

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CULTURE & LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL**

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel held on Monday, 24 February 2014 at 6.00 pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Matthew Winnington (in the Chair)

Councillors Phil Smith  
Darron Phillips  
Steve Wemyss

#### **7. Apologies for absence (AI 1)**

These had been received from Councillor Mike Hancock who was unwell and from Councillor Will Purvis who was absent on other council business.

#### **8. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

When there was mention of Solent, NHS Councillor Smith made a declaration in that his partner is a director.

#### **9. Minutes of Previous Meeting - 30 January 2014 (AI 3)**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Panel Meeting held on 30 January 2014 were approved as a correct record.

#### **10. Review: Pathways into work for young people (AI 4)**

The Chair welcomed all the witnesses to the meeting which was expected to be the last evidence gathering exercise for the Panel.

##### **(a) Lyn Exley, Post 16, Education Adviser, Portsmouth City Council**

Panel Members have been circulated a draft copy of the 'post-16 curriculum plan for 16-19 year olds and up to 25 young people with special educational needs for the academic year 2013/14 and 2014/15 (Version 4)'. She circulated updated pages on the consultation feedback on current provision as well as charts which were the appendices outlining the exact provision of vocational courses, traineeships, academic courses and outlining organisations that work with young people and support access to an engagement with education, training or employment in the local area. It was stressed that this is a consultation document that was to be discussed with schools and the post-16 providers to see where there was over provision or gaps and to look at the support available on the courses. This was in tandem with the ITYSS tracking and outlined the main organisations that young people progress onto and the predicted numbers there. The consultation

process was on-going and the plan would be sent to all schools the following day to ask them to sign up to this as well as consulting with the post-16 providers. Lyn presented the updated key pages 8-10 of the document.

### **Over Provision Identified**

- (a) A Levels - there was a concern that with the growth in availability it will be difficult for the providers to offer a full range of subjects with sustainable student numbers which might have an impact on the offer to young people after they have begun their programme.
- (b) Some BTECs - poor progression opportunities beyond one year courses have been identified as an issue where numbers on courses within an individual provider, may not enable progression to a full two year programme and therefore limit progression to higher education and employment.

This may lead to further discussion with the colleges regarding the need to pool for certain A Levels or BTECs to give provision for these courses. This would help address the risk when starting the first year of a course that the second year may not be viable and enable students to complete.

### **Insufficient Provision and/or Gaps in Provision**

The identified insufficient provision particularly for work-based programmes such as traineeships and apprenticeships is not about the lack of post-16 providers as they were willing to offer the identified provision, instead this is dependent upon the ability to find employers willing and able to offer work experience, internships and employment which are required by these programmes.

The lack of entry level provision especially hit hard the Harbour School pupils. There is a concern on the vocational programmes at entry level that with poor English and Maths skills students cannot progress to level 1 or 2.

Whilst traineeships are limited numbers for occupation areas this was a growing area. An identified problem was that the young people wanted payment for placements, as are available for apprenticeships.

For apprenticeships Level 2 (Intermediate) and Level 3 (Advanced) there is a reliance upon business engagement; without employers offering the placements young people cannot access these programmes.

There are also gaps in apprenticeships opportunities at Level 2 and 3 and Art Design & Visual merchandising and some specific construction areas.

A key area of concern was the bridging programmes for young people that cannot progress from a Level 2 to a Level 3 apprenticeship. These are often 17 and 18 year olds who do not have English and Mathematical skills to progress to Level 3. Where they struggle to progress to their second and third year this affects the NEET figures.

**Special Needs:** There were also gaps in specialist provision for profound and multiple learning difficulties, particularly post-19 and for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD), and those young people with mental health issues. Lyn did report that the Education Department at PCC had successfully bid for funding to reduce these gaps. Highbury College gained capital funding to refurbish Arundel Street accommodation to provide high end BESD provision from September 2014. At Portsmouth College from September 2015 a small facility will be available for those with profound multiple learning difficulties.

