

28 March 2013

**Updated Response to the Report of
Further Education in the Salisbury Area Scrutiny Task Group**

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Children's Select Committee on developments following the final report of Further Education in the Salisbury Area Scrutiny Task Group (May 2012).

Action Required of the Committee

2. To note officers' updates and agree further actions as appropriate.

Background

3. In September 2010, the Children's Services Select Committee established a task group to undertake a review of the post-16 education available in the Salisbury area. This was to become the Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group. The Task Group was established to:
 - (a) Identify the number of young people leaving the Salisbury area to access 16-19 education;
 - (b) Identify why these young people choose to travel and the impact of doing so;
 - (c) Investigate the young people's perception of the 16-19 provision available to them;
 - (d) Make recommendations, if a gap is identified, as to how this need might be met.
4. The task group reported its findings to the Children's Services Select Committee in May 2012 making thirteen recommendations. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services responded to these recommendations at the July 2012 meeting.

Task Group Original Recommendations and Officers Updates

Developing Sixth Form Provision in Central Salisbury
<p><i>Select Committee recommendation:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In its strategic role to ensure the provision of effective and efficient local education and training, Wiltshire Council facilitates urgent discussions between the Laverstock schools and Wiltshire College regarding collaborative provision of a broad, high-quality post-16 offer, harnessing the strengths and resources of all four institutions. Particular consideration should be given to developing jointly-run sixth form provision with a focus on AS/A2 levels, to complement the existing grammar school provision, but also including opportunities for technical and vocational learning."

Officers updates:

- (i) Officers worked with Laverstock Schools and Wiltshire College to explore possible collaborative provision. Following initial discussions, the providers identified that they wished to explore separate applications for a Free School Sixth Form for the Laverstock Campus and a University Technical College (UTC) for South Wiltshire. Applications to the Department for Education (DFE) and the Baker Dearing Trust have respectively been submitted. The Providers have liaised with each other during the development and application process.
- (ii) The parents and Governors of the Laverstock campus have led the application for a Free School Sixth Form and have been supported by the Headteacher of St Edmund's School. The application was submitted in January 2013 and officers understand that discussions with the DfE are due to take place shortly. Meetings have been held with officers of the LA and collaborative meetings with the Free School proposers and Wiltshire College to ensure maximum opportunities for learners in the area.
- (iii) Officers have also worked with Wiltshire College to explore and develop the proposal for a South Wiltshire University Technical College (UTC) with Southampton University, Wiltshire College, MoD and key local employers as sponsors. This will provide new educational opportunities for learners aged 14-19 years (see appendix 1). The outcome of this application is due in March 2013.
- (iv) Officers have continued to work with Headteachers of the schools on the Laverstock Campus in relation to strategic planning for 11-16 provision to commission additional places in response to pupil growth in the area. This work is also acknowledging the potential post 16 developments.

Select Committee recommendation:

2. "Parallel discussions are held with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to explore the capital and revenue funding implications of this project."

Officers updates:

- (i) An initial meeting with Local Authority Officers and the Education Funding Agency (EFA) took place on the 3rd July 2012 to share the report and establish the EFA's initial reaction to the findings and recommendations within the report.
- (ii) The EFA were unable to respond with regard to available capital funding at the time and communication has been ongoing. Following this initial response it became clear that the most likely route for external Capital Funding would be via the new application routes (Free School and UTC applications) which have now been followed.
- (iii) A recent communication from the EFA has confirmed that current national Post 16 capital funding, to support the learner growth, is only available to expand provision where demographic increases show there is a need for provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD). Based on the criteria and the evidence, officers are exploring the next steps for application in relation to learners with LLDD.
- (iv) The EFA have confirmed that based on lagged learner numbers, current EFA contract holders for post 16 provision could enter into sub-contract arrangements with schools to develop the range of provision in the area. Officers and providers are taking this information into account as they consider the full range of development options in the expansion of provision.

Improving the 16-19 educational offer in the Salisbury area

Select Committee recommendation:

3. "Wiltshire Council works with Wiltshire College and other 16-19 education providers where appropriate, to explore the factors behind:
 - a. the higher average attainment demonstrated by learners from the Salisbury area who study at Hampshire colleges compared with those who study at in-county providers;
 - b. the greater retention of learners from the Salisbury area demonstrated by Hampshire colleges as compared with Wiltshire College;
 - c. the significant numbers of learners from the Salisbury area taking courses in Science and Maths, and Arts, Media and Publishing, at Hampshire providers;
 - d. and designs and agrees plans to encourage improvements in these areas.

