



**EXECUTIVE
6 OCTOBER 2015**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M J HILL OBE (LEADER OF THE COUNCIL)

Councillors R G Davies (Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport, IT), P A Robinson (Executive Councillor for Fire and Rescue, Emergency Planning, Trading Standards, Equality and Diversity), R A Shore (Executive Councillor for Waste, Recycling), Mrs S Woolley (Executive Councillor for NHS Liaison, Community Engagement) and B Young (Executive Councillor for Crime Reduction, People Management, Legal).

Councillors Mrs M J Overton MBE, Mrs C A Talbot and A H Turner MBE JP attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

Tony McArdle (Chief Executive), Debbie Barnes (Executive Director of Children's Services), Maggie Freeman (14 - 19 Commissioner), Glen Garrod (Director of Adult Care), Cheryl Hall (Democratic Services Officer), Judith Hetherington Smith (Chief Information and Commissioning Officer), Dr Tony Hill (Executive Director of Community Wellbeing and Public Health), Pete Moore (Executive Director of Finance and Public Protection), Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services) and Richard Wills (Executive Director for Environment and Economy).

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs P A Bradwell, C J Davie, M S Jones and C N Worth.

14 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

15 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

There were no announcements made by the Leader, Executive Councillors and Executive Directors.

16 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON
1 SEPTEMBER 2015

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2015 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

17 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 16 - 18 (25) EDUCATION AND TRAINING
FOR 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report from the Executive Director for Children's Services, which set out the current situation in relation to post 16 education and training and identified the Council's priorities for the strategic commissioning of education and training provision for 16 – 18 year olds (to 25 for young people with an education, health and care plan) for the academic year 2016/17.

The 14-19 Commissioner guided Members through the report, and it was reported that the picture for post 16 education was similar to that in previous years. There continued to be some successes including attainment levels that were in line with those nationally, relatively low levels of those Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), high participation at age 16, as well as the success of the Supported Internship Programme in securing employment outcomes for young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disability (SEND).

The Executive was advised that there were challenges arising from a declining cohort, increasing competition, a reduction of funding in real terms and a funding mechanism that encouraged competition rather than collaboration which were significant and increasing.

It was also noted that there was a potential risk that changes to the way apprenticeships were funded would impact on the financial viability of some Apprenticeship providers and on the number of Apprenticeships offered. Lincolnshire had a large proportion of small and medium enterprises (SME's), some of which were already reluctant to take apprentices due to the perceived additional bureaucracy. Members were advised that the Government had sought to simplify this process as much as possible. However, the relationship between provider and employer would change, which the provider securing public funding in direct proportion to the fee negotiated with the employer. There were concerns that competition, particularly in relation to the popular frameworks, could result in reducing fees with an inevitable impact on quality.

It was reported that student numbers in sixth forms had, overall, increased slightly. However, the increase was not consistent across schools with 17 schools seeing a reduction, some of which were substantial, and in seven schools there had been a continuing decline in numbers over the last three years. As a result, there continued to be concerns in relation to some schools, particularly those with smaller sixth forms.

Members were provided with an opportunity to ask questions when the following points were noted: -

- Concerns were raised regarding the tracking of data for NEETs and how its reliability could be ensured. Members were advised that there was tracking for 16 and 17 year olds, and it was confirmed that most were being tracked, and the number of unknowns compared well against national figures. It was more difficult for 18 year olds and the number of unknowns was a little higher. It was agreed that the exact number of NEETs would be emailed to Members, for their information; and
- It was noted that it was the responsibility of the County Council, through the Customer Service Centre, to obtain the number of NEETs.

RESOLVED

That the Executive:

(1) Notes the current situation in relation to post 16 education and training.

(2) Approves the priorities set out below as the priorities for the strategic commissioning of education and training provision for 16 - 18 year olds (to 25 for young people with an education, health and care plan) for the academic year 2016/17:-

1. Increase the number of young people aged 17 participating in education or training and therefore meeting their duty to participate. As required by Raising of the Participation Age.
2. Reduce the number of young people failing to progress from AS to A2.
3. Close the gap in attainment at level 2 and level 3 by the age of 19 between young people from deprived backgrounds (those who are or have been eligible for free school meals) and the overall cohort.
4. Improve progression pathways, including specifically increasing the availability of Apprenticeships at advanced level (level 3) and higher (level 4 and above), to enable young people to access an alternative route to higher study.
5. Maintain a broad curriculum offer across Lincolnshire so that young people are able to access the courses they require to achieve their career aspirations. This will require schools, colleges and providers to work together in geographical areas.
6. To ensure that all young people have access to independent and impartial careers guidance and information about the labour market and opportunities so that they are able to make realistic, informed decisions about post 14 and post 16 education.
7. Develop programmes and transition pathways which better prepare young people with special education needs and or disabilities (SEND) for adulthood and lead to improved outcomes in terms of employment, independent living, good health and community inclusion.

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8. Stimulate demand for courses and programmes which better match the economic growth requirements and skills shortages in Lincolnshire, and therefore reduce youth unemployment among 19 – 25 year olds in particular.
- (3) Approves the Action Plan attached at Appendix B to the Report.

The meeting closed at 10.50 am.