

14th November 2012

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Education) – Councillor Kershaw

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director Children, Learning and Young People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Progress Update on the Implementation of the Local Strategy for Raising the Participation Age

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

As part of the spending review and The Importance of Teaching (The Schools White Paper 2010), the Government confirmed its commitment to raising the participation age to 18 by 2015. The Education and Skills Act 2008 increases the minimum age at which young people can leave learning, requiring them to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015.

Further information for local authorities was released in July 2012 via the Education Funding Agency. The paper – Guidance for local authorities: Funding 16-19 education and training – states 'when raising the participation age comes into effect from 2013, local authorities will have new duties to promote participation and to make arrangements to identify young people not participating. These complement the existing duty to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate'.

A position paper was produced that gave the background, the local context, current provision and the risks associated with Raising the Participation Age (RPA) for the City Council. A consultation event also took place in May 2012, involving schools, colleges, providers and other stakeholders to promote an increased understanding and awareness of RPA and to contribute to the strategic direction and implications that RPA will have in Coventry.

Work continued over the summer period to take this strategy forward, which resulted in a project brief being completed with a number of proposals.

Recommendations:

Cabinet Member is asked to endorse the actions taken to date, agree the strategy suggested for the implementation of the workstreams to take forward the work, for the project board to oversee the work in conjunction with the 11-25 Partnership and for the overall strategy for Raising the Participation Age to be taken to full Cabinet in July 2013.

List of Appendices included:

None

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Scrutiny Board 2

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: To provide a progress update on the implementation of our local strategy for Raising of the Participation Age (RPA)

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 In order to implement the requirements of Raising the Participation Age, the local authority has appraised the current position with regard to participation and provision, and has identified potential risks associated with it. A number of actions have been put in place to take forward the work needed to ensure 100% of young people access education, employment or training on leaving statutory education within the context of RPA at 17 (2013) and 18 (2015).
- 1.2 The work to be taken forward will link to the Overcoming Barriers to Learning (OB2L) programme, including raising aspirations of the most vulnerable groups.
- 1.3 In addition the work will need to take account of new provision in the City, for example the University Technical College (UTC).
- 1.4 Changes to the delivery of careers guidance is at the heart of the Government's Education Act 2011. It places a new duty on schools to secure access to impartial and independent careers guidance for every pupil in years 9 to 11 from September 2012 and repeals the requirement for schools to provide a programme of careers education. It retains the Local Authority's duty to encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training and to assist the most vulnerable young people and those at risk of becoming not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET).

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The Education Funding Agency released a document in July 2012 (Guidance for local authorities: Funding 16-19 education and training) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education, as guidance under the Education Act 1996 for the 2013/14 academic year.

It details key changes for local authorities for 2013/14. One of the statements made in the document is 'when raising the participation age (RPA) comes into effect from 2013, local authorities will have new duties to promote participation and to make arrangements to identify young people not participating. These complement the existing duty to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate'.

Further statements are made within the document with regard to local authorities fulfilling their statutory duties, and to champion the education and training needs of young people in their area by implementing the following:

- influencing and shaping the provision on offer and helping to develop and improve the education and training market;
- promoting any necessary structural change in the local education and training system;
- supporting the improvement of the quality of the education and training of young people aged 16-19;
- supporting employer needs, economic growth and community development working with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) as appropriate; and
- supporting the development of provider and stakeholder networks that help to deliver the RPA targets.

As part of the process local authorities, either individually or jointly, may develop with their partners a statement outlining their strategic overview to make information on the needs of young people and gaps in provision transparent and relevant to institutions.

Local authorities and their partners will identify these circumstances, which may arise from, for example:

- infrastructure changes such as new or closing institutions, including provision secured through competitions;
- re-distribution of provision that falls below national minimum performance standards and Ofsted (or other inspectorate) minimum standards and where insufficient improvement is in hand;
- re-distribution of provision where the local authority and all partners consider it best meets the needs of young people;
- the need for new provision that will help support young people who would otherwise not be in education, employment or training: or
- the need to support employer needs, economic growth and community development.

Where a local authority and institutions identify a gap in provision that cannot be met by changing existing provision and the Education Funding Agency (EFA) have agreed the gap can be funded, procurement of new education and training may be required. The local authority and EFA will work together to agree the specification for the gap and the EFA will then contract for and fund that provision.

