is to have allocated the full budget by the end of this academic year.
3. Early successes, include: the summer programme, on which you have already received briefing; training for primary teachers where we have seen really positive engagement and early feedback on the quality of training available and the establishment of a careers hub to share best practice around careers education information advice and guidance and the delivery of a coaching and mentoring pilot for vulnerable young people that has provided a with valuable insight into supporting this cohort that has informed larger programmes Challenges remain around ensuring the schools sector is able to engage and that this investment has an ongoing impact.

### EXEMPT REPORT

4. This report is not exempt.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

5. It is recommended that O&S note the progress made on implementation and offer thoughts and insights on the programme to date and the future programme.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

6. The Doncaster Opportunity Area Delivery Plan sets out an ambitious agenda to improve social mobility for the children and young people of Doncaster by reducing the gap in attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children at primary school; improving the performance of the borough's secondary schools, helping Doncaster's young people to find the right academic and vocational routes to the careers they aspire to; and taking active steps to help the most vulnerable, to access opportunities that will

support them in and out of education.

## BACKGROUND

7. The Doncaster Opportunity Area Delivery Plan was published in January 2018, half way into the first year of a three year programme. In the time since publication Cabinet have been engaged twice and this is the third report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the previous Cabinet Reports have been included as background documents.

## FUNDING

8. In addition to the £6m of OA funding which will be transferred through to the Council, in quarterly instalments, the OA programme brings with it £2.75m of Essential Life Skills (ELS) funding. The assumption is that this funding will be used to deliver the activities and ambitions in the plan. The annual profile of funding for the OA and ELS funding stream is included in table 1 below.

Table 1

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
OA <sup>1</sup>	£450,000	c£3.5m	c£2m
ELS	£1,008,267.22	£1,750,199.70	0
Total	£1,458,267.22	£5,250,199.70	£2,000,000

9. In addition to these dedicated funds national programmes are also being focussed on OAs. This includes funds such as the Teaching and Leadership Fund and the Strategic School Improvement Fund. This funding will go to national providers who will deliver training to teachers in schools in the borough, this is managed nationally so the Council will not be required to commission this provision.

## PROGRESS TO DATE

10. This section details the full range of activity underway across the Opportunity Area Programme, you will have been briefed on some of the activity before but this offers an update on progress.

### Priority 1 – Solid Foundations for primary children

11. The following activities are in train to support primary schools across the borough.
12. A Literacy programme that is currently funded through the Strategic School Investment Fund, that helps schools take on evidence based best practice around teaching of literacy, for which we have committed to fund an extension starting in April. (£144k)
13. A School Improvement Professional is working with the OA25 – this is 25 primary schools working in deprived areas. The ambition is to rapidly raise attainment and broaden horizons for disadvantaged pupils so that they can access opportunities which ordinarily they might not get. They will access and evaluate some of the most current regional and national professional advice available, particularly evidence informed practice through the Research Schools Network and Education Endowment Foundation. This support

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<sup>1</sup> The 2018/19 and 2019/20 figures are estimates, DfE will be confirming the 2018/19 figure in the New Year, the total transferred to DMBC from the OA line will be less than £6m as there are some central costs around for example evaluation that have been taken out at source.

involves £1000 per school to spend on research school programmes and advice and guidance on school improvement drawing on the range of support coming through the OA and available locally and nationally. (£202k) A flyer for the OA 25 programme is at Annex A to give more of a flavour of the support available.

14. A maths strategy to encourage Doncaster schools to engage more with the local Maths Hubs and support available nationally and locally on maths. (£88k)
15. There is also a Strategic School Investment funded maths programme delivering to schools based on the experience of the literacy programme, again based on best practice. (not OA funded)
16. A Learning Matters Leadership Programme that is supporting 10 schools developing their leaders. The programme has been developed using expertise from the Education Endowment Foundation and the research school network. The feedback from schools across this priority is positive and in particular this programme is being hugely well received, and receiving significant interest from across the research school network. (£175k)
17. A Doncaster Literacy Base has recently been approved by the Partnership Board, this will focus on engaging parents of primary age children in literacy programmes to encourage them to promote reading to their children. This should complement the schools facing support set out above. This will see the Council recruit a base lead, set up a steering group and then commission a range of activity to promote literacy in communities. (£142k)

#### Priority 2 – brilliant teaching and leadership at secondary

18. At priority 2 the focus has been different in that rather than looking to engage particular targeted schools with specific interventions we have sought to engage all schools with initial activities to develop greater collaboration at secondary, and on the basis of this initial work to roll out a more targeted programme of school improvement. The elements of this are set out below. Secondary schools have also been engaged heavily through priority three and four activity, and are in receipt of funding and programmes through this.
19. A Peer Review programme that splits schools into triads, who all have a Department reviewed by their peers to develop an action plan for further required improvements. This will not only offer valuable advice to the school being reviewed but develop a shared understanding of schools across the secondary sector and a greater understanding around school improvement and best practice through participation in the process. (£53k)
20. A Strategic School Investment Funded Reciprocal reading project led by the research school, this is modelled on the literacy programme at primary and utilises evidence based best practice to improve the teaching of literacy at KS3. (Not OA funded)
21. Engagement across these programmes has fallen short of the original ambition, with fewer schools engaging than hoped, currently 12 of 18 schools are engaged in both the Peer Review and Reciprocal Reading programmes. The Opportunity Area Programme Team is looking at this as a matter of urgency to determine why engagement is as low as this and what we can do to encourage greater take up, either of the existing offer or an alternate offer. We are aware that we need to expand the range of activities available in this priority, and this is a priority for the programme, we have a significant sum of

money notionally allocated to this further activity.

### Priority 3 – no career out of bounds

22. This priority sees a combination of major interventions and smaller scale projects, as described below.
23. The primary intervention in this space is the Careers Hub, this is a virtual hub that brings together careers leaders from across all secondary schools, colleges, special schools and pupil referral units in the borough to develop and share best practice with access to funding and expertise from within and outside of Doncaster. To date 28 out of 29 schools have signed up and 23 attended the first careers leader event. Feedback from the event was positive. (£480k)
24. To support this we are working with the Doncaster Chamber of Commerce to look at how we build sustainability into this proposal that brings together anchor institutions in the borough and creates a business model that draws in funding from a variety of sources to ensure the longevity of the organisation. To date this has meant putting in place an Education and Skills Director, who will work up wider proposals for embedding sustainability and is expected to bring a further business case to the Partnership Board in Spring. (£105k)
25. The OA Programme team, Council and secondary heads are working in partnership to implement the outcomes of the Post 16 Review, this means convening a working group and establishing area groups to look at potential opportunities for rationalisation of providers or provision. (No OA funding currently allocated to this activity, but it is anticipated that there will be in the future.)
26. The programme has funded the Brilliant Club to work with particularly able children in 12 primary schools across the borough to raise their awareness of university and their aspiration more widely. (£29k)
27. Primary Engineering have been funded to deliver training to 30 primary schools in Doncaster. This will enable teachers to deliver engaging engineering focussed curriculum. It will also build links between the schools and local engineers to come into their schools to bring the lessons to life with real examples. (£25k)
28. A careers education advice and guidance website has been procured, from U-Explore. This is a website that is already used by Doncaster schools but we will personalise the content so it features Doncaster young people and Doncaster businesses and labour market information and promote its use more widely. (£70k)

### Priority 4 - Opportunity for All

29. We started work on this priority with a pilot looking at a range of approaches to engaging vulnerable young people in extracurricular activities to increase their resilience and engagement with education. The outcomes of this pilot were really positive and on the back of it partners have developed two major programmes that take the lessons from this work and scale it up significantly. These are:
30. A vulnerable mentoring programme led by the Doncaster Children's Services Trust that is looking to recruit mentors to work with vulnerable young people within Doncaster. The attraction of this approach is that once the mentors are in place and trained the ongoing running costs will be significantly lower making this a sustainable intervention. This will

be targeted primarily at vulnerable year 5 and 6 students to support their transition into secondary in the first instance, we will also target students in alternate provision. (£590k)

31. A National Citizen Service wrap around programme that supports vulnerable young people to be able to take advantage of the NCS programme by slowly raising their resilience so they feel more able to engage with the full programme and realise the associated benefits. (£150k)
32. Doncaster College have been funded to roll out the Children's University to more disadvantaged schools. This will use the local pyramid structures to target groups of schools from particularly disadvantaged areas. Parent ambassadors will be identified and trained to promote the programme. (£92k)
33. In partnership with the Council the programme has developed an Inclusion Charter that all secondary schools are being asked to sign. This offers funding to support behaviour management without relying on exclusions, in turn for this funding schools commit to follow inclusive practices. An Inclusion Summit was held in January that all schools attended and on the back of that working groups are being established to lead on the co-design of: processes that sit around exclusion; and the use of the high needs block that supports inclusion collaboratively. (£384k)

