

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Board meeting 20th May 2004

Agenda Item 7

Learning and Skills for Young People Aged 14-19

Derbyshire County Council and the Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council have issued a Joint Statement for consultation on learning and skills for young people between the ages of 14 to 19 which was launched at the recent Pathfinder Conference. A response is required by 28th May 2004.

Much of the statement is based on those organisations' vision for secondary education which was developed as part of their bid for 'Building Schools For The Future' and in preparation for the Strategic Area Review process previously reported to the Board. The attached annexe contains a copy of the statement together with a list of questions to which a Board response is required, the last asking the Board's consideration to endorsing a document supporting the strategy.

The Board's views are requested.

LEARNING AND SKILLS FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 14 - 19

JOINT STATEMENT BY
DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
AND
DERBYSHIRE LEARNING AND SKILLS
COUNCIL



March 2004

Learning and Skills for Young People aged 14-19

JOINT STATEMENT BY DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND DERBYSHIRE LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL

Context

1 For many years young people in Derbyshire have been encouraged to stay on in learning once they reach 16. The County Council and Learning and Skills Council have worked together with schools, colleges and training providers to develop courses which are attractive to every young person. We have a long tradition of partnership working which Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council wish to build on. Our new strategy is informed by the Government's vision for 14-19 learning.

2 The Government plans to transform the ways in which young people in England learn. It aims to promote higher participation and attainment and to build a system in which young people come first, with learning that is uniformly of high quality, combines general and specialist study and is designed to meet their needs, aptitudes and aspirations. The government intends to develop a 14-19 phase in order to provide greater coherence for schools, colleges, employers and parents. It requires institutions to work closely together to provide students with the widest possible choices of curriculum while providing all with opportunities to learn about work and enterprise.

3 Chief Education Officers and Local Learning and Skills Council Executive Directors are expected to give a forceful lead in ensuring that providers seize the opportunities that the 14-19 agenda offers. Both LEAs and LSCs have considerable scope to support partnership and collaboration between schools, colleges, employers, training providers and universities.

4 Both organisations endeavour to meet shared goals and targets, which are expressed in the LSC's Strategic and Annual Plans and the County Council's Education Strategy. The County Council's Cabinet Member for Education and the Chief Education Officer are members of the local Learning and Skills Council. Senior officers meet regularly with the Executive Director of the LSC and with LSC Council members to monitor and review progress towards achieving our goals. Together we will promote appropriate collaboration and joint ventures between providers to ensure the most effective response to the needs of all the learners across the county.

Principles

5 Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council are jointly committed to:-

- Raising participation and attainment through a range of high-quality education and training options
- Ensuring that, by 2010, young people and adults in Derbyshire will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the country
- Putting the needs of the learner first
- Raising aspirations and motivating young people to remain in learning
- Ensuring access for all learners to good quality and impartial advice and guidance, which enables them to make appropriate and informed choices

6 We value:-

- Equality and diversity, believing that every young person has the right to achieve their potential
- social cohesion and inclusivity
- a co-operative climate, emphasising collaboration, mutual rights and responsibilities
- the contributions of learners, parents, governors, employers and community partners

Our Vision

7 Each young person in Derbyshire is entitled to receive the best preparation for life which we can provide. Parents and employers want our young people to have high aspirations, self-confidence, good qualifications and ambitions to succeed. Derbyshire needs young people who are enthusiastic, flexible and reliable in everything they do.

8 The economy in Derbyshire requires highly trained and motivated young people to enter employment or to move on to higher education. Once in employment, all young people must be able to continue learning throughout the rest of their lives. We want our young people to be active citizens and to contribute to the cultural and sporting life in Derbyshire. Young people should be able to develop their talents and chosen career without having to overcome barriers caused by income, race, gender, disability or attitudes which continue the divide between academic and vocational education.

9 We want young people in Derbyshire to master the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, information technology, thinking and emotional intelligence. They should be able to use a range of interpersonal skills

including communication, listening, decision-making, initiative, flexibility, perseverance, enthusiasm, teamwork and empathy. They should develop personal autonomy and individual effectiveness in a wide range of roles including learner, citizen, friend, carer, parent or worker.

10 We believe that young people should be aware of their rights as well as their responsibilities. With Connexions, we will produce a Young People's Learning Charter in partnership with young people, making best use of schools' councils and the County Youth Forum.

11 To realise the vision we are seeking to reform our organisations, structures and funding regimes to remove barriers to learning and achievement. There is no single blueprint - only a single ambition to secure equality of access to high quality, flexible provision leading to higher standards and high achievement for all.

We will effect this change through:-

Partnership and collaboration

12 The best public services are delivered through partnerships, which encourage collaboration between providers, not competition. Many organisations are involved in developing the talents of our young people with each institution playing a particular role, developing upon its strengths and specialisms. We will encourage partnerships of equals, discouraging systems that deepen the divide between vocational and academic learning. All deliverers of learning will be encouraged to work together for the benefit of young people to develop distinct, high-quality 14-19 provision that will be cost-effective and affordable. We will build on the existing partnerships in Derbyshire, encouraging schools to work together and with colleges, work-based learning providers, along with other organisations including Connexions, JobCentre Plus, the Youth Service and independent schools.

