

POST 16 EDUCATION SCRUTINY REVIEW



INTERIM REPORT OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

June 2010

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FOREWORD

Councillor Howard Blagbrough

This interim report presents the findings of a Working Party of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel which undertook a detailed scrutiny review on the topic of Post-16 Education. The primary role of the Working Party, was to support the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel by ensuring Councillors and co-opted members were fully informed of changes to learning opportunities and funding for 14-19 year olds (up to 25 year olds for children with learning difficulties and disabilities) and the implication of these changes for Calderdale.

As a background to this piece of work, Cabinet, at its meeting held on 20th April 2009, had considered a report on “Changes to Commissioning of 16-19 Education”, and resolved to note the report, and for the Acting Group Director, Children and Young People's Services to “be authorised to progress work on the sub-regional proposals for commissioning some post-16 education and training, and submit a further report to Cabinet in due course”.

Subsequently as part of its Work Plan for 2009-10, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in June, 2009 resolved to establish a Post-16 Education Working Party to examine issues arising from this legislation on its behalf. The membership of the Working Party was Councillors Howard Blagbrough, Mrs Olwen Jennings and Megan Swift together with co-opted member Mrs Tricia Astwood, MBE.

I wish to thank all the members of the Working Party for their time and contributions in undertaking this scrutiny review, and all those who attended and provided documentary evidence to assist us with our work.

Howard Blagbrough



Calderdale Councillor and
Chair, Post 16 Education Working Party,
Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

Introduction

From April 2010, Local Authorities become responsible for securing sufficient education and training provision for all young people aged 16-19 years of age. This is extended to 25 years old for some young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. This responsibility is picked up from the Learning and Skills Council, which ceased to exist from the end of March, 2010.

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel included in its 2009/10 Work Plan an examination of Post 16 Education and training provision.

The Working Party met on six occasions in the 2009/10 Municipal Year and held discussions with various individuals, groups of students and professionals to ascertain their views.

There are still some aspects of Post-16 Education the Working Party would like to consider in more detail, particularly around apprenticeships and provision for those students aged up to 25 years with learning difficulties and disabilities, so we have produced this report as an interim report.



The Working Party's terms of reference were:-

Role:

The role of the Working Party is to support the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel by ensuring Members are fully informed of the changes to learning opportunities and funding for 14-19 years old (25 year olds with learning difficulties and disabilities) and the implications of these changes for Calderdale. The Working Party will focus on:-

- **current and future changes to the 14-19 school curriculum and 16-18 transfer of funding to Local Authorities (April, 2010);**
- **14-19 curriculum pathways being developed, including the introduction of diplomas through collaboration between schools / college and other providers;**
- **the impact of the new curriculum and changes in funding on our students, the schools and the college;**
- **capital funding implications of the developing curriculum offer;**
- **the views of young people and others on the new curriculum and different routes for learning in Calderdale;**
- **the process and impact of Machinery of Government changes relating to the transfer of responsibility, from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for commissioning and funding 16-18 provision in our school sixth forms and within Calderdale College from April, 2010.**
- **The implications, issues and impact of the work of the West Yorkshire Sub-Regional Group charged with ensuring the five Local Authorities work effectively to commission and fund 16-18 provision.**
- **Plans and progress in ensuring provision for 19-25 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.**
- **the need to increase and inform future commissioning for apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds and young adults up to 25 years in Calderdale.**
- **the impact of 14-19 provision on re-engaging youngsters and reducing the numbers not in employment, education or training (NEET) in Calderdale.**
- **the implications of Raising Participation Age (RPA) for Calderdale.**
- **appropriate approaches to getting local employers involved in 14-19 curriculum and apprenticeship programmes.**

Research and Findings

Ages 14-19 Reform Programme

We received a presentation at our September 2009 meeting from the Director of Campus Calderdale on the 14-19 Reform Programme. This included an overview of schools, and highlighted what is driving the reforms and why they are needed.

We learnt that the challenge is to provide the opportunity for all young people to succeed at a higher level; the raising of the participation age and to ensure that all young people develop their potential. We held discussions about new pathways; apprenticeships; the substantial progress that had been made in the percentage of students now achieving 5 A* - C grades; diplomas; work with accredited training; A-Levels; Foundation Learning Tier; current qualifications; information, advice and training; and collaborative working.