Regarding BESD it was reported that the NEET figure for the Harbour School was approximately 50%. Special provision was desired for these students wishing to have practical/workshop courses rather than classroom learning, however there are high costs associated with providing for this with the and supervision required.

Discussion with the post 16 providers and Education Funding Agency will follow the agreement of what is needed for Portsmouth but it will also need further engagement with employers. The findings in relation to employers supports the Apprenticeships report later presented by Penny Lane.

**The other areas of support identified as a need included:**

- the earlier identification of dyslexia while at school before post-16 education
- increased number and range of taster days at colleges
- increased work experience opportunities for 14-16 year olds to a wider range of vocational projects
- increased work experience opportunities for under 18s to sit alongside full time programmes or to form the basis of a learning programme where full time education is a barrier to engagement
- opportunities for information on recruitment to the police, fire service and other uniformed services
- support for learner transition from Year 11 to Year 12, then increased from Year 12 to Year 13 when there is considerable disengagement and the NEET figures increase significantly. Also from Year 13 onto higher education, apprenticeships, further education or employment.

On 8 May there would be a seminar for schools and providers and it was hoped that the final document would be published there. In the meantime this was an evolving document.

**(b) Mark Rodwell, Young Person Support Team Manager and Tessa Bailey, Interim Commissioning Manager for Children's Social Care, Portsmouth City Council regarding the New Belongings project**

Mark Rodwell explained that the Young Person Support Team supports the Looked After Children (LAC) from the age of 14 to 17 years and care leavers from the age of 18 until 21 years of age, or until 25 if they remain in higher

education. The support consists of preparing young people into independent living, assess and assistance into accommodation, with finances, health needs as well as employment education and training opportunities. The team case loads are approximately 120 Looked after children and 80 Care Leavers.

### NEET Figures

Care leavers are over represented in Portsmouth and nationally in the NEET figures as well as doing less well in a number of outcomes. National average for all young people NEET is 15.1% (ONS 2013)

Looked After Children aged 16 and 17 years of age are closer to the Portsmouth average for being NEET, but still higher; the average for all 16/17 year olds in Portsmouth is approximately 5.9% (Jan 14).

The figures below show the NEET figures for Looked After Children and Care leavers

Month	LAC 16/17 Year olds	Care Leavers 18 +
April 13	4%	38%
May 13	12.3%	37.2%
June 13	11.2%	35%
July 13	12.6%	36.8%
August 13	18.5%	36%
September 13	5.5%	35.3%
October 13	6.4%	36%
November 13	6.4%	41%
December 13	7.8%	43%

In the month of November 2013 the care leaver cohort was separated in to the following categories:

- 26 Care leavers at college
- 4 Care leavers completing apprenticeships
- 2 Care leavers with a training provider
- 5 in work
- 32 NEET = 41% of the care leaver cohort.

In addition Care leavers fall behind the national average for those young people who progress in to higher education. At the start of 2014 8 care leavers in Portsmouth were attending University. This equates to approximately 5% of care leavers (18-25 year olds) continuing on to Higher Education, the national average is 49% of the total young person population (DfE 2011-2012).

It was further reported that the Looked After Children (LAC) do not do well academically compared to their peers so can struggle to find work, 24% achieving 5 A-C grades (the city average is closer to 60%). The Panel would be interested to find out further information regarding how long these children have been in care to see what impact the local authority are having, but this information was not available at this time. It was reported that when they

come into a care system there is disruption in their education, those in stable foster placements will have better results as they are more supported in their education. Many of these young people are articulate and bright but have missed out on formal education and Social Care would like more discussions with colleagues in Education to allow some flexibility for the LAC to access appropriate courses to help them with their pathways into employment.