13 Throughout Derbyshire we will develop existing partnerships so that new levels of collaboration and co-operation are achieved, linking with the developing partnership clusters of schools. The 14-19 Pathfinder Group will be further developed, embedding much of its work in mainstream activity where this is possible. We will ensure that it links effectively with other organisations including, The Derbyshire Learning Partnership; The Derbyshire Education Business Partnership; Derbyshire's Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership; Derbyshire Early Years and Childcare Partnership; Derbyshire and Peak Park Sports and Recreation Forum; North Derbyshire and the North Nottinghamshire Partnership and Derby City and Derbyshire Economic Partnership.

14 We will encourage all learning providers and employers within each local area to pool their expertise and knowledge so that diverse and high quality provision is on offer. We expect providers to share facilities and

staff, ensuring that a range of seamless learning opportunities is available to every learner.

Listening to Young People

15 Every young person deserves to be listened to. The views of young people will be reflected in our policies and the provision we make. We will ensure that the Engaging Young People Unit further develops the role of school and college councils, local and County Youth Forums. We will make sure that the views of young people in care are responded to. We will seek to include those on the margins of society in our consultation process.

Centres of Learning

16 We envisage provision for 14 – 19 year olds taking place in centres of learning, transforming colleges and schools to become the educational hub of their community. Schools, training providers and colleges will work with partners to ensure that provision is offered through collaboration, not competition, using the expertise of the specialist organisations.

17 These centres will provide a unique opportunity for a wide range of agencies (including education, training, childcare, sports, neighbourhood renewal and health) to combine under a single umbrella where targets and accountability are shared. Teams of lead professionals will focus on local, regional and national initiatives, integrating key services around the needs of children, their families and the wider community, including employers. Creating such centres will involve significant changes in the ways in which buildings are funded, built and run.

18 Where needed, we will look to design purpose built Vocational Centres designed to house some of the more expensive vocational programmes. Strategically located, these will allow clusters of schools, training providers and colleges to co-ordinate and integrate their timetables, allowing shared use and offering a full range of high quality provision to young people. The Connexions Service will provide on-site independent advice, support and guidance to learners. In rural areas or where further education provision is difficult to access, innovative use of existing resources will allow the development of a range of vocational options linked to school specialisms as well as offering a broad curriculum in partnership with other providers.

19 By maximising the use of ICT, we will aim to provide for all centres access to a state-of-the-art Virtual Learning Environment. This will provide interactive on-line courses, teaching materials, case studies and video conferencing, extending student choice and learning across the county, and within our most deprived communities, as well as our more remote, rural areas.

Inclusion

20 We will provide integrated and inclusive facilities for those vulnerable young people with special needs, creating a modern, flexible and innovative environment in which all learners can work together and maximise their potential. We will promote a balance of provision including school based nurture centres - co-ordinated provision across each area supported by specialised provision to be accessed by each community of schools and colleges. We will seek to involve independent providers of specialist education in our partnership working.

A new curriculum for 14-19

21 Building on the broad entitlement curriculum provided during early secondary education, the centres of learning will develop new flexible and individualised curriculum pathways, designed to meet the needs of all learners. Access to learning and skills training will be remodelled to maximise individual choice and opportunity. Characterised by collaborative working, our aim is to build flexible courses designed to meet local needs, promoting regeneration, increasing and widening participation in higher education.

22 At the age of 14, each learner will work with their learning provider or Connexions personal adviser to identify their own learning pathway through to 19. This will build on the work already undertaken to identify each learner's skills and abilities.

23 In consultation and partnership with parents, governors, headteachers, college principals, work-based learning providers, employers and learners, we will develop and support the following as an entitlement for all young people in the 14-19 age-range in the county:-

- distinct 14-19 provision appropriate to the needs of this age group which is broad, flexible and relevant
- equality of opportunity
- timely, impartial and good quality advice with reliable and transparent information, enabling young people to make informed choices appropriate to their needs and aspirations
- individual learning plans which involve the learner and provider in plotting the best pathways through a choice of provision in the 14-19 stage and beyond
- quality provision delivered by a community of well-qualified and trained teachers, lecturers and trainers
- a choice of suitable locally based learning at different levels to meet individual needs and aspirations both now and in the future
- the best possible learning environments and facilities within available resources in a safe, secure and supportive atmosphere