We also took evidence from the Director, Campus Calderdale outlining the Campus Calderdale priorities for 14-19 Reform from September 2009 which were:-

- Increasing participation in education or employment with training and standards achieved for all young people aged 16-19 years and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged up to 25 years;
- addressing the Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) agenda through preventative NEET work with schools;
- quality assurance of campus-wide provision and the development of the local authority commissioning role;
- workforce development – including leadership and management, diploma delivery and administration and functional skills; finalising collaborative timetabling and curriculum delivery;
- better engagement with employers; improved communication about 14-19 reforms with staff, students, parent/carers, employers and the Calderdale community;
- continuing to develop impartial information, advice and guidance;
- to ensure capital investment to deliver the diplomas;
- to develop an agreed funding methodology to support collaborative provision between providers.

Campus Calderdale now consists of four clusters of schools working together to deliver the 14-19 curriculum, and that each Cluster now works with Calderdale College.

Machinery of Government (MOG): Transfer of Post 16 Responsibilities

Throughout this scrutiny review, the Director, Campus Calderdale kept the Working Group informed on the Machinery of Government (MOG) transfer of Post 16 responsibilities.

In Autumn 2009, we considered and commented on latest drafts of the Memorandum of Understanding at that time which set out:

- the arrangements for undertaking sub-regional responsibilities for 16-19 learning and skills in West Yorkshire; and
- the underpinning principles, roles and responsibilities of the parties and was intended to act as a point of reference for the Authorities who make up the membership of the Sub-Regional Group.

We were made aware that the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 provided that, with effect from April 2010 local authorities will become responsible for securing sufficient education and training provision for all young people aged 16-19, and those aged 19-25 who are being assessed for a learning difficulty and/or disability, as well as juveniles in custody.

It was also recognised that local authorities will be expected to work collaboratively with all sectors, including Children's Trusts and 14-19 Partnerships. Additionally, because many young people live in one local authority area but receive education or training in another, we welcomed the news that local authorities would be expected to work with one another where there were travel-to-learn issues, i.e. cross-regions, regionally and in particular sub-regionally.

The authorities for the purpose of the Memorandum comprised the West Yorkshire Sub-Regional Group (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield Councils) with the aim of working and planning together to build a picture of demand, to review individual local authority commissioning plans, to ensure coherence and to consider how to deploy commissioning resources in the most cost effective and efficient manner.

In considering the Memorandum we identified the undermentioned key issues:

- We noted that the Elected Members Group involved the Lead Members for Children's Services for each of the five Local Authorities and we considered whether Scrutiny Panel Chairs should be involved in this Group. We came to the conclusion that the Lead Member should report back to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel.
- In relation to provider representation, we raised concerns that schools not having sixth forms were not represented on the sub-group. It was considered essential that a mechanism existed to ensure this sector was involved.

- We felt that the most important Success Criterion was contained in Paragraph 11.1(e) of the Memorandum, namely that “Learners access appropriate quality provision within a reasonable distance and successfully achieve and progress”. We emphasised that feedback from learners was very important.
- We commented that the location of the Skills Centres was vitally important. For example, those living in Todmorden presently found themselves with a long journey to attend the nearest Skills Centre. Officers were presently looking at the possibility of three skills centres across Calderdale, within Upper Valley, North Halifax and Lower Valley making good use of existing premises where possible. A feasibility study will be carried out and reported to Cabinet in summer 2010.

Following the November 2009 meeting of the Working Party, the Memorandum of Understanding, including our amendments, was submitted to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel on 15th December 2010, which accepted the report and recommended that Cabinet endorse the Memorandum of Understanding.

Cabinet at its meeting held on 1st February, 2010 subsequently considered and endorsed the Memorandum of Understanding.

Calderdale Apprenticeship Programme / Work Placements at Pennine Housing

When we met in January 2010, the Director, Campus Calderdale and the Employment, Partnership and Community Involvement Manager, Pennine Housing provided evidence on:-

- ❖ Calderdale Apprenticeship Programme
- ❖ Work Placements at Pennine Housing
- ❖ Understanding different types of Qualifications;

Areas of questioning included

- the amount (£) per week apprentices received?
- whether some apprenticeships could be ring-fenced for 16-18 year olds?
- the help/assistance that is available to young people who had applied for an apprenticeship but had only just been unsuccessful. In particular on what further advice/support could be given to help them with any future applications for apprenticeship positions.

