



meeting	SKILLS: NOW AND THE FUTURE SELECT COMMITTEE	
date	16 June 2008	agenda item number

Report of the Service director, Learning and Achievement

Machinery of Government – proposals outlined in “Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver”

Purpose of the report

1. To raise the awareness of the Committee of the implications for the County Council of proposals set out in the above mentioned White Paper. The Executive Summary of the White Paper is attached as Appendix A.

Background

2. Government is consulting on reforms proposed to the funding and delivery system for education and training as the participation age is raised to 18. This includes the transfer of annual revenue funding (16-19) to County Councils from the Learning and Skills Council, which is to be wound up from 2010/2011. Councils will be given a clear strategic lead for 14-19 education and training with integration of provision between a range of providers (schools, colleges, training organisations and employers). Key national qualification structures are to be established: Diplomas; GCSEs and A levels; Apprenticeships; and a Foundation Learning Tier of courses. All of these will act as a route into higher level qualifications. These structures will deliver the new entitlements for all young people from 2013. Local authorities will have a commissioning role - securing all the necessary provision to meet a full entitlement for all learners at the highest possible standard. The identification of all provision will be captured in an agreed plan with a funding model.
3. A new national agency (non departmental public body), the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), will provide an indicative budget for LAs within a region and have a significant role initially that will diminish as authorities demonstrate that they have put in place sufficiently robust formal partnership and decision-making structures. It is likely that YPLA will retain responsibility for maintaining the FE system, including governance and financial stability.
4. Local authorities will be responsible for provision for all Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) up to age 25. Planning will

take place at a local level, supported by brokerage with specialist providers at regional level. In addition, it is proposed that Local Authorities should be responsible for the educational training of young people in juvenile custody.

5. A significant further development is that councils will have a lead responsibility for improving quality and raising standards in school sixth forms and sixth form colleges, as is currently the case up to the end of Key Stage 4 (the current end of statutory schooling at age 16). Where performance is inadequate, intervention may be required and, if necessary, funding withdrawn.
6. The commissioning process will drive funding, building on the current LSC national formula approach from 2008/09. Consideration is being given to extending the national formula to Key Stage 4 to create a 14-19 funding system. This will be subject to consultation as part of the review of schools' funding to be implemented from 2011.

Issues

7. In preparation for this change of arrangements local authorities are being asked to organise themselves into appropriate 'sub regions' to reflect 'Travel to Learn' patterns and make sense of collaborative school and college arrangements. It is the view of officers of both the county and city councils, and of LSC officials that locally the most appropriate sub regional arrangement in Nottinghamshire is collaboration between county and city councils. A small working group has been established and held its first meeting.
 - All relevant service areas are to be invited to make a contribution to the Council's response to the White Paper, which has to be returned by June 9, 2008. (A copy of the questions for the consultation is attached as Appendix B).
 - A review of internal capacity will be undertaken to ensure the Council can deliver this new set of responsibilities.
 - Negotiation will take the place with the LSC to initiate work sharing arrangements in anticipation of the full assumption of responsibilities by the council.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that
 - the Skills: Now and the Future Select Committee consider and comment on the White Paper recommendations and the response of the Council to this widening of the Council's responsibility for post 16 education, training and provision in its new commissioning role; and

- note that the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services will lead on developing further proposals on this initiative, to result in a later report to the Executive for agreement.

JOHN SLATER

Service Director, Learning and Achievement

Background papers:

White Paper: "Raising Expectations: enabling the systems to deliver"