2.2 A number of actions have already been undertaken in progressing the work required to fully implement the requirements of Raising the Participation Age. A position paper was produced that raised a number of considerations that the City Council will need to take into account. It focussed on vulnerable groups/specialist provision, mix and balance of provision, employers, attendance and behaviour and communications. A consultation launch event was held in May 2012 involving schools, colleges, providers and other stakeholders to help promote an increased understanding and awareness of RPA and to contribute to the strategic direction. Regular briefings have been taking place since the launch event, including presentations to Head Teachers, Heads of Post 16, College Principals, The Association of Training Providers and the 11-25 Coventry Partnership.

2.3 Therefore, to take forward the full range of work required for the implementation of Raising the Participation Age of 16 and 17 year olds from 2013, we have/will implement the following:-

1. A RPA working group is set up, the core purpose being to continue to raise awareness of what 'Raising of the Participation Age' means, agree future strategies, link in with the work on curriculum development (across all post 16 provision) and determine a way forward for the City. As well as internal staff, potential external members will be invited to join this group, with representatives from colleges, apprenticeship providers, foundation learning providers, schools and CSWP The Careers Guidance Company. This group will feed into what is described below.

2. Develop 4 workstreams that will take forward the work required to introduce a full strategy for the implementation of Raising the Participation Age. Each workstream/group will have the responsibility to work through the position paper and identify issues raised that directly links to their groups.

The workstreams and aims are as follows:

Communications

Aim – To develop a strategy that will ensure the main messages regarding Raising the Participation Age are communicated to parents, young people, schools, colleges, training providers, the voluntary sector and employers.

Sufficient and Adequate Provision

Aim – To ensure current provision is 'fit for purpose', identify gaps in provision and barriers to progression.

16-18 NEET

Aim – To develop a clear process for those young people at risk of becoming NEET and targeted interventions delivered.

Data & Tracking 16-18 and IAG

Aim – To develop a process to track the participation of all young people in the City and ensure all young people have access to appropriate Information Advice and Guidance (IAG).

The requirement will be for each workstream/group to produce a workplan to take forward actions in each area.

A local authority project board will be put in place to track the work of each group – membership of the project board will be: -

- Dave Lennox (14-19 Adviser)
- Kate Ireland (Strategic Lead: Learning and Achievement)
- John Dwyer (Senior Adviser: 14-19)
- Anne Brennan (Senior Adviser: 14-19)
- Roger Lickfold (Strategic Lead: SEN, Inclusion and Participation)

Each workstream/group will have a lead officer and membership from various areas of education and learning services within the City Council, along with a representative from CSWP: -

- Communication – Lead Officer Dave Lennox – additional membership Karen Horton and Nick Jones (City Council), Jessica Lewis-Bell (CSWP)
- Sufficient and Adequate Provision – Lead Officer John Dwyer – additional membership Sandra Durkin, Sharon Cassidy, Jill Cook, Marian Simpson, Christine Korczak and Dave Lennox (City Council), Sue Walmsley (CSWP)
- 16-18 NEET – Lead Officer Sandra Durkin – additional membership Anne Brennan, Dave Lennox, Michaela Randle, Karen Horton and Ruth Brunton (City Council), Sam Morris (CSWP)
- Data & Tracking 16-18 and IAG – Lead Officer Anne Brennan – additional membership John Dwyer, Jill Cook, Karen Horton and Kevin Coughlan (City Council), Tracey Southam/Ricki Lomas (CSWP)

2.4 The proposed timeline is as follows: -

Date	Action
September 2012	Project board meet and finalise the detail for each workstream
October 2012	Each workstream meets – led by the lead officer – and an action plan produced. Report on progress to 11-25 Partnership.
November 2012	Project board meet to discuss action plans from each workstream and finalise details.
December 2012	Each workstream meets – feed into next project board. Report on progress to 11-25 Partnership.
February 2012	Project board meets – identifies what still needs to be completed and feeds back into workstreams. Report on progress to 11-25 Partnership.
March 2013	Each workstream meets – feed into next project board.
April 2013	Project board meets.