#### Essential life skills

34. The full £2.75m of Essential Life Skills funding has now been allocated across a wide range of programmes. This has involved funding for two years of a summer activity programme, a range of activities delivered by EXPECT Youth partners, a range of complementary activities commissioned externally, through two commissions, the first covering all disadvantaged children and young people in the borough, the other focussing on specific protected groups. We have then awarded additional funding to support schools who have been less engaged and to deliver more of those activities that have proved most popular. We have also procured an external evaluation of the programme to, define exactly which life skills we most wish to see enhanced, to develop approaches to measuring them and then to use these approaches to assess the impact of this activity on the skills of the participating children and young people. A report on take up of ELS activity is at Annex B.

#### Teacher recruitment and retention

35. This is a key area of focus for the programme but the full plan is still being determined. What has been agreed is a mentoring support programme to deliver mentoring to NQTs in schools requires improvement or special measures by Ofsted (£32k) and a short research programme led by Partnerships for Attainment, a part of Sheffield Hallam University. (£19k) This will inform a larger programme of activity.
36. The Partnership Board will also be receiving a business case setting out wider, more immediate proposals that can be implemented to have an impact to recruitment this academic year. This has still to be agreed, but will look at proposals for supporting schools in marketing themselves better and developing approaches for encouraging more young people into teaching.

#### Evaluation and monitoring

37. As the programme moves out of start up into delivery phase the focus of the and the Partnership Board is moving into ongoing monitoring and evaluation, this is true within

the Doncaster Opportunity Area but also at a programme level, and we have been working with the DfE to agree, for every strand of our programme, what the key success indicators are, what the measures are that will evidence progress towards these indicators, and how frequently this information is available. This will be used to track impact on a quarterly basis across all the strands of the programme. From a Doncaster perspective this will enable us to closely track how far initiatives are on track, against both milestones but also anticipated impact. From a Opportunity Area Programme perspective this information will enable DfE to pull out information on impact to inform spending review negotiations with Treasury.

Sustainability and legacy

38. The legacy of the programme is another area of particular focus both locally and at a programme level. With 18 months of the programme left it is important when the Opportunity Area funding is spent, there is a residual impact on the borough and that future children and young people benefit from the investment. There are a range of ways we consider sustainability and legacy within the programme all activities agreed through the Partnership Board have considered sustainability, this often centres around leaving the institution (most commonly a school) with new systems or ways of working supported by resources, or by implementing programmes that are adequately impactful for those benefitting to choose to identify funding to procure those services themselves going forward. At a system level, the collaborative networks of partners established through the life time of the programme will be critical. Crucially within these networks there need to be leaders identified to maintain the focus on improvement and the direction of travel set through the opportunity area and related efforts. A priority for the coming months will be to develop more robust consistent approaches to ensuring the sustainability and legacy of the programme and a paper will be going to the March Partnership Board on this subject.

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

39. We are not asking the O&S to make any decisions, only to note progress and offer comments.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

40. We are not asking the O&S to make any decisions, only to note progress and offer comments.

**IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES**

41. There is strong correlation between the priorities in the Delivery Plan, and the council's key outcomes. The implications for these are set out below:

	Outcomes	Implications
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	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> 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"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>	<p>Ultimately the successful delivery of the ambitions set out on the OA delivery plan should lead to a more skilled workforce, through the successful implementation of the Post 16 review, and greater links between the worlds of work and education facilitated through Careers Hubs.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> 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"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	<p>The ELS programme and the Children's University will promote extra-curricular activities that cover, sport and physical activity, arts, crafts and culture. Our coaching and mentoring pilots for vulnerable young people will also promote these enriching activities with the mentoring providing the influence to encourage participation.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> 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"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	<p>The OA programme sits within the living strand and if successful will have a significant impact in both primary and secondary schools. It will: improve the recruitment and retention of young people into Doncaster schools; as mentioned in the living strand it will encourage extra-curricular activities; improve the career professional development available to Doncaster schools, driving up the standards of teaching and of leadership of teaching; encourage the development of non-cognitive skills; support schools in ensuring the careers education advice and guidance they receive is of the highest quality to ensure young people make the right choices post 16 and It will encourage greater collaboration across Doncaster schools.</p>

