

Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Director of Children's Services

Report to:	Executive
Date:	1 October 2013
Subject:	Strategic Priorities for 16 – 19 (25) Education and Training for 2014/15
Decision Reference:	
Key decision?	Yes

Summary:

This report sets out the current situation in relation to post 16 education and training and establishes the changes to the mix and balance of provision that will be required to achieve full participation to age 18 by 2015.

It also suggests the priorities for strategic commissioning of education and training provision for 16 – 18 year olds (25 for young people with a learning difficulty assessment or education health and care plan) 2014/15

Recommendation(s):

Participation and Retention

- Increase the number of young people aged 16-18 participating in post 16 education and training and therefore meeting their duty to participate as required by Raising of the Participation Age.
- Reduce the number of 17 year olds not participating in education or training. Specifically reduce the proportion of young people failing to progress from AS to A2 programmes.

Curriculum

- Reform the curriculum through the development of Study Programmes, including Traineeships and Supported Internships that better meet the needs of young people and employers in Lincolnshire to improve participation and outcomes for young people
- Increase the number of available Apprenticeships in line with the skills priorities identified by the Lincolnshire and Rutland Employment and Skills Board and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Encourage further collaboration between school sixth forms and other providers to maintain niche provision including some A level provision in minority subjects and provision at entry and level 1 delivered by commercial and charitable providers.
- Increase the availability of level 3 programmes including Apprenticeship places and frameworks at level 3 and beyond to secure vocational progression routes for young people not wishing to follow a traditional academic pathway.

Attainment and Progression

- Close the gap in attainment at level 2 and level 3 by the age of 19 between young people from deprived backgrounds (those who have been eligible for free school meals) and the overall cohort.

Access to Information, Advice and Guidance

- All young people have access to independent and impartial careers guidance and information about all opportunities so they are able to make realistic, informed decisions about post 14 choices and their future post 16 options
- All young people and those supporting them (parents, carers, teachers, careers advisers and others) have access to information about post 16 provision and about the labour market

Vulnerable Learners and Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD)

- Improve the availability and range of opportunities and outcomes for LLDD to increase their participation and to enable more young to access learning within their own community in line with the Lincolnshire County Strategy for Post 16 Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
- Increase participation and attainment of young people from vulnerable groups including those who have been eligible for free school meals, to the same level as the cohort as a whole

Employment and Skills

- Provide information, advice and guidance, and deliver programmes and other support that will enable young people to successfully progress into employment or higher education that contributes to the growth of the Lincolnshire economy.

Alternatives Considered:

Not
Applicable

Reasons for Recommendation:

Under sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996 (as inserted by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009) local authorities have a duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training opportunities to meet the reasonable needs of young people in their area, and to make available to young people age 19 and below, support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training (section 68, Education and Skills Act 2008).

The Education and Skills Act (ESA) 2008 also places a duty on all young people to participate in education and training. From 2015, they will be required to remain in learning until their 18th birthday.

The Education and Skills Act 2008 places duties on local authorities in relation to 16 and 17 year olds. These relate to Raising the Participation Age (RPA):

- A local authority in England must ensure that its functions (so far as they are capable of being so) are exercised so as to promote the effective participation in education or training of persons belonging to its areas to whom Part 1 of ESA 2008 applies, with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.
- A local authority in England must make arrangements to enable it to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of persons belonging to its area to whom Part 1 of the ESA applies but who are failing to fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.

Failure to set out the priorities and changes that are required to ensure suitable provision is available to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in the area will mean:

- Lincolnshire County Council will not deliver its statutory duties;
- Schools, Academies, Colleges and other providers will not have the information they require to enable them to develop their provision to respond to the needs of young people and employer;
- The 14 – 19 Strategic Partnership (and its supporting structures) and learning providers will lack the policy steer that will lead to full participation to age 18 by 2015.