Officers updates:

- (i) Officers explored with the EFA the detail behind a-c above. The EFA reported that attainment levels vary across all institutions and will be based upon the prior attainment of learners, the amount of student contact time and the quality of teaching as well as the type of qualification that is offered. The monitoring of providers and student outcomes including student retention form part of the Ofsted inspection process and were considered through this route.
- (ii) In relation to bullet c the availability of provision and personal choice are core drivers in the numbers of learners from Salisbury taking up provision with Hampshire Providers. Free School and UTC developments both acknowledge the need for a local offer in the subject areas identified.
- (iii) In relation to bullet d it is not the responsibility of Wiltshire Council to design or implement plans to secure improvements within the FE or Training Provider sector or for any school or academy who is not considered to be at risk or causing concern. However, officers continue to work in partnership with providers to support them in securing improvements to provision.

Improving the marketing and promotion of the 16-19 education offer in the Salisbury area

Select Committee recommendation:

4. Wiltshire Council works with schools and colleges to improve the marketing and promotion of 16-19 education in the Salisbury area, with consideration given to ideas such as a comprehensive careers and training fair, common websites and/or a magazine circulated in and out-of-county to promote the full local post-16 offer.

Officers updates:

- (i) Changes to statutory duties and responsibilities in relation to the provision of information advice and guidance, coupled with the reduction in funding means that supporting this area centrally from within the Council is now more challenging than it has ever been. This duty rests with the National Careers Service and individual providers, officers are however leading on the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) agenda and as such work with all providers to ensure they plan for transition of all learners at 16 into further

education, training or an apprenticeship.

- (ii) A Project Lead for RPA has been appointed (in October 2012) to work with all providers and employers in Wiltshire. A Risk of NEET indicator tool (RONI) has been launched to help schools identify those learners at risk of not making a successful transition to further education, training or employment with training. Once identified these young people receive additional support and help which is predominately provided via their school.
- (iii) The 'Your Choices' campaign continues to promote Post-16 opportunities for all learners in Wiltshire and is facilitated by officers. For the third year a theatre tour is offered free of charge to all schools, an Application (both Apple and Android) is available and a website which is currently being updated to include links to all providers' prospectuses. A range of printed materials is also available. www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
- (iv) Officers from Children's Services working with colleagues in Economic Regeneration have been able to ensure both the provision and funding for Careers Education Programme, Apprenticeship Fair, Apprenticeship Ambassadors programme and a range of Skills events.
- (v) Officers continue to work with all providers to ensure there is synergy in the curriculum offer, sharing key data to support transitions and collaborative working amongst providers with identified progression pathways including the current Skilled for Life project.
- (vi) Combined funding and support of the Key Stage 4 Engagement (KS4EP) programme working with schools and providers has secured alternative programmes of learning for those who may not make a successful transition to Post 16. Additionally, funding and support is available for special schools to support learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) in KS4 with linked provision to local colleges.
- (vii) An EFA Gaps exercise was recently undertaken to establish the gaps in local provision. The outcome is awaited, although it is likely that there will be an increase in EFA contracted provision for Post-16 in Wiltshire along with support for a 3rd sector organisation in obtaining a Zero funded contract to become an EFA contracted provider.

Improving the Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) available to young people across Wiltshire

Select Committee recommendation:

5. Recognising the substantial cuts in government funding for local authority Connexions services, and the responsibility for such provision shifting from the local authorities to schools in September 2012, Wiltshire Council supports Wiltshire secondary schools to develop their offer of impartial training and careers advice to their pupils and parents from Year 9, when they are making their GCSE choices, in order to maximise awareness of the full range of opportunities available to them.

Officers updates:

- (i) Officers are providing support to secondary schools and providers in order that across Wiltshire, schools are able to develop the quality of their Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance. This is a service offered at cost recovery as this is no longer a duty on the Local Authority.
- (ii) From September 2012, designated individual school support through a linked Personal Adviser is no longer available for all. Support for learners

identified as vulnerable has continued to be made available.

- (iii) Under the statutory responsibilities for RPA the 'Your Choices' campaign aims to raise awareness of choices available for young people across Wiltshire. See point 4(I-V) for additional support given to providers via RPA.

Developing school sixth form provision to the north of Salisbury

Select Committee recommendation:

6. In its strategic role to ensure the provision of effective and efficient local education and training, Wiltshire Council encourages and supports the development of the Sixth Form Vision agreed by Avon Valley College and The Stonehenge School.

Officers updates:

- (i) Officers are supporting this provision and have worked with the two schools on the implementation of a joint strategic plan to develop a shared Post-16 offer across the Avon Valley College and Stonehenge campuses.
- (ii) A wide range of activity has taken place to develop collaborative models of sharing curriculum Pre-16 and establish Post-16 pathways. The Co-ordinator for Education and Skills is continuing to work and support the development of this partnership and there is an ambition for a joint Post-16 building to enhance limited facilities available and attract new learners to the provision.

