

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 March 2010

CHANGES TO POST 16 EDUCATION

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Scrutiny Committee members of the changes to post 16 education and the impact on the local authority and post 16 education providers in Darlington

Summary

2. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009 disbands the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) on 31 March 2010 and transfers the responsibility for the commissioning of learning provision for young people to local authorities from 1 April 2010
3. The responsibility for commissioning training for learners aged 19 and over will transfer to the new Skills Funding Agency (SFA). Commissioning of Apprenticeships will rest with the National Apprenticeship Service.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that the report be noted.

Murray Rose,
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009
National Commissioning Framework
Local Government Association REACT Councillor Briefing (Attached)?

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S17 Crime and Disorder	This policy has no implications for crime and disorder
Health and Well Being	This policy has no implications for health and well being
Sustainability	This report has no effect on sustainability
Diversity	All groups of post 16 learners are effected
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	All post 16 learners
Budget and Policy Framework	There is no direct impact on the Local Authority budget as the 16-19 education budgets transfer from the Learning and Skills Council to the Young People's Learning Agency
Efficiency	The content of this report does not effect efficiency
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This change shifts the responsibility for any 16-19 National Indicator targets from the Learning and Skills Council to the Local Authority

MAIN REPORT

5. The Darlington 14-19 Partnership (Partnership) reports to the Children's Trust. It is made up of secondary headteachers, college principals, Director of Children's Services and representatives from work based learning, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), local authority officers, the Business Education Partnership, employers, the voluntary sector, Durham and North Yorkshire local authorities and Teesside University. The Partnership has been responsible for developing the local 14-19 strategy and members have agreed to work together collaboratively to:
 - (a) Generate improvements in the educational achievements of 14-19 year olds in Darlington
 - (b) Oversee guidance arrangements and ensure all young people are fully informed about the options available to them
 - (c) Ensure that 14-19 provision is effectively commissioned, well-resourced and takes place in appropriate facilities.
6. It is a time of substantial reform to the 14-19 curriculum. The introduction of Foundation Learning and the Qualifications and Credit Framework has been addressed by the Partnership through the creation of a Foundation Learning working group comprising schools, colleges and other providers. Awareness raising amongst professionals and the development of a plan for Foundation Learning across Darlington are priorities.
7. As part of the work of the Partnership, curriculum deputy headteachers and college principals meet regularly to share good practice and consider opportunities for collaboration to improve the offer for young people. This interface between schools and colleges is essential in supporting transitions at age 16. The transition support programme is a model of good practice.
8. The 14-19 Diploma was introduced as a new qualification in 2008, with an emphasis on applied learning and functional skills. The Partnership has recently submitted a bid to the Gateway 4 to enable them to deliver further lines of learning. At present 2 Diploma lines are being taught in Darlington, Engineering at Level 2 at Carmel College and the Education Village and Level 3 Creative and Media at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College. Subject to student demand the planned delivery for 2010 will include Hair and Beauty Studies, Sport and Active Leisure and Construction and the Built Environment. Further lines are planned to start in 2011.
9. An electronic Area Wide Prospectus detailing 14-19 learning opportunities in Darlington has been established for some time. Over recent months the Partnership has been developing a Common Applications Process to post 16 opportunities. This will be a national requirement for 2011.
10. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009 makes provision to wind up the LSC and establish three new organisations:
 - (a) The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) who will set the national framework for the commissioning of 16-19 provision, hold the 16-19 budget, ensure sub-regional

- plans work together, and allocate funds to councils to meet their plans for education and training.
- (b) The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) will fund colleges and other learning providers for learners aged 19 and over, and manage the performance of further education colleges.
 - (c) The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will be responsible for procuring sufficient apprenticeship places to meet the needs of each sub region.
11. The ASCL Act places the responsibility for the commissioning of education and training for 16-19 year olds (and 19-25 year olds subject to a learning disability assessment) on local authorities. Specifically to secure sufficient education and training for young people in their area and for procuring learning provision with providers located in their area. To support this new role around 950 LSC staff nationally will transfer to local councils. Two full time staff will transfer across to Darlington Borough Council from the LSC; both have experience of the Darlington area. The staff will be fully integrated into Children's Services from 1st April 2010 after a formal 'shadowing period' from January 2010.
 12. The legislation establishes local authorities as the single point of responsibility and accountability for children and young people's services from 0-19 years (25 years for learners subject to a learning difficulty assessment).
 13. There is also a requirement to plan 16-19 provision across 'travel to learn' areas in sub regional groups (SRGs). A Tees Valley sub regional group has been established and consists of the five Tees Valley authorities. In addition Darlington has specific responsibility for liaising with North Yorkshire and County Durham on behalf of the SRG. A Regional Planning Group will scrutinise the commissioning plans of the SRGs to ensure that they are coherent, fall within the overall budget available and deliver the entitlement for all young people in the region.
 14. A Darlington 14-19 commissioning group has been established as a sub-group of the 14-19 Partnership to take forward this agenda. The group includes representatives of 16-19 education and training providers as well as the appropriate council officers.
 15. There are a number of parameters that will apply to the commissioning process, the key ones are:
 - (a) Budgets will be retained by the YPLA and allocations will have to be passed on in full to education and training providers in line with the local commissioning plan.
 - (b) There will be a statutory national framework detailing the timescales, processes and expected quality standards for the commissioning of 16-19 provision.
 - (c) There will be a national funding formula for the allocation of funds to providers.
 - (d) Local commissioning plans will have to be moderated at sub regional and regional levels, prior to approval by the YPLA, and subject to the cash limit of the 16-19 budget.
 - (e) Provision will still have to be commissioned in support of government targets, i.e. Level 2 and Level 3, Apprenticeships etc.
 - (f) A greater focus on the meeting the needs of vulnerable groups and the need to lay the foundations for the Raising the Participation Age to 18 by 2015.