May 2013	Each workstream meets – actions determined as a result of project board meeting implemented.
June 2013	Each workstream meets. Project board meets. Report on progress to 11-25 Partnership.
July 2013	Report on progress to Cabinet
September 2013	All year 11 summer 2013 leavers remain in education, employment or training.
October 2013	Project board evaluates analysis of 2013 year 11 leavers and which routes they have taken.
November 2013	Workstreams meet to analyse 2013 data and begin to work on implementation plan for 2014/15.
December 2013	Project board meets – ongoing analysis (then bi-monthly).
January 2014	Workstream groups meets – ongoing analysis (then bi-monthly).
February 2014 to December 2015	Work (analysis) continues.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 During the initial work to produce the position paper a number of colleagues have been involved in discussions to gain a greater understanding of the provision that was currently offered and to start to identify where the potential gaps are to meet the needs of specific groups of young people.
- 3.2 Updates of the work to date has been shared with internal staff, both individually and at team meetings, and also at external meetings with Head Teachers, Heads of Post 16, Association of Training Providers, College Principals and the 11-25 Partnership.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The Education and Skills Act 2008 increases the minimum age at which young people in England can leave learning, requiring them to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

5.1 Post-16 education and training provision is funded by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). The cost of additional provision required as a result of raising the participation age will be met by funding from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). The cost of Local Authority services supporting this change will continue to be met by the Local Authority.

5.1.1 There are currently no additional costs identified and the project can be managed within existing resources. As the four work streams progress further work will be carried out to identify any potential financial implications, although there is no central government funding to support local authorities to deliver these new duties.

5.1.2 The expectation will be that services affected by this change will manage within existing funding levels.

5.2 Legal implications

When Raising the Participation Age (RPA) comes into effect from 2013, local authorities will have new duties to promote participation and to make arrangements to identify young people not participating. These complement the existing duty to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate.

The public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 imposes on decision makers when carrying out any of its functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across all of the protected characteristics (which as relates to education are disabilities, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). "Due regard" requires more than just an awareness of the equality duty. It requires demonstration of a rigorous analysis by the public authority decision maker.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

This work contributes to the Council's key objectives in a number of ways. Encouraging young people from vulnerable groups to access post-16 education and training will contribute towards objectives around 'Jobs and Growth', 'Support and celebrate our young people' and 'Protect our most vulnerable residents'.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Potential for not meeting 100% participation and therefore an increase in the number of young people who are recorded as NEET. The mix and balance of provision will be kept under review. Schools and academies will be supported by the local authority to help them meet their new duty (from September 2012) to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for young people. For example all schools and academies are using an on-line area prospectus that shows the full range of post-16 options (6th Form, Colleges, Apprenticeships, Work Based Learning).

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Corporate parenting responsibilities.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

Local authorities have a key role to champion the needs of young people in their area and work with local partners to achieve full participation. The Education and Skills Act 2008 places duties on local authorities to promote the effective participation or training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area. Local authorities will make arrangements to identify young people resident in their area who are not participating.

There is potential to reduce barriers and inequalities that currently exist due to the increased raising of aspirations and opportunities.

Equality monitoring is already in place and demonstrates that young people from vulnerable groups are overrepresented amongst those who are not participating in education or training post-16. This strategy is designed to achieve 100% participation in high quality education or training which meets the needs of a diverse range of young

people. A workstream has been established to monitor progress and inform on areas for concern/any need for additional intervention.

Monitoring has not been undertaken in relation to sexual orientation or religion/belief. RPA is a government policy which defines the age group that is affected.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The Raising of the Participation Age will have an impact on schools, colleges, training providers, CSWP The Careers Guidance Company, employers and voluntary organisations.

Report author(s):

Name and job title:

David Lennox, 14-19 Adviser Education and Learning Services

Directorate:

Children, Learning and Young People

Tel and email contact:

Tel: 024 76 527 498

Email: David.Lennox@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
John Dwyer	Senior Adviser 14-19 (25)	Children, Learning and Young People	18 th Oct 2012	26 th Oct 2012
Kate Ireland	Strategic Lead, Education and Learning	Children, Learning and Young People	18 th Oct 2012	26 th Oct 2012
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Richard Adams	Lead Accountant	Finance and Legal Services	18 th Oct 2012	23 rd Oct 2012
Elaine Atkins/Julie Newman	Solicitor, Legal Services	Finance and Legal Services	18 th Oct 2012	19 th Oct 2012
Colin Green	Director	Children, Learning and Young People	18 th Oct 2012	21 st Oct 2012
Councillor Kershaw	Cabinet Member (Education)	-	18 th Oct 2012	21 st Oct 2012

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings