

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24 September 2019

Nuneaton Education Strategy

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Children and Young People OSC C&YP O&S considers and comments on the proposal to establish a multi-agency Nuneaton Education Strategy, which aligns to the wider Transforming Nuneaton Strategy.
2. It is proposed that this model, if successful, be rolled out in other areas of the county at a later date (to be agreed upon evaluation of the first year of the Nuneaton Education Strategy in Autumn 2020) where appropriate.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 To highlight the need for a new approach in raising the aspirations and outcomes for children and young people in Nuneaton.
- 1.2 Performance data highlights that educational outcomes for Nuneaton and Bedworth present high level challenge, within the wider context of Warwickshire and that concerns are particularly prevalent in Nuneaton.
- 1.3 Recognising that an innovative, collaborative, multi-agency, approach is needed in order to gain some traction and potentially improve outcomes for children, young people and families in the town.
- 1.4 The report 'Performance in Bedworth and Nuneaton Schools' identifies the following concerns:

Nuneaton has the lowest educational performance within the County and the lowest proportion of category A and B schools. Currently 44% of secondary school aged young people attend a school in the town which is judged by Ofsted to require improvement.

- Pupils cohorts are increasing
- Bedworth has higher proportions of Free School Meal claimants than Nuneaton, however based on IDACI scores there are higher levels of deprivation in Nuneaton. This suggests fewer families in Nuneaton who are eligible are claiming Free School Meals
- There are more primary schools of concern in Nuneaton than Bedworth
- Generally primary schools performance is stronger than the secondary schools performance
- There are three secondary schools of particular concern all based in Nuneaton all part of the same multi academy trust

- Three school sixth forms are particularly small
- There are higher proportions of engagement with the Youth Justice Service in the district of Nuneaton and Bedworth than other districts in Warwickshire
- There are higher proportions of teenage pregnancies in the district of Nuneaton and Bedworth than other districts in Warwickshire

2.0 Options and Proposal

- 2.1 The key focus of the strategy is 'Raising Aspiration, Working Together.' The approach is within the ethos of the Ethical Leadership programme for school leaders and governors.
- 2.2 It is felt that a new, multi-agency approach will have maximum impact from existing resource, using the Bradford Education Covenant as a model. The Covenant is about mobilising the whole community to play a part in helping young people to succeed in life. The Education Covenant is focused upon keeping education as a top priority to:
- help schools and teachers raise standards;
 - support parents to get children ready for school, work and life;
 - work with businesses and colleges to boost career options;
 - champion and celebrate the borough's unique qualities.
- 2.3 In order to maximise opportunity to raise aspiration, linkage with the Transforming Nuneaton Programme Board and regeneration within the town is key. Programme opportunities for all will include clear guidance on learning pathways, inspirational stories and access to training, development and work experience. Advocates for the town (Nuneatonians with successful careers) will be identified and asked to pledge support and stories that can inspire others.
- 2.4 Three scoping meetings of key stakeholders have now begun to work as three Task and Finish groups. The focus of these groups are:
- Best start possible (Birth-5)
 - Promoting learning – An empowering curriculum (5-19)
 - Ready for work and life (Post 16 and beyond)
- 2.5 Reports back on the progress of the strategy are to be tabled termly at the Education Challenge Board and Warwickshire Education Strategy Board with KPMs to be agreed.
- 2.6 We have mobilised working groups and the draft development plan is with key partners for comment/ local ownership and implementation from September 2019 until Summer 2024.
- 2.7 Detailed briefings for elected members are scheduled to take place in September and October. (The briefing planned for Nuneaton Councillors on July 25th was unable to take place.)
- 2.8 The aims of local education strategies are to increase the wellbeing, aspirations and outcomes for learners. Our approach builds on evaluations of

previous local education strategies and initiatives including Excellence in Cities, Education Action Zones, leadership training for headteachers, national strategies and City Challenges. The Local Authority can make a difference through facilitation, brokering actions, sharing skills and making links with public sector and other partners that can make a real difference to local communities.

- 2.9 Research and evaluations emphasise the importance of effective leadership, networking and collaboration, system leadership roles and sustainability. This is twinned with a data-rich approach to tackling issues and sharing learning. School leaders thrive when they feel trusted, supported and encouraged in improving provision and outcomes for local learners.
- 2.10 In reducing the number of underperforming schools, actions include support with effective use of data, teaching and learning and leadership. Bespoke solutions are important both in tackling the specific issues faced in each school, and in giving school leaders and staff a sense of ownership. Different forms of support are effective in schools at different stages on their improvement journey.
- 2.11 The wider school workforce thrives where they are equipped, encouraged and successes are celebrated. This will be done through conferences, schools working together in small groups and the setting up of partnerships where there is outstanding practice that others can visit and learn from.
- 2.12 Actions to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils include working in clusters to share effective multi agency practice, support for tuition, working with parents or involving pupils in leadership programmes.

3.0 Financial Implications

3.1 No additional revenue funding is anticipated at this stage in order to deliver this strategy.

- Opportunities to bid for funding will be maximised where appropriate.
- Budget plans will be developed as a key focus of the task and finish groups.
- A member of the School Improvement Team will have oversight of the strategy and will maintain an overview of the budget plans and undertake a quarterly review with the Chair of each Task and Finish group.
- A financial update should be a standing item on all Education Strategic Board meeting agendas.
- Sources of external funding may be sought via the PVI/community sector.
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council has pledged a commitment to support the strategy. NBBC has committed to key staff members

involvement with the strategy (Best Start and Ready for Work and Life strands).

- There is the opportunity to pool resources for a communications strategy, working with the Transforming Nuneaton Programme Board.
- Coventry and Warwickshire LEP has committed to explore opportunities for resourcing strand 3 (Ready for Work and Life)

4.0 Environmental Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 No decision required. For information.

Background Papers

1. Nuneaton Education Strategy Context data report

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