## **New Belongings**

Tessa Bailey then introduced the New Belongings project which offers an exciting opportunity to improve employment, education and training opportunities of PCC care leavers. The project brief was circulated; this is a live document which is subject to regular updates. The New Belongings project is a national project, run by the Care Leavers Foundation and funded by the Department for Education, which aims to create a 'gold standard' in supporting care leavers. It is aligned with and supports other key national developments aiming to improve the lives of care leavers such as the Care Leavers Strategy and Access All Areas.

Portsmouth is one of 9 local authorities (there are 6 pilot areas with some covering more than one local authority area) which has been chosen to pilot the programme and the PCC successful bid lasts from October 2013 to October 2014. On average PCC supports 80 care leavers at any given time (78 at the start of New Belongings). Of these 78 care leavers, 8 are at University (this care leavers up to the age of 25), 26 are at college, 4 are completing apprenticeships, 2 are with a training provider, 5 are in work, 32 are NEET.

**Accommodation** - PCC care leavers tend to go in supported lodgings/hostels or shared housing for the aim to allow access to support for these vulnerable young people. The Housing Department is looking at the provision of smaller hostels. It was noted that this accommodation was often in the city centre although supported lodgings could be spread around the city. PCC is also looking at private landlords to help, with the local authority giving support. Work was taking place for the post-18 age group to stay with their current foster carers when they are in education and it was hoped that this could be extended for those starting traineeships.

## **Progression to Further/Higher Education**

One of the outcomes the Project was seeking to achieve was to see improvements in the take-up of education and employment opportunities for LAC, with progression through and beyond further education. One of the 6 areas of development within the action plan relates to further education employment and apprenticeships for the 16+ age group and to encourage further education establishments to sign up for the Frank Buttle UK Quality Kite Mark. It was reported that Guildford College was now asking some of our care leavers to attend their courses as part of the Buttle accreditation. There was also work with the University of Portsmouth to develop an interim support programme for care leavers wishing to attend higher and/or further education.

Lyn Exley reported that there is the aspiration to give more opportunity and support on re-takes of examinations at the local colleges.

The DfE published data of GCSE English and maths retakes for the KS4 year 11 leaving in 2009/10 who had failed to achieve an A\*-C grade. When completing their KS5 in 2011/12 there are major variations between colleges locally particularly for the numbers entered for retakes. Gaining a GCSE in these key subjects are seen as key for our young people both for being able to progress to a Level 3 programme or into work where employers recognise GCSEs.

Discussion took place as to whether those colleges with very high achievement rates may be risk adverse in entering students for these qualifications when nationally the achievement rate is 50% and this was a challenge for the project.

Data was given for our 4 local colleges which have the majority of our Portsmouth students. Members were advised that the data related to the whole cohort within the college not just Portsmouth residents and the make-up of each college will be different.

#### **GCSE English (11/12)**

	<b>Highbury</b>	<b>Portsmouth</b>	<b>South Downs College</b>	<b>Havant</b>
% Retakes registered	2%	64%	24%	83%
% Achieved	1%	34%	13%	71%
% who entered college with a Level 1 D-G grade	81.5%	84%	96%	94%

#### **GCSE Maths (11/12)**

	<b>Highbury</b>	<b>Portsmouth</b>	<b>South Downs College</b>	<b>Havant</b>
% Retakes registered	3%	41%	15%	68%
% Achieved	1%	18%	9%	34%
% who entered college with a Level 1 D-G grade	85%	88%	96%	94%

Pupil premium rates stop at 16 but now with the government extending the age of school attendance, added funding will be required to give them this support. It was also reported that the University of Portsmouth were offering a mentoring and support programmes for care leavers interested in higher and further education.

### **PCC's Role**

Portsmouth City Council as a large employer and a corporate parent has a duty to provide opportunities. As part of the New Belongings project it was intended to have a part-time post taken by a care leaver in a keeping-in-touch role. This post would inform others of open days, apprenticeship opportunities, newsletters and use of 'apps'<sup>1</sup> technology in informing each other. Each care leaver should have a transparent entitlement pack. The role of the Children in Care Council would be encouraged to expand.

