



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 8 August 2019

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

Education and Skills 2030 Framework for Consultation

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Nuala Fennelly Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People, and Schools	All	No
Cllr Bill Mordue Portfolio member for Business, Skills, and Economic Development		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Strategy and Performance Unit (SPU) and the Strategic Advisor for Education and Skills, have been working to develop a Framework for Education and Skills in Doncaster to consult on, in order to define and co-produce a strategy for Education and Skills to 2030. SPU are ensuring that the Scrutiny Committee are appraised of the draft Framework for Education and Skills, attached to this report. This document is currently out for public consultation. The document details the vision for the future Education and Skills System, the characteristics that such a system would exhibit, and the priority areas for action in order to realise that vision.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. This report is not an exempt item.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That Members consider the appended report (Appendix 1) and note its findings.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. The Framework for Consultation presents a vision for the future of the Education and Skills system in Doncaster. The vision is for Doncaster to be a learning city; providing residents with life-long learning and enabling people, places and businesses to participate in a growing and productive economy. The vision recognises learning as a key driver for inclusive growth – a means to improving living standards and earnings, in-work progression and reducing long-term unemployment. Fundamentally, the Education and Skills System must help achieve a social return by helping more people to participate meaningfully in our economy. The Framework will drive the development of Education and Skills policy, informing strategy development to 2030.

BACKGROUND

5. Michael Jameson (an experienced ex-DCS, who has supported and led on regional and national, social care, education and skills developments) has been commissioned as Strategic Director for Education and Skills to conduct a full programme of consultation with partners. Michael has interviewed over fifty partners from across the sector to shape the formation of the document and overall, has consulted with around 600 stakeholders in the system. This has included schools, Governors, Higher and Further Education, Multi-Academy Trust CEOs, Doncaster Children's Service Trust, Opportunity Area Board members, council colleagues, the Chamber of Commerce, health and sector colleagues, lead members, the Mayor and, most importantly, young people. Specific areas of enquiry have included:
 - What the characteristics of a successful Education & Skills system would look like in Doncaster and whether these have changed since the publication of the *One Doncaster Report* in 2016.
 - What common, unifying key themes could be focussed on to address some of the areas of development highlighted by initial consultees.
 6. Using the feedback from this initial phase of consultation, SPU has worked with Michael Jameson to develop a Framework for Education and Skills in Doncaster. This Framework will form the basis of a co-produced strategy for Education and Skills to 2030.
 7. The consultation is now in its second phase, with the first draft of the Framework out for consultation (published 5th July 2019, and closing 20th September 2019). The consultation portal can be found here:
<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/get-involved/education-skills-2030-consultation>
 8. The method of consultation has been tailored as appropriate to different stakeholder groups. For example, the consultation portal and online survey has been developed for professionals; and members of the public are being engaged through focus groups and the Doncaster Talks programme.
 9. Once this second phase of consultation has ended, SPU and Learning and Opportunities Colleagues will be working closely with partners to develop a ten-year Statement of Intent for Education and Skills in Doncaster, which will be launched in November 2019 (tentatively, for implementation in April 2020 onwards).
 10. The Framework outlines a number of strong foundations for development in Doncaster's Education & Skills System. These have been highlighted by the initial phase of consultation:
 - **Lots of known core strength areas within the sector** – Early Years, the Business-Education link, sectoral strengths in rail, engineering, creative, media and digital, improved attainment at KS2 and an open approach to innovation.
 - **Key local learning and skills assets** – including Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital; Doncaster College; the National College for High Speed Rail; Partners in Learning; the Opportunity Area Programme, and some outstanding practice across the education system.
- Initial Consultation has also highlighted:
- **Political leadership and chief officers** - offer good support and challenge, with political leaders acting as strong and visible advocates for positive change.
 - **A strengthening local infrastructure for collaboration** – with the Local Authority playing a strong 'broker' role and more partners than ever before engaged (e.g. Inclusion Summit).
 - **A greater sense of place and increasing pride in Doncaster.**
11. Consultation has highlighted that there is much more to do with some substantial areas for challenge within the local system, including:

- Many known historic challenges are still pervasive – child poverty, social mobility, low levels of attainment and aspiration within the secondary sector, low levels of access to and attainment within Further and Higher Education.
- The current system is faced with a national policy framework that has fragmented learning provision and disconnected it from the place-context.
- The fact that the collaborative infrastructure is still fragmented in places. There are issues with the secondary sector and wider partners collaborating effectively and there is a perception of ‘preferred partners’ within the system.
- The need for a renewed focus on clear, consistent straplines and objectives for success within the system, supported by realistic plans for delivery and improved evaluation arrangements.
- The need to ensure that projects and programmes are effectively aligned to strategic priorities with on the ground delivery.