1. Background

There have been, and are continuing to be, a number of statutory and policy changes that will impact on post 16 education and training provision from September 2014. These include:

- The transfer of the statutory duty to provide careers guidance to pupils in key stage 4 from local authorities to schools from September 2012.
- From September 2013, schools and colleges are required to provide independent careers guidance to pupils in year 8 and up to year 13.
- The implementation of the duty on all young people to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013.
- From 2015 young people will be required to participate in education or training until their 18th birthday.
- Schools funding reform, including changes to funding high needs i.e. learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) in post 16 provision from 2013
- Changes to the post 16 curriculum including the introduction of Study Programmes (which will include the introduction of Traineeships and Supported Internships) which whilst providing some real opportunities to tailor programmes to better meet young people's and employer's specific needs, will be challenging for some providers to deliver
- Changes resulting from the Children and Families Bill currently passing through parliament including the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans, and the entitlement to personal budgets for those who are eligible from 2015.
- There are also a number of other reports and consultations, the recommendations from which, if implemented will have an impact on post 16 education and training. These include the Heseltine review and the Richard review into apprenticeships, A level reform etc.

Raising of the Participation Age (RPA)

Participation remains good in Lincolnshire compared to regional and national averages and those of our statistical neighbours, and the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) remains relatively low. The year 11 cohort who reached the statutory school leaving age in June this year are the first to whom the duty to participate in post 16 education applies. We do not yet have destination data for this group, and are therefore unable to assess the impact of the new duty. The duty on young people to participate extends to the age of 18 from September 2014. Whilst the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) aged 16 and 17 remains fairly static, it is higher for 17 year olds and therefore this may become an issue in relation to RPA in 2014. There continues to be a need to increase the number and availability of level 3 programmes for those young people who have already achieved level 2 (over 40% of the NEET group) including progression opportunities in apprenticeships.

Young people from a range of vulnerable groups (learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, care leavers, teenage parents, those known to the youth offending team, those who have been eligible for free school meals) continue to be over-represented in NEET.

Apprenticeships

A significant increase in the number of apprenticeship opportunities available will be required if the coalition government's ambition, that one in five young people will be studying an apprenticeship by 2020, is to be achieved. In addition the assumption is that any additional places required to meet the requirements of RPA will be apprenticeships rather than additional places in schools sixth forms or colleges. As an apprenticeship requires an employment opportunity, this provides significant challenges given the current levels of youth unemployment opportunities generally. Lincolnshire has however seen a growth in the number of young people age 16 to 18 undertaking an apprenticeship compared to a decline regionally and nationally. This is a result of: our investment in Apprenticeship Champions who work directly with employers and young people to increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities; our support for initiatives such as the 'Have a Go' events and World Skills; and the work with employers via colleagues in the Economy Directorate and with the Employment and Skills Board (ESB).

A 'Ready to Work' survey commissioned by the ESB in 2011, found that many employers were unhappy with the preparedness of young people (and adults) for the world of work. The introduction of Traineeships (which are a strand of Study Programmes) from September 2014 will enable young people to undertake a 6 month programme comprising of work experience, English and maths, and other employability skills including interview skills and curriculum vitae preparation. This will equip them to take up the opportunities that are available. Guidance for Traineeships has only recently been published (July 2013) and therefore the programme will develop over the next few months.

Some progress has been made in increasing the proportion of advanced apprenticeships (level 3) compared to intermediate (level 2). In the year April 2012 to April 2013 advanced apprenticeships were 30% of starts compared to 25% the previous year. There is still a need to increase the opportunities for young people to progress through from intermediate apprenticeships to advanced and higher levels if the apprenticeship is to be a real and plausible alternative to the academic route into higher education. The lack of progression opportunities is also likely to

have an impact on young people's ability to meet the duty to participate when this is extended to their 18th birthday in 2015. The proportions of apprenticeships in specific sectors still do not reflect sufficiently the skills priorities for Lincolnshire. As a result of various national reports into apprenticeships over the last year we anticipate some changes to the apprenticeship programme, including an increased role for the Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Success rates for apprenticeships in Lincolnshire remain static at 72%, which is around 1% below regional and national rates.