- the possibility of some other existing jobs in all Directorates in the Council being advertised on an apprenticeship basis – this would allow a young person an opportunity to train, develop and learn in a job.
- The need for additional nurturing / encouragement for more vulnerable groups of young people was identified as being extremely important (such as looked after young people (recognising the corporate parenting role of the Council) and learning disabilities (the need for more help to apply etc) or those who have entered the criminal justice system (more vulnerable youngsters who have been to a Young Offenders institution).

We identified that confidence issues are a major factor for some young people (it was a big step moving into four days at work and one at the college through an apprenticeship). We looked at how the Council could support a more flexible approach to work placements, some of which could be supported placements

A target by 2020 was to have 20% of 16-18 year olds in apprenticeships and there was an identified need for better cross services working and planning on apprenticeships.

The Employment, Partnership and Community Involvement Manager, Pennine Housing told us about 16-18 Work Placements with specific emphasis on the work undertaken by Pennine Housing. The types of work placements and young people needing work placements were outlined.

We learnt that Pennine Housing tried to assist young people who live on the estates that they managed back into work. The aim was to establish sustainable communities and Pennine Housing have been delivering work experience and young experience opportunities for several years. The commitment of staff to assisting in work placements was commended.

We also heard about the “World of Work” Group, which was a partnership approach to employer engagement.

Understanding Different Types of Qualifications

The Working Party, as part of our research, was given an introduction to the Qualifications and Credit Framework, including a short on-line interactive guide about the operation of the framework. We also obtained a Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency publication: The Qualifications and Credit Framework: an introduction. This booklet explained the Framework in more detail.

Calderdale Post 16 Outcomes 2008/09

In February 2010 we considered a report of the Director, Campus Calderdale which focussed on the Calderdale Post 16 Outcomes for 2008/09. The key findings were:-

❖ A Level APS (Average Points Score);

Calderdale APS per student showed a significant rise compared with a national fall; Calderdale was well above the national average APS per student; we nearly reached Calderdale Points Score Average (PSA) target of 760 points; Calderdale APS per exam entry has risen by 4 points and more than national average rise, although Calderdale still below national average on this indicator; there was focus on Post 16 support and challenge.

❖ A Level: Asian Pakistani and White: British Students comparison;

Asian Pakistani pupils attain less than White British Students, however the 2009 figures show a significant reduction in the gap and a significant rise in attainment this year for both APS per student and per exam entry compared with 2007 and 2008 figures. Closing the gap further remains a priority for the Campus.

❖ A Level Gender Analysis;

Both males and females have increased attainment this year; females continue to outperform males; males have improved more than females; the gap began to close in 2009.

❖ A Level FSM (Free Schools Meal) Analysis;

Students eligible for FSM performed less well than those not eligible; gap has reduced this year, particularly for APS per student; significant increase in performance for students eligible for FSM. However, closing the gap further remains a priority for the Campus.

Our key findings and observations from this information were:

- it was recognised that Calderdale's APS had improved significantly over the last 3 years from 701 to 753.6. When the point scores were correlated with actual grades, we were pleased to find that 2009 was the first year Calderdale was above the national Average for APS per student;

- APS per entry was below national average – we found out that this related to the level of grades awarded to students. Work was on-going through the Post 16 Support and Challenge programme to raise standards post-16.
- We did have some concerns that some schools might not enter some students for some exams. However, in response we were informed that although some schools did not enter all students for all exams (and were therefore not shown in the results), that in not doing so, this had a negative impact on Post 16 budget for individual schools in following years.
- In discussing free school meals (FSM), we noted that deprivation seems to be having a greater impact on post-16 education results than ethnicity.

Calderdale Local Area Statement of Need for 2010

We considered a report of the Director, Campus Calderdale which focussed on the high level Commissioning Priorities for 2010/11 (including elements identified through strategic analysis plus reviews/refreshes of the 14-19 plan):-

Participation

- Reduce Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and increase participation by increasing Foundation Learning places and expanding diploma opportunities at all levels;
- Increase full level 2 participation by offering appropriate starts on a flexible basis (January/February);
- Establish Halifax Trinity Academy;
- Expand Apprenticeship Places;
- Maintain Places and funding levels for high quality sixth forms to meet demand;
- Continue to develop locally based provision for Learners with Learning Disabilities (LLDD).

