

# BRISTOL

## LEARNING CITY

**ACTION NOTES FROM**  
**LEARNING CITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING**  
**28 SEPTEMBER 2016, 3.30PM – 5.30PM**  
VENUE – @BRISTOL

**Attendees, Board members:**

Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol (in the Chair)  
Sarah Baker, Bristol Secondary Head Teachers and Principals Association  
Karl Brown, Bristol Junior Chamber  
Rebecca Clark, South West Regional Schools Commissioner  
Patricia Greer, West of England LEP  
John Hirst, Destination Bristol  
Cllr Claire Hiscott, Bristol City Council Cabinet member for Education and Skills  
Stephen Hughes, Bristol City Council  
Laurence Pitt, Primary Heads Association  
Lee Probert, City of Bristol College  
John Readman, Bristol City Council  
Tim Stringer, Integral Build  
Professor Judith Squires, University of Bristol  
Professor Steve West, UWE  
Phil Winfield, At Bristol

**Apologies:**

Chris Curling, Society of Merchant Venturers  
Neha Mehta, Bristol City Youth Council

**Other attendees:**

Carly Bennett, Learning City  
Ian Hird, Democratic Services, Bristol City Council  
Paul Jacobs, Service Director – Education and Skills, Bristol City Council  
Rebecca Phillips, Learning City  
Sian Rees, Learning City  
Jane Taylor, Service Manager – Employment, Skills and Learning, Bristol City Council

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

At the invitation of the Mayor, attendees introduced themselves.

## **NOTES AND ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING – 8 JUNE 2016**

The notes of the 8 June meeting were confirmed as a correct record.

A summary of actions taken since 8 June, included with the agenda papers, was noted.

## **LEARNING CITY UPDATES:**

### **a. School Performance 2016**

Paul Jacobs provided an update, highlighting the following:

- Early years: there is improved performance against key indicators, and the achievement gap is closing in relation to raising attainment in relatively deprived communities.
- Primary: a new SATS assessment framework has been introduced at Key Stage 2. A year on year comparative assessment cannot therefore be made, however results are in line with the national average. More detailed analysis will be available later this year.
- Secondary: at Key Stage 4, the percentage of students achieving grade C and above in English and Maths has risen by 4%, from 56% to 60%. There is improved performance in the south of the city and evidence that the deprivation gap is closing.

### **b. University of Bristol- local scholar scheme / offer**

Judith Squires provided an update; the scheme has been further developed, in collaboration with head teachers, and will be launched as a Learning City initiative this autumn. Five schools are involved in a pilot, with the first intake of students to be in September 2017.

### **c. Invitation from Grant Thornton to attend nationwide inquiry event on a vibrant economy**

Limited places are available for Board members wishing to attend this event on 9 November – those interested to contact Sian Rees directly; the invitation will be circulated with the minutes.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING:**

### **1. Refreshed Vision and Draft Strategic Implementation Plan**

John Readman and Judith Squires presented an overview of this item. A number of key points were highlighted:

#### **Context of Bristol Learning City:**

The city has a global reputation; is a good place to study, live and work, but there are a number of long standing and complex challenges. There are 42 areas amongst the most deprived in the UK, life expectancy and life chances depend on where you live. In particular,

the chances of attending a good/outstanding school, GCSE attainment, attending university or being in education, employment or training vary significantly across the city. The aim of being a Learning City is to bring us together as partners, to tackle some of these complex issues so that we ensure the city is a fairer place for all.

**Learning City - one year on - key achievements include:**

- Partner commitment to address these challenges - over 70 organisations directly involved.
- Development of strategies for skills, school places, excellence in schools.
- Robust governance in place and strong ethos, recognised at the PASCAL International Learning Cities Conference in Glasgow earlier this summer.
- Development of the Engagement Hub and PEBL – the first major Learning City projects.

**The Vision and Implementation Plan**

The refreshed vision sets out our strategic ambition and builds on the original model; work from last year; Annual Review outcomes and Board discussions. The draft Implementation Plan aims to provide a clear statement of priorities and actions; ensure a focus for Challenge Group activity and capture ideas to improve the operational effectiveness of the Board.

In groups, Board members considered and discussed the following questions:

***Does the vision describe our ambition more clearly?***

Comments from group discussion:

- There was unanimous support for the refreshed vision, which was felt to be very clear and capture the key elements the Board aims to achieve. It articulates the right level of ambition, including impacting positively on disadvantaged communities.
- It was suggested that key deliverables be added to the document, recognising these may be 10 year outcomes.