School Sixth Forms

Of our schools with sixth forms, 14 are judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding, 17 are Good, 10 Satisfactory/Requiring Improvement, and 1 Unsatisfactory. The on going financial viability of some of our school sixth forms continues to be an increasing concern. Whilst there is an increase in this year's (2013/14) year 11 cohort of 80, there is a forecast decline to 7759 (400 fewer than the current year in 2015/16, and a further drop of 300 the following year). This reduction in cohort size will coincide with the planned ending of transitional protection funding in 2015. There continues to be overcapacity of school sixth form A level provision, resulting in many small class sizes (23 sixth forms have more than 40% of their offer with less than 10 enrolments and 17 have 25% of subjects with less than 6 enrolments). In many instances there is another institution offering the same course nearby. There is a concern that alongside the viability issue there will be a reduction in the breadth of the offer available to young people and a reduction in minority subjects as schools seek to manage the reductions in funding and numbers. This is likely to be exacerbated in the future as there are a number of options available to the sector to increase post 16 provision that do not require the consent of the local authority. Some of our school sixth forms are heavily reliant on out of county learners (616 out of county learners attended our school sixth forms in 2012/13).

There has been an improvement in the proportion of young people progressing from year 12 to 13 in school sixth forms with the percentage of young people leaving at the end of year 12 falling from 21% in 2010/11 to 18% in 11/12. In grammar schools the continuation rate has remained the same at 86%, and the improvement has been within comprehensives (5% increase to 78%). There are however, some significant variations between schools (both grammar and comprehensive) with some schools retaining less than 60% of pupils into year 13. Two schools have shown significant improvement as a result of changing their curriculum offer.

Performance of Lincolnshire sixth forms remains good overall. However, points per student and points per entry are below the national averages. In terms of the points per entry, there is a mix of schools that have improved and those that have declined. The decline in points per student is however a trend and a result of moves to reduce the size of learner programmes in line with the funding.

There remains an urgent need to find ways to maintain the curriculum and secure the future of some sixth form provision. Success in encouraging collaboration has been minimal and there needs to be a substantial increase in partnership working and cooperation both between schools sixth forms, and with other post 16 providers, in order to minimise duplication and ensure there is an appropriate full curriculum offer in each area. Individual schools also need to review their curriculum offer to consider whether it is appropriate in terms of the local area and RPA.

General Further Education Colleges (GFE)

At the time of writing, of the 4 GFE colleges based in Lincolnshire, one is judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding, 2 to be Good and 1 Requiring Improvement. None are unsatisfactory. Ofsted have recently communicated to colleges their intention to: increase the impact of inspection; increase the impact and scope of improvement work; raise the status, quality and impact of vocational training; and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; within the further education and skills sector. We can therefore anticipate a more rigorous inspection regime which may impact on future inspection outcomes. A significant number (almost 1500) of Lincolnshire learners access GFE colleges outside of Lincolnshire in the main Grimsby Institute for Further and Higher Education (759), College of West Anglia (217), Peterborough Regional College (207) and North Lindsey College (128).

Changes to the adult funding in GFE colleges and the introduction of student loans for adults are likely to have a significant detrimental impact on GFE finances which in turn may have an impact on provision for young people.

GFE colleges are the main providers of vocational programmes and of provision at level 2 and below. Only 14% of their delivery is A levels. They are also the largest providers of Apprenticeship programmes in Lincolnshire and as such are well placed to support the increase in number and the range and levels of apprenticeship programmes required to meet the government ambitions and the requirements of RPA.

The main GFE colleges have been proactive in supporting the Lincolnshire County Strategy for Post 16 Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) and have increased their offer significantly to these learners. This has significantly reduced the authority's reliance on costly specialist residential and out of county post 16 education provision, as well as improving outcomes for learners.

From September 2013 GFE colleges are able to recruit young people aged 14 – 16. The Lincolnshire colleges have signalled that they will be considering offering this provision from September 2014. This may have a further impact on the number of young people accessing sixth form provision in schools as young people are less likely to transfer back into school post 16. (Only 7 GFE colleges nationally will be offering this from September this year.)

There continues to be a need for flexible start dates to enable young people to access provision other than in September where they may have dropped out of their first choice of learning. There has been some progress in this, but it remains difficult due to issues of viability of courses for low numbers of learners.

There will also be a requirement to provide part time courses for young people who are in employment to enable them to meet their statutory duty to participate in learning.

Further Education In Higher Education

From September 2012, Bishop Burton College have been operating from the Riseholme campus of Lincoln University to provide specialist programmes in agriculture and horticulture, one of the skills priority sectors for Lincolnshire.

