BRISTOL LEARNING CITY

Minutes / Action Notes
Learning City Partnership Board Meeting
6 June 2018

Actions Summary

Agenda Item	Actions from meeting	Who	When
Focus areas	Sponsorship - further work to identify a sponsor(s) for each focus area, with very clear expectations to be set by the Board for the project sponsor role.	Tommy Jarvis	June/July
Progress: xx			
Board membership	The Chair and Tommy Jarvis to further discuss the future membership of the Board with a view to a proposal being shared with the Board.	Chair / Tommy Jarvis	June/July
Progress: xx			

Attendees, Board members:
Cllr Anna Keen, Bristol City Council Cabinet member for Education & Skills - Chair
Jon Angell, Bristol Secondary Head Teachers and Principals Association
Chris Curling, Society of Merchant Venturers
Claire Doherty, Arnolfini
Jo Midgley, University of the West of England
Lee Probert, City of Bristol College
Professor Judith Squires, University of Bristol

Apologies:
Karl Brown, Clarke Willmott
Laurence Pitt, Primary Heads Association Bristol
Jacqui Jensen, Executive Director - Adults, Children & Education, Bristol City Council
Sue Rogers, Director - Education, Learning & Skills Improvement, Bristol City Council

Other attendees:
Tommy Jarvis, Learning City Strategic Lead
Fiona Lightwood, Attendance Manager, Bristol City Council
Nakita Singh, SEND Operational Development & Planning Manager, Bristol City Council
Jane Taylor, Head of Service - Employment, Skills & Learning, Bristol City Council
Debbie Miles, Every Child a Reader Teaching and Learning Consultant
Cerys Stevens, Every Child a Reader Teaching and Learning Consultant
Ian Hird, Bristol City Council Democratic Services

1

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Keen welcomed attendees to the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves.

DELIVERY

<u>**Focus Areas:**</u>

In the context of their discussion at the previous meeting on setting key priorities and areas of focus for the year ahead, the Board endorsed further work being taken forward on the following specific project proposals in 4 identified focus areas:

1. Attendance strategy
2. SEND project proposal
3. Post 16 learning, employment and skills – improving our offer and outcomes
4. Bristol – a Reading City

Further detail of the Board's consideration of these project proposals is set out below:

1. Attendance strategy

Fiona Lightwood presented the proposal, highlighting the following:

a. Bristol was ranked bottom of the national school attendance tables in 2015-16. Whilst the position in both primary and secondary has improved since then, Bristol's ranking is still towards the bottom of the tables and significant further work is needed to secure a sustained improvement.

b. An attendance strategy is being developed, aiming at significantly improving the position in Bristol. This is based on 4 priorities:

1. Priority One – parents and carers understanding their roles and responsibilities in ensuring their child attends school, on time and ready to learn.
2. Priority Two – fully utilising attendance data to inform and shape the work on improving attendance.
3. Priority Three – ensuring children and families receive the help they need at the time they need it.
4. Priority Four – developing understanding that school attendance is a whole-city issue.

Main points raised in discussion:

a. The Board can assist by playing a key role in advising and engaging with the strategy priorities, helping to shape the strategy through to finalisation and helping to ensure sign-up from partners.

b. Raising awareness of the attendance issue across the city is crucial. As part of this, consistent messages need to be given by partners about what constitutes an acceptable level of attendance.

c. It will be important to learn from positive campaigns on school attendance undertaken by other cities, e.g. Liverpool, Birmingham.

d. It is important to recognise that a range of approaches may be needed to spread key messages, mindful of Bristol's diversity as a city.

e. One key message will be to stress that school is a safe place for children and young people.

f. Every opportunity must be taken to influence parents and carers in terms of their responsibilities; schools have a key role in this but it is a city issue.

g. Certain practical issues may need to be addressed as part of this work, e.g. ensuring consistency of approach about the time school registers close each day.

2. SEND project proposal

Nakita Singh presented the proposal, highlighting the following:

a. The SEND project is focused on addressing the key challenges faced by children and young people with a special educational need or disability in Bristol. We need to transform our approach to improving outcomes for these young people.

b. An action plan has accordingly been developed – in terms of the Board's role, there are 3 particular strands that the Board can support:
    1. Communication – communicating more effectively with families about what services are available.
    2. Access – increasing opportunities for children and young people with SEND to access cultural and fun events across Bristol.
    3. Making Bristol more inclusive as a city – encouraging business and services to be accessible to children and adults with SEND.

Main points raised in discussion:

a. Links can be made with work being undertaken in Bristol's cultural sector to promote inclusivity and diversity, e.g. to encourage artists who have a disability.

b. There could also be an opportunity to link in / work with the University of the West of England Children's University on particular targeted work to improve opportunities for young people with SEND.

c. Linked to the planned refresh of the Bristol "Aim for the Stars" framework, small and medium sized organisations could be encouraged to look at how they can assist inclusion, e.g. in terms of access to work experience for young people with SEND.

3

d. It will be important to highlight positive case studies of work experience – some form of "celebration of success" event could be held, which participants could help to plan.

e. It is important to communicate effectively with parents and carers in particular about the opportunities available to help promote the independence of young people with SEND, i.e. to help encourage routes to independent living, and include parents and carers as part of that journey.