	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	<p>Through priority 4, that focuses on supporting the most vulnerable we anticipate a whole family focus, in recognition that many vulnerabilities in children stem from their families.</p>
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	<p>The rationale for siting the OA Programme Manager in the Council is to ensure that the OA programme is fully connected with the wider work of the Council.</p>

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

42. We are seeing that some schools do not have capacity to engage with the full range of initiatives that are coming out of the Opportunity Area. Those schools who are not engaging are often those schools who could most benefit from support. We know that in some cases capacity is an issue and elsewhere we know that some Multi Academy Trusts are engaging with some of their schools and they plan to then share the learning on the basis of this experience. The capacity issue is a cause for concern, we are investigating wider causes of disengagement, what can be done to rectify them and what this means for the activities within this priority going forward.
43. There is a risk that the work of the Opportunity Area and that of the Council and wider partners does not align as well as it might, and is not applied as holistically as it might be. To mitigate this we are looking at systems for aligning efforts, particularly around the most disadvantaged. We will support this with a data sharing agreement to ensure all providers have all available information necessary to provide support.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (ND 19/02/19)

44. There are no specific legal implications relating to this report. Legal will continue to support and assist with the Social Mobility Opportunity Area Programme.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (SB 14/02/19)

45. Funding of up to £8.7m will be received from the DfE in the form of a Section 31 non-ring fenced grant, £5.9m for the Opportunity Area Programme and £2.76m for the essential life skills programme, and under the grant determination we are required to confirm at the end of each financial year that the funding has been properly expended. The funding



has / will be received in instalments as agreed through the delivery plans with the first payments of the Opportunity Area and essential life skills programme funding having been received in October 2017 (£0.1m). The Opportunity Area funding profile for 2018/19 (£3.5m) and 2019/20 (£2m) shown in the report covers the overall programme however elements of this funding will be retained centrally by DfE for expenditure on elements such as programme evaluation, therefore the final grant the Council will receive could be less than the totals shown.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (AG 14/2/09)**

46. The Opportunity Area Programme involves providing support as detailed in this report to help to enable schools to raise attainment and aspiration. Amongst the areas of support are improvement of reading and literacy skills, leadership development, establishment of a careers hub and initiatives to improve teacher recruitment and retention, all of which involve direct and indirect support from school improvement professionals with the ultimate purpose of improving the life chances (including developing their skills and employability) of young people.

### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (ET 13/02/19)**

47. A proposal to procure a digital solution to improve access to high quality careers information, advice and guidance was agreed by the Technology Governance Board (TGB) in August 18. Digital Transformation & ICT have provided input to the specification and evaluation to ensure that the procured solution meets the necessary security requirements and technical and accessibility standards. Any further technology requirements to support the delivery of the Social Mobility Opportunity Area Programme would need to be considered by TGB.

### **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS (RS 18/02/19)**

48. Learning outcomes and health outcomes are intrinsically linked. On the whole, investments in improving learning outcomes should also improve health outcomes. Evidence shows that education, training and employment are key socio-economic factors in determining health status (Marmot, 2010). Programmes that focus on reducing the gap in educational attainment between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children are likely to impact positively in reducing long-term health inequalities in Doncaster. The Doncaster Growing Together Programme sets out wide ranging ambitions for the borough, across living, learning, caring and working streams of activity. Again this holistic approach highlights the linkages between health and learning, as shown through the close links between the learning strand of activity and the caring and living strands. The health impact of this programme will need to be monitored in the course of its implementation, and public health can provide the appropriate advice in assessing the health impact.

### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS (RM 12/2/19)**

49. The OA programme's explicit aspiration is to narrow the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children and young people and to support the most vulnerable. Improving the equality and inclusivity of the education system sits at the heart of the programme. On this basis the programme should have a disproportionately positive impact on protected groups. We will carry out an equality impact assessment on major activities to ensure there are no unexpected negative impacts on protected groups.

## **CONSULTATION**

50. The DP has been consulted on extensively with partners across Doncaster during its production. The full list of partners that have engaged with the Plan is reflected by the range of organisations represented through the working groups, we have also consulted with children from a variety of backgrounds and school heads.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

51. Cabinet Report 31 July 2018 and 6 February 2018:

<https://doncasterintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s17836/i8%20Cab%20310718%20-%20Social%20Mobility.pdf>

<https://doncasterintranet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=2641&Ver=4>

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