

14th October 2019

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Strategy for Improving Educational Opportunities for All (IEOfA), attached as **Appendix 1**, and recommend it to Policy Committee for approval, replacing the existing Closing the Educational Gaps Strategy (2012).
2. To seek approval to bring six-monthly update reports on progress towards the Strategy for IEOfA success criteria.

Information

3. At the Children and Young People's Committee meeting on 11th February 2019, the development of, and consultation on, a new Strategy for Improving Educational Opportunities for All in Nottinghamshire was approved.
4. This decision reflected new national priorities surrounding social mobility, recognising that disadvantaged children and young people are less likely to fulfil their academic potential, secure employment and gain a sense of future emotional and financial security.
5. In addition, the Social Mobility Commission's "*State of the Nation Report*" (November 2017) ranked all English local authorities into hotspots and coldspots based on social mobility outcomes from early years through to working lives. The East Midlands was the country's lowest performing area and, in Nottinghamshire, six of the seven districts were ranked as coldspots.
6. The Strategy reflects issues outlined in national reports (referenced in background papers), which recognise the central role that education plays in breaking down the barriers to social mobility. It also builds upon the successes of the Closing the Educational Gaps Strategy (2012) by continuing to bring together County Council services and key partners to further improve both opportunities and outcomes for all, including the most vulnerable groups of learners.

7. The Strategy will contribute to the delivery of the following key ambitions of the Nottinghamshire County Council Plan 2017-2021, 'Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future':

"A great place to bring up your family" acknowledges the importance of giving children the best possible start in life and the opportunity to attend good schools. The IEOfA Strategy has an enhanced focus on the "readiness to learn" agenda, striving to ensure the development of emotional health and wellbeing, independence, self-esteem and the desire to learn.

"A great place to fulfil your ambition" aims to increase the number of young people who leave education with better qualifications and skills, and are thus able to find higher paid, more skilled jobs. The IEOfA Strategy focusses particularly on maximising partnership working across the secondary and post 16 sectors to improve pathways into adulthood and employment.

"A great place to start and grow your business" acknowledges the need for a skilled workforce. It identifies the importance that the skills taught in our schools and colleges match the needs of local businesses and so support the ambitions of our young people. The IEOfA Strategy will develop active partnership links with Council services and key partners, especially learning providers and employers.

8. The proposed six-monthly update reports on progress towards the IEOfA Strategy's success criteria will strengthen existing accountability arrangements, principally the IEOfA Performance Board.

Process

9. The IEOfA Strategy has been developed by Nottinghamshire County Council officers in partnership with key stakeholders.
10. An extensive and productive consultation was conducted between 7th June and 5th July 2019, the outcomes of which are set out fully in **Appendix 2**.

Other Options Considered

11. A new strategy is required in light of changing national priorities. It is inappropriate to continue to use the Closing the Educational Gaps Strategy (2012) because it focusses insufficiently upon improving educational opportunities and preparation for adulthood.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

12. To provide an effective response to new national priorities and ensure improved educational opportunities and outcomes for all of Nottinghamshire's children and young people.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty,

safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

14. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

- 1) recommends the Strategy for Improving Educational Opportunities for All, attached as **Appendix 1**, to Policy Committee for approval, replacing the existing Closing the Educational Gaps Strategy (2012).
- 2) agrees to receive six-monthly update reports on progress towards the Strategy for Improving Educational Opportunities for All success criteria and that these be included in the Committee's work programme.

Marion Clay

Service Director, Education, Learning and Skills

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (LW 19/09/19)

15. The Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (SAS 23/09/19)

16. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Strategy for Improving Educational Opportunities for All](#) - report to Children and Young People's Committee on 11th February 2019

Bercow 10 Years On (March 2018)

<http://www.bercow10yearson.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/337644-ICAN-Bercow-Report-WEB.pdf>

Closing the Educational Gaps Strategy (2012) <http://home.nottsc.gov.uk/working/policies-performance/policy/policy-library/closing-theeducational-gaps>

Nottinghamshire County Council Plan 2017-20, 'Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future'
<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/plans-policies-andassessments/council-plans-and-policies/strategic-plan-2017-2021>

Social Mobility in Counties- County Councils Network (CCN) (October 2018)
<https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/download/1811/>

State of the Nation- Social Mobility Commission Report (November 2017)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662744/State_of_the_Nation_2017_-_Social_Mobility_in_Great_Britain.pdf

Unlocking Talent Fulfilling Potential- Department for Education (December 2017)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/667690/Social_Mobility_Action_Plan_-_for_printing.pdf

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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