Commercial and Charitable Providers (formerly referred to as Independent Private Providers)

We currently have 7 Commercial and Charitable Providers (CPPS) based in Lincolnshire. Of these 4 are deemed by Ofsted to be Good, the remaining

Satisfactory (or Requiring Improvement the new description for grade 3 provision) with one being unsatisfactory. The changes to funding, reduction of learner number allocations (168 less in 2013/14) and the introduction of new curriculum requirements of study programmes mean that some of these providers are potentially financially vulnerable. This provision is the only provision (apart from some apprenticeship programmes) that has truly flexible start dates and that supports some of our most vulnerable young people to progress into apprenticeship programmes, GFE courses and employment with training. They also in the main offer a unique learning environment that some young people need in which to progress. We are taking a more proactive approach to supporting these providers in terms of the development of the new curriculum and how they can make best use of the available funding to ensure their continued sustainability to enable them to support some of Lincolnshire's most vulnerable learners. There is also one relatively large independent specialist provider, Linkage, based in Lincolnshire which provides residential education placements for young people with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) nationally. Most local authorities are, like Lincolnshire, reducing their dependence on residential out of county placements for these young people, and therefore specialist providers are needing to review their offer, for example to provide day placements to local young people.

Learners with learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD)

The Lincolnshire County Strategy for Post 16 Learners with Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities (LLDD) was officially launched in September 2012 with the key priority being to develop local provision for Post 16 LLDD to meet both their diverse needs and their aspirations for adult life within their own communities. This is an area of work where collaboration has been successful. There are 6 groups working across the county comprising of representatives from Special schools, Colleges of Further Education, Independent Specialist Providers, Independent Training Providers, Learning Disability Advisers, Welfare to Work team, Support organisations and parents / carers. These groups have brought about increased collaboration and cooperation between special schools, colleges and other post 16 providers facilitating improved transition between organisations, skills sharing, joint training opportunities and cost effective development and sharing of resources.

Three Colleges of Further Education, supported by Lincolnshire County Council have been successful in their applications for the Education Funding Agency Demographic Growth Capital Fund (DGCF) resulting in £1.8 million being invested in four projects to further develop facilities for Post 16 Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and / or Disabilities. We are advised that Lincolnshire were the only authority in the East Midlands to secure any of this funding and this is a direct result of the strategy and the successful partnerships that have been established. The increased availability and quality of local provision for LLDD has resulted in a substantial reduction in the numbers and associated high costs of young people requiring residential education provision. The funding to support these high needs learners transferred to local authorities for 2013/14 and is likely to be under increasing pressure over the coming years. This, and the continuing need to improve the outcomes for young people with LDD means that this work will remain a priority for Lincolnshire. Future attention needs to be given to the need to improve transition from post 16 education into employment and/or independence. The introduction of Supported Internships which are a strand of Study Programmes

provides an opportunity for programmes to be much better tailored to individuals needs and work will be undertaken to support providers and collaborative partnerships to implement these programmes. A further priority will be the implementation of changes resulting from the Children and Families Bill including the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans, personal budgets and increased learner choice.

Information Advice and Guidance

The statutory duty to provide impartial and independent advice and guidance transferred from local authorities to schools in September 2012. From September 2013 the duty is extended to pupils in schools in year 8 and in schools and colleges up to year 13. As with RPA, the young people reaching the statutory school leaving age this year are the first to be affected by this change, and it is too early to assess the impact of this on their participation post 16. There does however continue to be a potential tension in 11 – 19 schools between the requirement to provide independent impartial guidance and the need to maintain learner numbers in sixth forms to maintain funding levels. The local authority funded careers service works with young people aged 16 – 18 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) to fulfil the statutory duty to make available to young people support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training. From September 2013 the local authority duties are extended to include promoting effective participation to ensure young people meet their statutory duty to participate, and make arrangements to establish the identities of those young people who are failing to fulfil the duty to participate. The careers service also offers a traded service to schools, which 39 secondary schools took advantage of in 2012/13. There is an increasing need to ensure all young people, and their parents and carers, as well as professionals outside of the local authority who are working with young people, have access to information about the opportunities available both in education and in terms of employment and skills. This is provided locally through the on-line prospectus and by publication (3 times a year in partnership with the Employment and Skills Board and the Work Based Academy) of 'Aspirations' which provides information about the skills economy and opportunities in Lincolnshire. Young people are also able to access the National Careers Service website as well as search for Apprenticeship vacancies via the Apprenticeship website.