### **Specialist Support**

Another challenge was for the mental health services to take up the responsibility for care leavers aged 18-25 who should have assessments for mental health needs. This would be discussed further with the commissioners. Solent NHS have the contract for Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS); there is further work needed to develop this relationship with the health bodies.

### **(c) Penny Lane, Strategic, Intelligence & Information Manager, Portsmouth City Council**

Penny Lane presented the draft findings and priority themes for the report entitled 'Delivering Apprenticeships for Portsmouth'. Findings were from the draft report which had not yet been approved by the city council's cabinet but had come from the regeneration ambitions for the city looking at the skills of the workforce and population. This recognises that regeneration projects should be accompanied by social benefits for local residents. The Business Growth & Skills Plan had identified the need to undertake a programme of work to:

- increase the number of apprenticeships and traineeships available in the city
- ensure that apprenticeships in the city meet current and future employment demand
- promote apprenticeships as an equal alternative to other progression routes

The draft report identifies 4 priority themes:-

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<sup>1</sup> Short for 'application' a computer programme designed for use on mobile devices (smartphone/tablets)

i) Engaging Employers

Employers need to be engaged to understand the direct benefits to their organisations; encouraged to recognise the importance of delivering skills in a growing economy; and supported to access information and practical help to establish apprenticeships within their organisations.

(Thereby apprenticeships should be seen as a positive not detrimental to their business)

ii) Raising Awareness and Promoting Opportunities

Potential apprentices and their advisers, parents and schools, need to be fully informed of the range and extent of the opportunities available, and have an understanding of what an apprenticeship is and the benefits it brings.

(It is recognised that parents and carers are the primary source of information on careers for pupils in the city so they need to be fully aware of the opportunities available)

iii) Shaping Provision and Ensuring Access

Employers and providers need to ensure that there are enough advanced and higher level apprenticeships to match the increased labour demands for higher level skills, particularly in key growth sectors. Sufficient entry level provision including traineeships and pathways into work will be central to ensuring that all future opportunities can be accessed by all.

iv) The City Council and Partners - Raising Our Game

The council and its partners have a key role as employers to ensure a sufficient number and range of apprenticeships within their own workforces. As an influencer and policy maker the council also has a central role to play in encouraging and supporting the development of increased opportunities across the city.

The report had accompanying suggested actions which are aspirational at this stage but would need an accompanying framework to offer more opportunities for apprenticeships.

Panel Members had been advised by the Hampshire Chamber of Commerce that some of the small medium enterprises had the problems not in paying for apprentices but in the associated time resources devoted to training them. It was felt that this would vary between size of business and type and it was important to share the success stories by those businesses taking on apprentices.



**(d) Local Student**

Unfortunately the student who had been intending to come to meetings was not available.

All the witnesses were thanked by the Chair for coming in and giving such interesting presentations.

**(e) Written Evidence**

Supplementary evidence was circulated:

- (i) Leone Hill, Job Centre Plus giving an update on the latest figures. They currently have 865 18-24 year olds showing a downward trend. It was clarified that JCP see any young people who are claiming benefits that could be Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance or Income Support (ie lone parents).

When someone claims benefit they are allocated an adviser (soon to be called work coaches). There is a team of advisors who only deal with the 18-24 age group. The advisers see young people weekly or more often if it is necessary. They provide customers with their contact details so if someone needs to come in and see an adviser they can call and arrange this or alternatively speak over the phone or via email.

- (ii) Intensive Support Programme

Lisa Wills, Strategy & Partnership Manager within Community Safety at PCC had provided supplementary information on the submission process for funding from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner.

- (iii) South Downs College

Amanda Percy the Assistant Principal Admissions, Progression & Marketing and Jane Lamer the Head of Employer Engagement and Business Development have submitted the following summary of initiatives at SDC:

The **Careers and Employment Zone** is open for drop-in from 9.00 to 4.30pm every day. This is at the front of the College – employers can also visit and we have an Employment board advertising part time and full time opportunities (although obviously we speak to students prior to the referral for full time roles as they are on course as we are committed to ensuring their achievement). Full time opportunities will include Apprenticeship and Traineeship opportunities and we accept referrals off the street and the Careers team support application to College for full time and Apprenticeship positions.