Select Committee recommendation:

7. The Children's Services Select Committee notes its support for Wiltshire Council's submission of a bid for funding from the government's Priority Schools Building Programme for additional capital funding for The Stonehenge School.

This application was unsuccessful.

Improving transport links and schemes

Select Committee recommendation:

8. Wiltshire Council works with Wiltshire College and local bus companies to review and, if appropriate, revise existing bus routes and develop more attractive student travel schemes to enhance the appeal of study at Wiltshire College's Salisbury campus.

Officers updates:

- (i) Officers from passenger transport working with education officers continue to facilitate action with Wiltshire College and with other Post 16 providers to review processes and initiate potential changes to support access.
- (ii) A review of the transport policy has recently been agreed to support statutory changes to Post-16 participation.

16-19 Education funding inequalities between Wiltshire and Hampshire

Select Committee recommendation:

- 9.** The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Chairman of the Children's Services Select Committee write a joint letter to the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Skills and Lifelong Learning to draw attention to, and request a review of the disparity between the funding received by Wiltshire and Hampshire for provision of post-16 education.

Officers updates:

- (i) National changes to both Pre and Post 16 educational funding and the development of a national funding formula are currently being introduced and will mitigate the need for a formal response to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills under point 10.

Connexions and YPLA student destination data disparities

Select Committee recommendation:

- 10.** Wiltshire Council advises Wiltshire schools, colleges and other relevant bodies, of the disparities between the student destination data provided by Connexions and by the YPLA and the reasons behind these.

Officers updates:

- (i) This action is complete. Connexions data used in the original report was provided directly from schools in the area through intended and actual destinations compared to YPLA (now EFA) data which included those learners already accessing education outside of the LA Pre-16 from the wider Salisbury area.

Encouraging students to remain on-campus at Wiltshire College, Salisbury

Select Committee recommendation:

- 11.** Recognising the challenges inherent in being a city-centre provider, the Task Group recommends that Wiltshire College considers the potential impact on learner retention and attainment of its 16-19 learners having such flexibility to leave the Salisbury campus when not in lectures and, if appropriate, implements measures to encourage students to remain on campus.

No response required.

Monitoring implementation of the Task Group's recommendations

Select Committee recommendation:

- 12.** The Task Group is mindful that any strategic developments must take into account the need for additional secondary school provision in the Salisbury area as housing developments are progressed; and that all providers, including the Trafalgar School at Downton, Sarum Academy, Wellington Academy and

the Grammar Schools, are involved in the strategic planning. The Task Group is also aware that its recommendations may be seen as just another step in a long history of failed attempts to improve the provision of 16-19 education in the Salisbury area. To ensure that the recommendations are seen through to completion and the improvement of 16-19 education in the Salisbury area is brought to fruition, the Task Group therefore recommends that:

- a. a senior officer is identified to take ownership of and report on the implementation of the Task Group's recommendations

Officers updates:

- (i) Wiltshire Council officers work in a strong partnership with The Wessex Partnership (TWP) in planning and supporting developments within the Salisbury area, this includes funding to support a partnership officer to coordinate work within TWP. Officers of the council continue to work with the TWP coordinator to support the delivery of the actions outlined in this paper.
- (ii) The responsibility for the strategic planning of School places is part of School Improvement within Schools and Learning. Julie Cathcart as Head of School Improvement has the overall strategic responsible for the strategic lead on these developments. She is overseeing much of this work with the operational support of Tina Pagett Coordinator for Education and Skills. This includes planning for changing demographics, core strategy developments, RPA, provider partnership working across all providers and key stake holders in addition to curriculum and quality of provision for learners in the area.

Select Committee recommendation:

The Children's Services Select Committee

- b. requests that the Cabinet Member's response to the Task Group's recommendations is accompanied by an action plan setting out how and when they will be implemented;

Officers updates:

- (i) The action plan is incorporated within the 13-19 Statement of Priorities (a requirement for the EFA) in full collaboration with all of the 16-19 providers in the Salisbury area and sits alongside the current RPA Strategic Plan. Both plans report to the 13-19 Strategic Board for monitoring purposes.

Select Committee recommendations:

- c. regularly monitors those actions and reconvenes the Task Group 12 months hence to undertake a rapid scrutiny exercise to consider progress and future plans; and
- d. disseminates the Task Group's report as widely as possible.

No responses required

Conclusion

6. Members are asked to:
 1. Note the above updates and actions taken in respect of the report of the Further Education in the Salisbury Area Scrutiny Task Group; and
 2. Agree any further actions as appropriate.
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Appendices

Appendix 1 ~ A Briefing Paper for Members and Senior Officers Regarding Current Developments in Relation to Post 16 in the Salisbury Area and in Particular the development of a University Technical College (UTC) for Wiltshire. (October 2012)

Appendix 2 ~ South Wiltshire UTC Update (February 2013)