Attainment and Closing the Gap

Projected figures for 2012/13 show that attainment at level 2 by age 19 for Lincolnshire is 85.3% and above the regional (82.5%), and national (84.8%) averages and that of our statistical neighbours (83.7%). Attainment of level 3 by age 19 for Lincolnshire at 56.8% is below the national average for England (57.8%) but above the regional (53.8%) average and that of our statistical neighbours (55.6%). The trend for both level 2 and level 3 attainment at age 19 is upwards regionally and nationally as well as for Lincolnshire. However, until 2009/10, attainment of level 3 by 19 year olds in Lincolnshire was above that in England, the East Midlands and our statistical neighbours. Since then the increase in attainment has been slower in Lincolnshire. There is progress being made in closing the gap in attainment between young people who have at some stage been eligible for free school meals and the overall cohort. However, for level 2 at age 19 in Lincolnshire, the gap remains significantly higher at 25% than the averages for

England (17%), and higher than that for the East Midlands (24%) and our statistical neighbours (23%), and is not reducing as quickly. The gap in attainment of level 2 with English and Maths at age 19 is considerably worse at 35% compared to the East Midlands (31%), England (27%) and our statistical neighbours (31%) and is not improving. It has remained at around 35% since 2005 other than in 2010 where the statistics show a reduction to 32%. The gap in attainment at level 3 at age 19 for Lincolnshire at 32% also does not compare well with the East Midlands (28%), England (24%) or our statistical neighbours (31%). The gap has been gradually reducing since 2009 but the figure for 2012 shows an increase of 1%. Closing the gap in attainment at level 2 and 3 by 19 is therefore a key priority for Lincolnshire. The lack of apprenticeship opportunities at level 3, the high proportion of young people leaving school at the end of year 12, and the proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training at age 17 are all contributory factors.

Curriculum

Following the publication of Alison Wolf's 'Review of vocational Education in 2011', the government has introduced, from September 2013, changes to the way in which it funds schools, colleges and training providers to enable the delivery of programmes that include maths and English, and substantial, well recognised vocational programmes. These new programmes are referred to as Study Programmes. Within the Study Programmes framework, providers will be able to tailor programmes to more effectively meet individual needs. Within the Study Programmes framework there are also specific programmes to prepare young people for apprenticeships to be known as Traineeships, and programmes to prepare young people with LDD for employment which will be known as Supported Internships. The introduction of Study Programmes provides some real opportunities to create programmes that more effectively meet individual learner needs. However, there is an increased requirement for work experience for all of the programmes, which along with the needs for continued growth in apprenticeship places and the requirements for Department for Work and Pensions programmes for the jobless give some cause for concern that the demands on employers may be too great. There will also be a range of providers and programmes competing to gain opportunities with employers. More work is required to engage the public sector in Lincolnshire which as the largest employment sector in Lincolnshire will be key to making opportunities for work experience and work related learning opportunities available to young people.

Provision

There continues to be increasing competition within post 16 education provision, and this is in the context of a reducing cohort (following a very small increase in 2014). The University Technical College (a partnership between Lincoln University, Lincoln College and Siemens) will be recruiting for the first time in September 2014 and we expect the other colleges will start to offer places to 14 – 16 year olds from 2014. Two additional providers have recently been awarded 'zero' contracts by the Education Funding Agency whereby they (the providers) fund the provision themselves in the first year and receive funding to the equivalent level the following year. There are other initiatives including the Youth Contract and additional European Social Funded programmes commencing from September 2014. In addition there are over 334 different apprenticeship training providers working

within Lincolnshire most of which are based outside the county. Many are national employers with their own Apprenticeship programmes for example British Telecom and British Gas Services who have 2 apprentices each based in Lincolnshire. Others have specialisms in specific sectors such as CITB in construction. Given the context of increasing competition, reducing funding, and increased rigour in inspection, there is a concern that some provision, particularly smaller specialist provision based in Lincolnshire, will become financially unviable and therefore disappear. Providers may also become more risk averse in terms of the young people they are prepared to accept onto their programmes. In either case it is likely to impact on the more vulnerable young people within the cohort.