Further areas for development include:

- Requirement for a sustained focus on numeracy, literacy, and essential life skills.
- Variable inclusion practice across the secondary sector, with a need to reduce Elective Home Education and Fixed Term, Permanent Exclusions.
- A requirement to improve on communication, responsiveness and pace within the sector and Local Authority.
- The need for a comprehensive strategy for lifelong learning.
- The need to improve the quality of job placements and link them to career pathways.
- Simplification of strategies and delivery plans, and the need to focus on a number of core objectives.
- Recruitment and retention of the best teachers and leaders.
- A need to further develop the collaborative infrastructure for business, education and community organisations.
- Joining up regional and local approaches to innovation and address health and social care barriers to learning.
- Addressing the aspirations, expectations and engagement of parents and learners.
- Communicating and celebrating Doncaster as a Learning City.

12. During the initial consultation, stakeholders answered some of these questions and described the features of what a successful Education and Skills system for Doncaster might look like. These responses have been collated and reflected back into **a vision**:

“Our vision is to create a learning city, where life-long education and culture engage and inspire, giving everybody the opportunity to flourish. Learning is at the heart of our ambitious plans for inclusive growth, where everybody has the chance to access a fulfilling career and share in the proceeds of economic development, with few limitations arising from their social background. This will be achieved through maximising the borough’s social capital through the effective utilisation of technology, community assets and the pre-existing talents of our people. To achieve this, Team Doncaster will forge a strong relationship with business to create industry-driven career pathways, ensuring that training is linked to employer needs and that everybody has the opportunity to develop their skills and fulfil their aspirations.”

13. These responses have been distilled into eight key characteristics of a successful Education and Skills System:

- **Great Distributed Leadership**
- **A ‘Cradle to Career’ Approach**
- **High Ambitions, High Expectations**
- **Developing an Outstanding Workforce**
- **An Inclusive Learning System, that delivers for all**
- **Culture and Heritage at the Centre of the System**
- **An Open Approach to Innovation**

- **Communicating and Celebrating Doncaster as a Place**

These characteristics are still tentative Members are invited to feedback on how well these resonate. Specifically, whether anything can be added, if anything has been missed or if there are any further characteristics that should be included in a successful Education and Skills System for Doncaster.



14. To develop a successful and positive system associated with achievement and transformation, it is necessary to focus resources on priority areas. From the initial consultation process, the following emerged as ‘thematic clusters’ and potential areas of focus for action for the next ten years:

- **The Best Start: Ready to Learn at all Stages and Ages** – A successful education system and a growing, inclusive economy is one where people of all ages face no social or economic barriers to accessing the enriching, fulfilling learning that will allow them to fulfil the career of their dreams. This is why Doncaster wants to be the most child-friendly borough in the country, ensuring that all are ready for learning.
- **Accelerating Expectations and Achievement for All** – Outcomes need to improve for all at a pace. High performing systems are characterised by a culture of high support and challenge.
- **Better Work & Jobs** - To move from a low paid, low skilled economy to a productive, modern local economy with a highly skilled workforce driving economic development means placing our education and skills system at the very heart of our ambitions plans for inclusive growth.
- **Reaching and Engaging with Vulnerable People and Places** – Through reaching and engaging with vulnerable people and places, we can ensure that all of our communities can access opportunity and share in the proceeds of growth, with no person or place left behind.



15. This culminates in a unifying characteristic which we have called ‘**Sum the Parts –Working Better Together**’. Together, we can achieve much more and everybody has a role that they can play in securing the future for our Education & Skills System. What is now required is a long-term perspective and a clear strategy for delivery to 2030, including:
- A framework of entitlements and expectations of all the key stakeholders including learners and parents in shaping and delivering on the key priorities to accelerate education outcomes and develop confident and skilled employees;
 - Provision for the arrangement of strategic forums to consider and address key strategic issues attended by system leaders;
 - Provision for developing an infrastructure to further strengthen collaboration at a local, regional and national level;
 - Clear delivery mechanisms to implement the partner owned strategy with delivery plans on a 3, 5 and 10-year basis;
 - Sustainable and partner-led governance arrangements, supported by appropriate levels of capability and implemented after the conclusion of the Opportunity Area Programme in 2020.
16. The presentation (Appendix 2) highlights the following key questions:
- Are the themes and characteristics right for Doncaster?
 - What more could we do/what else can we focus on to deliver an inclusive, successful learning and skills system in our borough?
 - Will a focus on these areas make growing up, learning and working in Doncaster better?
 - Should there be a focus study by young people view on growing up, learning and living in Doncaster?
 - Should an engagement strategy for and with families be developed and also to elicit their views and the reasons for their choices?
 - Will the themes proposed deliver on the characteristics of a successful Education and Skills system outlined?
 - Do these characteristics and themes align with where you see learning and work in Doncaster in ten years’ time?