**Preparing for work:** In addition to drop in careers advice there is a specialist service for students seeking employment on completion of their course. The service includes job search, CV, application advice and interview techniques.

We are working to extend this service with a “**Talent Bank**” for students wishing to register for suitable vacancies. We are currently working with employers who are considering work experience linked to priority for employment – many of these as paid college experiences to support students on programme

**Work Experience** is also based in this area and the College is very successful in placing students for their work experience. This work is being extended with an **Internship Programme** for students in the summer of between their first and second year at College. Currently offering approximately 2700 opportunities – many course have this as a requirement but we also support students who are seeking to develop their CV to support progression and UCAS applications

The College organises a wide range of **employment events** to support this work and these include subject specific employment fairs including Engineering, Hospitality and Catering and STEM. This includes Employers all having stands and speaking to students about working with them, they recruit from this, but also

In addition there is a “**Not going to Uni**” fair specifically for those students seeking training schemes, Apprenticeships and Employment on completion of their course. This is an annual day event where there are stands and the opportunity to speak to employers about other high quality options – all of whom include continued learning. This is in addition to our occupational events and include Apprenticeship providers, Armed forces and local employers including BAE, Vector Aerospace, Rolls Royce, IBM and career/job search agencies. There was the opportunity to speak to employers and apply for jobs starting after students courses.

Staff teaching on vocational courses have strong **employer links** which support this work. We also do CPD with employers so that our staff are realistic about the needs of local employers and can embed employability within a wide variety of courses. Considering progression into traditional and non-traditional routes

Hospitality, Catering and Travel is a particular flagship area for the College. Their Students’ progress to a wide range of employment including very prestigious employers. We also have an **employers’ focus group** that meets termly – this allows us to obtain real employer feedback on the provision and how we

develop. This has helped us to develop our curriculum to meet local employers needs, and massively developed the work experience opportunities that we can offer our students. For the last 3 years this has included the wonderful “Hotel Takeover” of the Langstone Hotel on Hayling where over 40 Students take the key roles and the full time staff take the weekend off. An amazing opportunity which has strengthened students CVs and understanding dramatically.

**Apprenticeships** – the College was amongst the top 3 in the Country for Apprenticeship delivery in 2011/12 (last published rating) and maintained outstanding results. The delivery includes Design and Media Apprenticeships, AAT, Childcare, Management, Equine, Business Admin, Enterprise, Hair Dressing and Professional Cookery.

**Traineeships** – supporting young people overcoming the barriers to achievement of an Apprenticeship this flexible and individual programme is roll on roll off and tailored to the individual, including between 5 weeks and 5 months work experience. All Apprenticeship areas covered but this is designed for young people who need some support into Apprenticeships and not hard to reach NEET learners

**Young Consultants** – The Solent LEP Internship project with the 7 GFE Colleges. South Downs College are leading this project between the 7 GFE Colleges in the Solent LEP area (Fareham, IoW, Sparsholt, Highbury, Southampton City, Eastleigh, Fareham and South Downs) to develop our work with employers. This is a paid work experience model delivered during the Summer break for continuing students, offering employers the opportunity to work through a specific project using the unique skills of our highest quality students. Recruited on a competitive basis these unique opportunities will allow business and students to gain real benefit and hopefully extend the career opportunities for the young person. Our Principal Lyn Surgeon will be launching this project at the Solent LEP’s Skills Summit in March.

#### **11. Date of next meeting (AI 5)**

It was agreed that there should be an informal meeting on 11 March at 6 pm and hopefully the report will be signed off at a full meeting on Thursday 20 March at 6 pm.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 pm.

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Councillor Matthew Winnington  
Chair