Student finance

It is difficult to evaluate the impact of student finance on participation and attainment in post 16 education. Information on the reasons why young people drop out of learning is not systematically gathered in a way that would provide this information. Participation rates remain relatively high in Lincolnshire, but it is not clear whether student finance will impact on full participation needed to meet the requirements of Raising the Participation Age.

Role of the local authority in supporting post 16 participation

Lincolnshire County Council has developed a corporate youth employment strategy. The Council currently employs 33 apprentices, 10 of whom are care leavers and we expect the total of apprentices employed in 2014 to be around 40. With the development of Study Programmes, there is the potential for the Council to provide opportunities for Supported Internships for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, Traineeships, and wider work experience opportunities for post 16 learners. If the increased demands for work experience opportunities are to be met there is a need for the public sector, which is the largest employment sector in Lincolnshire, to lead the way in providing these opportunities. Lincolnshire County Council can use its influence, for example in its partnerships with health and the district councils to promote opportunities for post 16 learners. Some work has been started to investigate how providers of services to Lincolnshire County Council can demonstrate added social value as required under the Social Value Act, by supporting young people to participate in post 16 learning through for example employing apprentices or providing work experience opportunities. There is also close working with the Employment and Skills Board for Lincolnshire and Rutland and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The growth in the number of 16 – 18 year old Apprentices in Lincolnshire is an example of how this work has been effective.

Skills

The Government wants to grow the UK economy by helping businesses realise their growth potential. They are encouraging this through the introduction of private sector led Local Enterprise Partnerships that will influence local provision and services so that these better fit the needs of business. Growth Plans are currently being developed that will prioritise local activity aimed at growing the private sector. Plans will cover a wide range of topics that create better conditions for business growth, including infrastructure, housing, planning and skills. Skill plans will focus on making sure that:

1. there is a pool of suitable people from which employers can recruit, and

2. the existing workforce can be up skilled and re-trained as industry demands require

In relation to point 1, schools, colleges and other post 16 providers will have a role in contributing to the success of Lincolnshire's growth ambitions and the county's ability to compete for national funds, by ensuring that its learners are suitably prepared for the world of work.

There are range of issues and challenges facing (but not all unique to) Lincolnshire in relation to employment and skills:

- Work readiness of young entrants to the labour market (as well as adult returners)
- Young people and their parents and carers' perception of the opportunities available and the image of some sectors for example care and the food industry as mainly low paid menial sectors
- Low wages
- Transport infrastructure and the high cost of car insurance meaning young people have difficulty accessing some employment opportunities and conversely some employers have difficulty recruiting young people, particularly apprentices.
- The need to retain skilled young people within the county
- Disproportionate high number of residents who out-commute (using their higher level skills outside of the county) and yet we continue to have unsatisfied demand for professional, technical and managerial skills within the County.
- Cost of recruitment, particularly in light of difficult perceptions that need to be overcome, and lack of good recruitment and induction practices in some organisations

Priorities for the Growth Plan are therefore likely to include:

- Helping young people and their parents understand local industry, important sectors and the careers and jobs within them;
- Providing good information to young people about all of the routes they can take to obtain a career/job;
- Preparing young people for the world of work; which might include a focus on enterprise and employability.
- Recognising the importance of, and making links with, relevant partners and employers who can help deliver appropriate outcomes, and find successful destinations for their learners.
- Helping employers understand the role they have in promoting their sectors and providing both experience and jobs to young people.

As an important stakeholder within the Employment and Skills Board (ESB) and LEP, the Local Authority has already started to address some of these through its joint working with other LCC teams and partners by introducing Apprentice Champions, through the Aspirations publications, supporting increased number of Apprentices in the food sector and the 'Did You Know?' campaigns and it is important that these activities continue.