Achievement and Quality

- Continue to focus on achievement of Level 3 by age 19;
- Continue to support schools to improve attainment at Key Stage 5;

Other

- The Learning and Skills Council (E2E) contract for Calderdale currently lies with Kirklees College as part of a partnership bid for funding. However, given the implications of the MOG Post 16 Transfer and the provision being incorporated into foundation learning in Further Education (FE), it is appropriate for Calderdale Local Authority to directly commission foundation learning.



Research/Evidence Gathering Session: Meeting with Students from Years 11/ 12 and/or 13 from Rastrick High School; Ryburn Valley High School; Halifax High at Wellesley Park; and the Crossley Heath School – March, 2010

As part of our Working Party's research and evidence gathering, we met with a number of students from Rastrick High School; Ryburn Valley High School; Halifax High at Wellesley Park and the Crossley Heath School. We listened and talked with the students on their views on courses being followed now and their aspirations for the future; the help and advice they received when making choices; any experiences of the workplace they had (such as work experience or a part time job). We also asked their views on what ways they felt the learning experience could be better.

In addition, following the meeting, we gave the students a further opportunity to provide feedback to the Working Party on how they felt the Council could better support and help students in the future.

Apprenticeships

The Working Party met with an Assistant Head of Service from the Council's Human Resources (HR) Team to discuss apprenticeships.

A number of apprentices within the Council had been given the opportunity to meet with the Working Party, but unfortunately none were available to attend on the day of the meeting.

The Assistant Head of Service, HR Team advised that the Council presently had twenty two apprentices (12 horticultural and 10 customer services), and the feedback from managers was that they were pleased with the calibre of these apprentices.

We enquired about details of the selection process, which we were informed involved a full day of tests. It was also mentioned that the HR Service was looking at the possibility of replacing some Scale 1-3 posts with apprentices.

We discussed what was happening to apprentices and their chances of being offered employment at the end of their apprenticeship and were informed that some of the types of apprenticeships were temporary in nature, and that there was no guarantee of a job at the end of it. However that was the long term hope.

We enquired what, if any, help was being provided to those who were not offered employment at the end of their apprenticeships.

We identified that it was important that the type of tests for apprenticeship places were suitable to particular abilities, for example, a person may have potential in horticulture but may not be as good at written tests.

Communications between services in the Council was seen to be vitally important and we enquired about what steps were been taken to improve this.

There was a concern about which Directorate(s) in the Council were taking the initiative to push forward apprenticeships and whether this was being publicised well enough. We found out that that there was part time officer in Human Resources, a major part of their job responsibilities was to push forward the apprenticeship initiative. There was also at least one member of staff in the Children and Young People Directorate who was responsible for college links, young apprenticeships for Key Stage 4 students and promoting the apprenticeship programme Post 16.

We believe that there needs to be a co-ordinated approach across all Directorates to promote the apprenticeships programme. We also feel that the apprenticeship programme should be supported and promoted at the highest level within the organisation – ideally by the Chief Executive.

Other things we suggested were that every Directorate should be expected to have work placements and it would be helpful to have a breakdown of the number of apprenticeships and the number of work placements in each directorate.

We also suggest that monitoring the numbers and types of apprenticeships should be undertaken and need to know the outcomes of the apprenticeships.

Our conclusion was that there was a need to have a strategy and a goal for apprenticeships. It was noted that a strategy should be in place by Autumn 2010 and that the CYP Scrutiny Panel should contribute to the development of the strategy.

We also feel it is important that Customer First are providing the right advice to those making enquiries regarding apprenticeships. We also looked at what arrangements are in place to find employment for young people leaving care as it is important that they are every opportunity in order to gain employment.



Summary

The main issues considered by this Working Party in producing this interim report incorporated are summarised below:-

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding (endorsed by Cabinet, February, 2010)
- (ii) Local Area Statement of Need (to be reviewed by Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in October, 2010)
- (iii) Apprenticeships and Work Placements
- (iv) Pennine Housing – Working with Employers
- (v) Communications
 - Council Departments
 - Parents/young people
 - Work staff
 - Using Council/local documents
 - Communications Strategy
- (vi) Voice of Young People
 - 11-16 transition
 - Cross school community cohesion
- (vii) Challenge and Support

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

We recommend the need for a more highly visible managerial/political leadership commitment to apprenticeships/vulnerable learners in Calderdale.