Supporting Schools, Colleges & Providers

24 We will negotiate with all providers appropriate and relevant levels of support in relation to:-

- staff recruitment, retention, training and development
- funding of courses and provision in accordance with national criteria
- provision of accommodation according to a rational plan for county-wide provision
- evaluation and assessment of provision in the light of the aims and principles of this strategy
- action planning to advance the strategy
- sharing and disseminating best practice
- data sharing and interpretation which avoids unnecessary duplication
- adequate and appropriate information, advice and guidance, including timely information about new sources of funding
- support networks and forums at different levels, e.g., subjects and courses, guidance staff, senior staff
- support for schools or providers where the provision for learners is deemed to be inadequate or where attainment is below expectations
- an annual Derbyshire and Derby conference to review progress and set the context for future development

Quality Assurance

25 We will work together and in partnership with providers to establish a quality assurance regime which is relevant, transparent and formative building on existing practices. We will:-

- seek to establish a common framework for performance review and improvement for all 14-19 provision, linking the LSC Quality Improvement Strategy and LEA's Quality Development Dialogue process
- establish a data sharing protocol so that relevant performance indicators are available in a timely and relevant fashion to make valid judgements about the quality of provision in schools and learning providers: thus information on examination results, along with the relative performance of learners and institutions, could be available well in advance of publication of official government figures
- utilise Ofsted inspection reports and internal reviews to make judgements about the quality of provision and inform future support and planning
- encourage all providers to establish a rigorous self-evaluation process for the 14-19 provision
- assist providers in setting targets which reflect national government targets for achievement, participation and retention
- encourage providers to engage learners in their self-evaluation procedures.

Funding

26 The LSC and County Council will work together to reduce any funding barriers encountered by learners, schools and providers, creating as level a playing field as possible. We will encourage the development of systems which allow funding to follow the learner, recognising the cost implications of young people learning with more than one provider. We will encourage providers to align budgets and planning arrangements in this regard. We will work with central Government to reduce the burden of bureaucracy for providers and young people, to focus as much funding as possible on front line delivery.

Accountability

27 We will encourage school and college governors to work closely together, building links with employers and the directors of work based learning providers. The County Council and LSC, through their consultation systems, will ensure that employers, parents and young people are involved in making decisions about 14-19 provision in Derbyshire.

Review

28 The strategy will be kept under review and its impact will be monitored as part of the regular dialogue between County Council, LSC, Connexions and other key partners, including contributing to the three yearly strategic area reviews of post 16 learning.

Consultation

29 We want all those involved in learning for 14-19 year olds to share our vision. A comprehensive consultation exercise is taking place to promote it, involving young people, their parents or carers, employers and the broader community. The heads of institutions that provide learning – and their staff – are also involved

We will develop and deliver the Strategy through broad consultation with the key participants listed above, and also with learning and business partnerships and other relevant organisations.

30 If you wish to comment on the strategy, please complete the attached consultation response form, sending it to Donald Rae, Assistant Chief Education Officer (Lifelong Learning), Derbyshire County Council, Education Dept, Chatsworth Hall, Chesterfield Road, Matlock DE4 3FW by 28 May 2004.

Learning and Skills for Young People aged 14 – 19

Consultation Response

It would help us if you could use this form when responding to our consultation. Please return it to Peter Brammall, Acting Executive Director, Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council, St Helen's Court, St Helen's Street, Derby DE1 3GY by 28 May 2004. You can e-mail it to debra.blackshaw@isc.gov.uk

Name of organisation:

Name of person making the return:

Address:

Telephone:

e-mail:

1. Do you agree with the principles outlined in paragraph 5?

2. Is our vision – paragraphs 7-11 – one which you share? Please tell us whether you think it is too ambitious, not ambitious enough or just about right.

3. We are committed to partnership working and describe this in paragraphs 12-14. Are you committed to this model of partnership working? If not, what alternatives do you suggest?

4. We want to listen to the views of young people and respond to them (paragraph 15). Are we right to focus on the work of the Engaging Young People Unit? How can we reach young people who are not engaged in school councils or youth forums?

5. Our vision for new centres of learning (paragraphs 16-19) is radical. Do you agree with it?

(a) If you are a provider, are you prepared to work in partnership to help us deliver it?

(b) What do we need to do to make sure it succeeds?

6. Do you agree with the way we propose to include young people with special needs (paragraph 20)? How can we balance the needs of inclusion with those requiring very specialised provision?

7. Do paragraphs 21-23 capture what we have already achieved in developing a new curriculum for 14-19 year olds? Is the way forward one which you agree with?

8. Paragraph 24 outlines how the County Council and LSC will support providers. If you are one, is the degree of support offered adequate or too much?

9. Paragraph 25 describes how the LSC and County Council will work together to assure the quality of provision. Do you agree that this is how we will work together? How can we best achieve this without increasing bureaucracy?

10. We aim to reduce funding barriers and describe this in paragraph 26. Is our aim of creating as level a playing field as possible one you share? Will doing so present problems and if so how can we overcome them?

11. How can we ensure that we are accountable for 14-19 work (paragraph 27)? Are we correct to use our existing consultation methods to ensure that this happens? If not, what would you suggest we do instead?

12. Finally, would your organisation be prepared to sign a document supporting the strategy?