The following priorities seek to address the key issues outlined above:

Participation and Retention

- Increase the number of young people aged 16-18 participating in post 16 education and training and therefore meeting their duty to participate as required by Raising of the Participation Age.
- Reduce the number of 17 year olds not participating in education or training. Specifically reduce the proportion of young people failing to progress from AS to A2 programmes.

Curriculum

- Reform the curriculum through the development of Study Programmes, including Traineeships and Supported Internships that better meet the needs of young people and employers in Lincolnshire to improve participation and outcomes for young people
- Increase the number of available Apprenticeships in line with the skills priorities identified by the Lincolnshire and Rutland Employment and Skills Board and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Encourage further collaboration between school sixth forms and other providers to maintain niche provision including some A level provision in minority subjects and provision at entry and level 1 delivered by commercial and charitable providers.
- Increase the availability of level 3 programmes including Apprenticeship places and frameworks at level 3 and beyond to secure vocational progression routes for young people not wishing to follow a traditional academic pathway.

Attainment and Progression

- Close the gap in attainment at level 2 and level 3 by the age of 19 between young people from deprived backgrounds (those who have been eligible for free school meals) and the overall cohort.

Access to Information, Advice and Guidance

- All young people have access to independent and impartial careers guidance and information about all opportunities so they are able to make realistic, informed decisions about post 14 choices and their future post 16 options
- All young people and those supporting them (parents, carers, teachers, careers advisers and others) have access to information about post 16 provision and about the labour market

Vulnerable Learners and Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD)

- Improve the availability and range of opportunities and outcomes for LLDD to increase their participation and to enable more young to access learning within their own community in line with the Lincolnshire County Strategy for Post 16 Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
- Increase participation and attainment of young people from vulnerable groups including those who have been eligible for free school meals, to the same level as the cohort as a whole

Employment and Skills

- Provide information, advice and guidance, and deliver programmes and other support that will enable young people to successfully progress onto employment or higher education that contributes to the growth of the Lincolnshire economy.

2. Conclusion

Data is not yet available to identify the number of young people who are failing to meet the duty to participate in learning this current academic year. Analysis shows that there will be sufficient post 16 places available to meet the requirements of the extension of the duty to participate to the age of 18 from September 2014, although there will need to be continued growth in the availability of apprenticeship places. However, there is still a need to alter the mix and balance of provision in order to better meet the needs of young people; in particular those with low attainment at age 16; those who find it difficult to participate due to a range of vulnerabilities; and those that are failing to participate beyond the age of 17. If young people are to take advantage of the employment opportunities in Lincolnshire, it is important that the available curriculum takes into account the current and future skills needs of employers in the County and the plans for growth currently being developed by the LEP.

There continues to be an over (and increasing) supply of A level provision in school and Academy sixth forms. There remains an urgent and pressing need to find ways to maintain the curriculum and secure the future of some sixth forms. The only way to achieve this, whilst maintaining the same number of schools sixth forms, is through collaboration and partnership working including the sharing of resources.

3. Legal Comments:

The legal issues to be taken into account in the making of these decisions, which are within the remit of the Executive, are fully set out in this report.

4. Resource Comments:

The paper sets out the strategic priorities for the 16-19 (25) education and training for 2014/15 and will have no direct impact initially on resources until detailed plans are drawn up to implement the strategic plan. This will need to be delivered within the current funding envelope and providers will need to adapt to the changing delivery model and financial landscape.

5. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

c) Scrutiny Comments

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considered this report at its meeting on 6 September 2013. Comments from this meeting are included below to inform the Executive when making its decision:- *(To be inserted)*

d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

N/A

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	

7. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Education and Skills Act 2008	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents
Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/contents
Education Act 2011	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/section/74/enacted
Children and Families Bill 2012-13 to 2013-14 Bills before Parliament	http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/childrenandfamilies.html
Participation of young people - Statutory guidance	http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00222993/stat-guide-young-people-edu-employ-train
16 to 19 study programmes	http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/gandlearning/programmes
Traineeships	http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/gandlearning/traineeships

Supported internships for young people with SEN	http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send/changin-gsen/b00211325/sen-supported-internships
Education Funding Agency market entry 2013 to 2014 academic year	http://www.education.gov.uk/a00226738/efa-market-entry

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