(As a Working Party, we identified this as a key area for improvement throughout the course of our work on Post 16 Education).

Recommendation 2

We recommend the use of mystery student shopper(s) to assess services, deliver “critical friend” challenge and provide feedback to improve services.

(Experience has shown that such mystery shopping exercises can result in tangible service changes/improvements).

Recommendation 3

We recommend the need for greater ownership by all Directorates / Departments of the Council to apprenticeships/vulnerable learners in Calderdale through staff training, vacancy management, creative thinking and commitment.

Recommendation 4

We recommend the creation of a Calderdale Workforce/Apprenticeships Cross-Directorate Group and for the National Apprenticeship Service to be better used.

Recommendation 5

We recommend the need for the urgent development of a Calderdale Strategy for Apprenticeships and Work Placements.

(This follows on from our discussions with Pennine Housing and the Council’s Human Resources Team on these matters).

Recommendation 6

We recommend that appropriate support and assistance be given for Council Departments to set up Apprenticeships.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that further investigation is undertaken on Post 16 transition provision from Age 11-16 schools.

(As a Working Party, we will also be undertaking further work in this matter following the publication of this Interim report).

Recommendation 8

We recommend the need to establish and embed community cohesion / cross school activities.

(As a Working Party, we recognised the need to undertake more work in this area following on from our meeting with Young People in March, 2010)

Recommendation 9

We recommend the need for further investigation into placements for Special Educational Needs (SEN) and vulnerable youngsters.

(As a Working Party, we will also be undertaking further work in this matter following the publication of this Interim report).

Appendix One

Membership of the Working Party (2009/10 Municipal Year)

Councillor Howard Blagbrough (Chair)
Councillor Mrs Olwen Jennings
Councillor Megan Swift
Mrs P Astwood, MBE – Free Churches

Membership of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel (2009/10 Municipal Year)

Councillor Mrs Olwen Jennings (Chair)
Councillor Howard Blagbrough
Councillor Mohammed Ilyas
Councillor Richard Marshall, MBE
Councillor Ann McAllister
Councillor Megan Swift

Vacant, Church of England (Co-Opted Voting Member)
Mr David Gott, Roman Catholic Church (Co-Opted Voting Member)
Vacant – Parent Governor Representative (Co-Opted Voting Member)
Mrs Emma Carter - Parent Governor Representative (Co-Opted Voting Member)
Vacant – Muslim Faith (Non Voting Co-Opted Member)
Mrs Sheila Hirst – Teacher’s Federation (Non Voting Co-Opted Member)
Ms Sue McMahan - Teacher’s Federation (Non Voting Co-Opted Member)
Vacant – University of Huddersfield (Non Voting Co-Opted Member)
Mrs Tricia Astwood, MBE – Free Churches (Non Voting Co-Opted Member)

(Support to this Scrutiny Working Party was provided by Paul Preston, Scrutiny Support Officer, Democratic and Partnership Services and other colleagues within the Scrutiny Support team)

Appendix Two

Summary of Witnesses Giving Evidence

Liz Singleton, Director, Campus Calderdale

Jayne Spencer, Employment, Partnership and Community Involvement
Manager, Pennine Housing

Children and teacher representatives from the Crossley Heath School; Halifax
High at Wellesley Park School, Rastrick High School and Ryburn Valley High
School

Paul Johansen, Assistant Head of Human Resources, Calderdale Council

Appendix Three

References and Bibliography

Report of the Director, Campus Calderdale – Post 16 Update (September, 2009);

Department for Children, Schools and the Families Document - 14-19 Reform: the 14-19 Reform Programme: *an overview for schools*

Document – Machinery of Government Changes – Memorandum of Understanding West Yorkshire Sub-Regional Group (SRG) 16-19 Provision (Draft 1 – July, 2009)

Presentation, Calderdale Apprenticeship Programme / Work Placements at Pennine Housing (January, 2010)

Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency: The Qualifications and Credit Framework: an introduction

Calderdale Youth Board; Campus Calderdale Post 16 Results 2008/09

Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – Local Area Statement of Need, Calderdale MBC, October, 2009.

Any enquiries or requests for background information,
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