

Decision Pathway Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 01 October 2019

TITLE	Improving Bristol Post 16 Education, Skills and Career Pathways – Strategy 2019-24	
Ward(s)	All wards – particularly those with the highest numbers of young people aged 16-25 who are not in education, training and employment or whose destination is unknown.	
Author:	Jane Taylor	Job title: Head of Employment, Skills and Learning
Cabinet lead:	Cllr Anna Keen	Executive Director lead: Jacqui Jensen
Proposal origin: <i>Other</i>		
Decision maker: Mayor Decision forum: <i>Cabinet</i>		
Purpose of Report: To present the Bristol Learning City Partnership Post 16 Education, Skills and Career Pathways Strategy and to secure approval so that BCC can align its current resources to support the implementation plan and work on collaborative applications to generate additional external funding to drive forward priority actions including the provision of free bus travel for 16-18 year olds.		
Evidence Base: In June 2018, the Learning City Partnership approved a two year project to enable key Post 16 partners to work together to develop a collaborative strategy to achieve a fundamental transformation of our post 16 offer to significantly improve our provision planning and outcomes. The strategy outlines a number of priority actions covering six core themes. One of the top priorities is the provision of free bus travel for 16-18 year olds. Early conversations have already started with local transport suppliers and further detailed business planning and option appraisal is now required as part of the mayor’s One City conversation. Other priorities are already being progressed within existing resources – for example, Cabot Learning Federation are working with the Council’s Community Learning Team to develop a new Family Learning Careers Programme to be piloted with primary aged children and their parents/carers. Some priorities will require additional resources, for example the expansion of experience of work and careers events, and this is forming part of an action research programme and business planning process with the West of England Combined Authority. Task and finish group members have drawn on a range of individual case studies – including successful and less successful stories of post 16 transitions. Where transition has not worked, some of the main factors are:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity and transport is an issue for many families and a barrier to post 16 options. • There is projected 17.5% growth across the 15-19 year old population in Bristol over the next 3-5 years and beyond – there is a critical need for a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to provision planning. • Few or no opportunities for work experience leaving students unable to form a clear future career goal and education or training pathway to get there • Lack of input and support from post-16 providers to enable young people to understand the full range of available options and to transition successfully • Lack of broad provision that includes vocational training and apprenticeship options • Lack of transition support for young people who have the greatest needs 		
In the first research phase, up until July 2019, the task and finish group have collected data and evidence to inform strategic plan priorities. Lee Probert (Principal of City of Bristol College) acted as group chair, with strategic support from Jane Taylor (Head of Employment, Skills and Learning). A core group of 23 city leaders have shown huge commitment and enthusiasm in their action research this year - including 7 schools; 1 PRU; 2 FE Colleges; 1 6th Form		

College; 2 universities; the DWP; and 4 Bristol City Council representatives and contributors. To inform the work of the group, 7 focus groups have been held with 50 young people and 13 expert speakers have presented key information at group meetings.

Some of the headline findings included in the final draft strategy (see appendix 1) are:

- Between 2016-18 Bristol City Council was placed in the 5th quintile (i.e. worst performing local authority) for overall performance in relation to young people Not in Education, Training and Employment. Children in Care and Care Leavers are 4 times more likely to be NEET; young people with an EHCP are 5 times more likely to be NEET;
- There is currently a lack of A level and apprenticeship training provision across the South of Bristol and in parts of North Bristol which means young people on low incomes face long and expensive journeys to learning;
- Due to changes in national apprenticeship funding arrangements, there has been a downward trend in the take up of apprenticeships. 2017/18 saw a reduction of 374 apprenticeship starts by learners from the most deprived areas in Bristol;
- There is scope to expand A level, vocational training and apprenticeship provision in key job growth areas;
- Bristol has the lowest entries into higher education at age 19 when compared to the other 7 core cities within England;
- There is a strong correlation between young people in the worst performing wards in relation to low attainment of maths and English GCSE and the negative impact on their post 16 pathway including Higher Education – only Ashley shows an improvement in quintile performance from GCSE to Higher Education;
- Bristol has a strong economy with many good jobs across a range of skill levels that employers report are ‘hard to fill’;
- There is projected 17.5% growth across the 15-19 year old population in Bristol over the next 3-5 years and beyond;
- there is a critical need for a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to provision planning in partnership with employers to provide clear and supported pathways for young people into a range of job roles with good progression opportunities.

The Task and Finish group presented the draft report to the Learning City Partnership Board where it was well received. The group have requested a £10K resource to extend a project assistant post to support strategy implementation over the next year. The LCP are now preparing for phase two as city leaders move to strategy implementation, including potential pooling of resources and collaborative applications for additional funds from a range of different sources, including WECA and national government. It is proposed that the Council’s Post 16 Participation Team provides active support through their existing team resource and annual revenue budget.

Officer Recommendations:

- A. That Cabinet endorses the LCP Post 16 Strategy and agrees that Bristol City Council supports strategy implementation, including further business option appraisals regarding free bus travel for 16-18 year olds.
- B. That Cabinet agrees that BCC leads and supports the development of a collaborative business case and funding applications to WECA and other funders to generate additional resources to support strategy implementation and success.

Corporate Strategy alignment: The Corporate Strategy has a key priority to make quality work experience and apprenticeships available to every young person. Equalising career development opportunities requires the City Council to fulfil its post 16 Participation duties and work with local partners to co-ordinate and promote an effective and responsive post 16 offer.

City Benefits: This proposal provides Bristol with wide ranging benefits: educational equality and improved outcomes; reducing the number of young people at risk from disengaging early from education, training and employment; reduction in poverty and improvement in social mobility in our most deprived neighbourhoods; delivery of inclusive economic growth and productivity through improved skills and employment progression.

Consultation Details: The strategy development has involved a strong collaborative partnership across post 16 providers and sectors, including a cross Council team of officers in education and social care services. The draft strategy was presented to BASHP, and was discussed and ‘signed off’ by the Bristol Learning Partnership Board in July. In September, the draft strategy is being circulated with an opportunity for wider stakeholders to provide their comments and suggested improvements.

Revenue Cost	£272,750	Source of Revenue Funding	Post 16 Participation Cost Centre: 12490
Capital Cost	£	Source of Capital Funding	<i>e.g. grant/prudential borrowing etc.</i>
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice: The current budget of £272k will be spent to work towards the outcomes in the strategy once it has been ratified by Cabinet. In order to fully achieve the strategy additional funding will be required and this will be sought from WECA and other external funding sources.

Finance Business Partner: Graham Booth – Finance Manager, Children & Education, 25th July 2019

2. Legal Advice: “Local authorities have broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. Specifically these are:

- To secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained. This is a duty under the Education Act 1996.
- To fulfil this, local authorities need to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area and to identify and resolve gaps in provision.
- To make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training under Section 68 Education and Skills Act 2008 as updated by Section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

The proposal would enable the local authority to fulfil its functions and duties in respect of the provision of post 16 and special educational provision for its area. Consideration will need to be given to the nature and extent of consultation required and care taken to ensure that consultation arrangement comply with best practice.

The Public Sector Equality duty requires the decision maker to consider the need to promote equality for persons with “protected characteristics” and to have due regard to the need to i) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; ii) advance equality of opportunity; and iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The Equalities Impact Check/Assessment is designed to assess whether there are any barriers in place that may prevent people with a protected characteristic using a service or benefiting from a policy. The decision maker must take into consideration the information in the assessment before taking the decision. A decision can be made where there is a negative impact if it is clear that it is necessary, it is not possible to reduce or remove the negative impact by looking at alternatives and the means by which the aim of the decision is being implemented is both necessary and appropriate.”

Legal Team Leader: Anne Nugent, Team Leader (Litigation), 30th July 2019

3. Implications on ICT: “There are no significant IT implications in this strategy at this stage. During implementation, some IT requirements may arise, although it is likely that these would rely on existing services and facilities. If not, then suitable business cases and planning may need to be made at the appropriate time.”

ICT Team Leader: Ian Gale, Head of IT, 25th July 2019

4. HR Advice: “The report is focussed on the continuation of the leading role BCC currently has in the implementation of the Post 16 Strategy and is seeking approval to continue to develop business cases collaboratively to WECA and other funders. These proposals do not have any HR implications on our Post 16 Participation Team except to align the priorities of the team with the strategy. There may also be opportunities for development through the training and development programme.”

HR Partner: Lorna Laing, HR Business Partner, 25th July 2019

EDM Sign-off	Dr Jacqui Jensen	21 st August 2019
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Anna Keen	23 rd August 2019
For Key Decisions - Mayor’s Office sign-off	Mayor’s Office	3 rd September 2019

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal Appendix 1: Improving Bristol Post 16 Education, Skills and Career Pathways – Strategy 2019-24	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Combined Background papers	N/A
Appendix J – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix K – HR advice	NO
Appendix L – ICT	NO