3. Post 16 learning, employment and skills – improving our offer and outcomes

Jane Taylor and Lee Probert presented the proposal, highlighting the following:

a. This proposed project was a 2 year project.

b. In Year 1, it was proposed that a Task and Finish Group will plan and oversee a participatory planning process and produce a Bristol Post 16 strategy and action plan by July 2019. The group would also oversee and help co-ordinate linked services, and provide evidence and act as an advisory board for key post-16 investment decisions.

c. In Year 2, the Task and Finish Group would oversee the implementation of the collaborative plan, with continued joined-up accountability and challenge.

d. In terms of the Board's role: the Board can provide strategic leadership and guidance, governance and accountability – in particular by ensuring that post 16 updates and expert advice are shared with the Task and Finish Group. The Board's assistance was also sought in identifying resources to support Year 1 activity.

Main points raised in discussion:

a. It was suggested that there could be an opportunity to mobilise Year 1 activity more quickly, potentially utilising research already undertaken and existing resources.

b. It was suggested that account should be taken of age group needs from age 13/14 onwards, recognising that year 9 students (and in some cases) year 8 students choose their GCSE / other options at this point.

c. The wider West of England perspective around post 16 provision and investment also needs to be fully recognised in taking this project forward, e.g. identifying opportunities for joint investment.

4. Bristol – a Reading City

Debbie Miles and Cerys Stevens presented the proposal, highlighting the following:

a. Bristol is a flagship for the delivery of the Every Child a Reader (ECaR) project. Reading Recovery is at the heart of this project.

b. The "Bristol – a reading city" project builds on the model used in Gothenburg, enhanced by offering quality training.

c. The Board was asked to support an initial one year project with the overarching purpose of enabling Bristol to become a "Reading City." The Board has an essential role to play in advising and engaging with the project at a strategic level. Specifically, the Board was asked to
   1. Support the KPMG Foundation in securing part-funding to retain and develop Reading Recovery across local authority maintained schools and multi-academy trusts. KPMG is potentially prepared to invest £100k to support Reading Recovery.
   2. Support the implementation of the enhanced "Gothenburg" model. Additional resource support from partners is also sought (£23K already secured from Bristol CC).

Main points raised in discussion:

a. The importance of Reading Recovery is recognised in terms of recovering and enhancing the future educational opportunities of participants, e.g. enabling children to go take GCSEs.

b. There is a challenge in terms of reaching some parents and carers in terms of their role in encouraging their children to read. It will be important to support families in improving their literacy – some form of "short course" literacy certification may be appropriate.

c. It is critical to address these reading challenges at primary school, given the high standard of literacy soon needed by children once they start their secondary school studies.

d. The Board can potentially assist in encouraging whole city engagement in the project, also encouraging links with other related initiatives, e.g. learning ambassadors. There was also the possibility of exploring a bid for national lottery funding around a coherent citywide literacy improvement offer for Bristol.

e. It will be important to clarify the governance lines around this project, and identify a Board sponsor.

Sponsorship:

At the conclusion of the discussion on focus areas, the Chair referred to the proposed sponsorship specification.

It was agreed it would be important for the Board to identify a sponsor(s) for each focus area, but very clear expectations must be set by the Board for the project sponsor role.

GOVERNANCE

Steering Group & Challenge Groups:

Following discussion, it was agreed that in terms of avoiding the potential for overlap and duplication of work, the current Steering Group should be discontinued, on the basis that the Partnership Board will meet more regularly. The frequency and timing of Board meetings will be reviewed accordingly, with a view to maximising Board member attendance.

It was also generally agreed that the Challenge Group structure had effectively run its course. The particular effectiveness of the Learning for Work Challenge Group was, however recognised and there may be a positive role for a "re-branded" group to play in sponsoring / overseeing / driving the Post 16 learning, employment and skills project.

Membership:

The Board further discussed its membership, mindful of the view taken at the previous meeting that the Board membership needs to be reviewed to ensure it is fully fit-for-purpose in the context of the Learning City vision and in delivering the identified focus area priorities moving forwards.

It was again emphasised that Board members must be able to influence their own and other organisations, think creatively and be able to positively assist the delivery of the identified focus area priorities. In addition to representation from the universities, secondary and primary schools, special schools should be represented to help ensure an inclusive approach. There is a particular need to secure appropriate, senior level business sector and voluntary sector representation. It is also important to continue to secure senior-level representation from the city's cultural sector – and to be clear about the Board's "ask" to help inform which individual(s) will be best placed to assist the Board in delivering the identified focus area priorities. The Board must also be more diverse, reflecting the diversity of Bristol as a city.

It was agreed that the Chair and Tommy Jarvis would further discuss the future membership of the Board with a view to a proposal being shared with the Board.

LEARNING CITY UPDATES

Notes and actions from last meeting – 14 March 2018

The notes of the 14 March meeting were confirmed as a correct record and noted, together with the update on actions taken arising from that meeting.

**** Meeting close: 6.40 pm *********