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

17. Not applicable – the Framework is being presented for discussion rather than decision and as such, this element of consultation with members precedes the full options appraisal for content which shall follow during the strategy development process.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

18. Not applicable – the Framework is being presented for discussion rather than decision.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

19.

	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 • Inward Investment 	<p>The Education and Skills System is central to the Working Theme, and reforms arising from this strategy will shape the direction of this theme.</p> <p>The production of this Education and Skills Framework is key to delivery of our commitments under the Inclusive Growth Strategy (which has, within its</p>

		key areas of focus: Industry Specialisms, Education & Skills, Better Work & Jobs, and Reaching Vulnerable People & Places). The <i>better work and jobs</i> strand has particular relevance for this.
	<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 	The proposed system characteristic ' <i>Culture and Heritage at the Centre of the System</i> ' is about placing cultural capital at the centre of a borough-wide offer to all learners, with integrated programmes for participation in heritage, culture and learning activities.
	<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 	The majority of our strategic and funding commitments for the Learning Theme extend only to 2021. It is therefore crucial for the Learning Theme and Team Doncaster more widely to develop a long-term, ten-year vision for Education and Skills. This will allow partners to work together, and to focus their efforts, to achieve a successful learning system.
	<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 	The production of a new Education and Skills strategy determines reforms and game changers that will influence this theme. For example, <i>ensuring that all children get a good start</i> and that they are ready to learn forms the very foundation of a successful education system; and the focus on better work and jobs will see residents enjoying better levels of health and wellbeing.
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole 	By focussing on <i>working better together</i> , and <i>engaging vulnerable people and places</i> , we can ensure that all of our communities access opportunity and share in the proceeds of growth, with no place or person left behind; and help to deliver our

	<p>life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>commitments under the Connected Council Theme.</p>
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RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

20. The production of an Education and Skills Strategy ensures that reforms and activity aimed at improving our Education and Skills System are aligned to sound financial decision making; without a clear strategic plan we could risk investing in reforms that provide no or little economic benefit to our residents and economy.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: HW, Date 25/7/19]

21. There are no specific legal implications associated with this report. The Council has a number of legal duties in relation to the provision of education, learning and skills with associated strategies aimed at improving the same. Specific legal advice can be provided on these strategies as required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SB, Date: 26/07/19]

22. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report however, the delivery of any outcomes from the Framework for Education and Skills will need to take place within agreed budgets. Any financial implications relating to specific areas of the Framework will need to be included further reports.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: KW, Date: 29/07/2019]

23. There are no specific Human Resources implications contained within this report, should there be any staffing changes following the outcome this should be included in further reports.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: AM, Date 25/07/19]

24. There are no direct implications at this stage, however, any technology requirements to support delivery of the framework would need to be considered, agreed and prioritized by the Technology Governance Board (TGB). ICT must always be involved where technology-based procurements, developments or enhancements are required. This ensures all information is safe and secure and the use of technology is maximized, providing best value.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: RS, Date: 24/07/19]

25. Improving education and skills and building on the capability of Doncaster residents should lead to improved health outcomes. Decision makers will want to ensure that the consultation draws responses from all populations and stakeholders. The consultation should adhere to the best practice principles of the consultation institute integrity, visibility, accessibility, transparency, disclosure, fair interpretation and publication in order to ensure future decisions do no widen health inequalities.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: DA, Date: 24/07/19]

26. Inclusivity is at the heart of the vision set out in the Framework, which states that Doncaster will be a learning city, which gives everybody the opportunity to flourish. The vision sees learning as being at the heart of our ambitious plans for inclusive growth, where everybody

has the chance to access a fulfilling career, with no limitations arising from their social background. A wide range of stakeholders has been consulted to ensure the priority areas for action are inclusive for all residents to, learn, grow, and develop.

CONSULTATION

27. Key to the development and adoption of a new Education and Skills Strategy is the comments and views from our partners, public and businesses. To ensure the development of a strategy that sets the right tone and ambition for skills and education, we are undertaking a series of consultations to provide the best quality narrative for our residents (see Appendix 3).

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Education & Skills 2030 Framework Consultation Document

Appendix 2: Presentation Slides

Appendix 3: Consultation Timeline

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

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