***Does the plan set out what we intend to do?***

Comments from group discussion:

- For some sections of the plan there needs to be clearer outcomes identified, with, specific measureable actions and milestones. Delivery must be focussed on these commitments made to demonstrate the difference made and the added value brought by being a Learning City.
- The following measureable outcomes were suggested for consideration: qualifications; a learning mentor for every young person; reduced student absenteeism.
- Evaluation Framework to ensure actions will deliver the ambition and that evidence about the difference being made is robust.

***Is the plan sufficiently aligned with organisational/sector priorities?***

There was agreement that partners would consider the implementation plan in their organisations/sectors to confirm alignment with their priorities.

In addition there needs to be connectivity with other strategic partnership boards and plans e.g. the Health and Wellbeing Board and between the Learning City Challenge Groups.

## **Next Steps**

These were agreed as follows:

- All partners to consider the implementation plan in their organisations/sectors to confirm alignment with their priorities.
- All partners to consider/review their contribution to actions/projects, and identify key people to lead or contribute.
- The Implementation Plan to be presented to the next Board meeting on 9 November for sign-off.

## **2. Membership Nominations**

The Board approved/noted the following:

### **Business leaders:**

- Airbus to be approached, to identify a senior leader to join the Board;
- University Hospitals, Bristol to be approached to identify a senior leader to join the Board - Robert Woolley should be approached initially.

It was noted that Suzanne Baxter, Finance Director, Mitie (Business West nomination) is interested in joining the Board, but is not available until 2017. This will be re-considered in the New Year.

### **Education leaders:**

Two Cultural Partnership nominations were received: Kate Brindley, CEO Arnolfini, to be appointed to the Board. Thanks to be extended to Rhian Tritton, SS Great Britain.

It was suggested that consideration is also given to seeking the participation of a senior leader from the Bristol sport community.

A process is underway to identify a senior leader from the voluntary and community sector to chair the Learning in Communities Challenge Group.

## **3. Learning City Board Roadshow**

Sian Rees provided an update on the events taking place between now and January.

### **FOCUSSED DISCUSSION: LEARNING FOR WORK – DELIVERING THE FIRST MAJOR LEARNING CITY PROJECT – HUB AND PORTFOLIO**

Steve West, Jane Taylor and Lee Probert presented this item, with key points highlighted from a presentation:

#### **The challenge - background/range of activities/developments being taken forward:**

UWE has developed a strong school and college partnership, including staff involvement in leadership, engagement and a schools volunteering programme.

Progression has been supported by opening up opportunities through a range of initiatives, including the Children's University, 'UWEBoxEd' and Heading Higher Passport Plus.

Talent has been nurtured through building connections, supporting ambition and enterprise, including:

- The largest graduate recruitment fair in the south west
- Developing an extensive mentor network
- Sharing best practice events
- A city leadership programme
- The development of the Engagement Hub.

“Future Quest” has been launched, as a 4 year programme, aiming to increase participation in higher education by 2% each year; a tailored programme to meet local requirements, contextualised to communities, especially hard-to-reach communities.

Moving forwards, we need to be aware of new ideas from other organisations, which may be worth linking with, e.g. the Liketobe.org initiative.

### **Engagement Hub / PEBL development:**

The ambition is to achieve collaboration between education providers, employers, young people and local communities which is delivered via linked centres across the city and through an e-skills portfolio. The initial focus is on construction and digital technology industries; inspiring young people to gain the skills, qualities and experience they need to work and learn.

The project is in the initial phase with a project manager appointed and delivery options appraised. A reception event is taking place on 14 October to galvanise partner energy.

The Employment and Skills Strategy was agreed by the Board, and implementation is underway; BCC targets are embedded in contracts and pathways into jobs are being designed to increase opportunities for underrepresented groups.

As a Challenge Group, we have agreed to focus on priorities to secure lasting impact.

### **The challenge around work experience opportunities for young people:**

Studies show that four or more employer engagement activities significantly increase the success of young people’s employability. The challenge is to secure more and improved opportunities for young people to gain meaningful work experience opportunities.

The apprenticeship levy means this may become a potential priority for large businesses and we need to recognise the challenges faced by small employers in offering such opportunities.

In groups, Board members considered and discussed the following questions:

### ***What types of experience of work should we be promoting? What has the most impact?***

Comments from group discussion:

- Set a minimum expectation for a workplace experience; expectations should be communicated clearly to businesses/organisations offering experience opportunities.
- Workplace experiences need to engage and stimulate young people and be real “tasters”.
- Secure the right experiences at the right time, with follow-up opportunities where possible.

- Clarify/improve the pathways to and co-ordination of work experience opportunities, so that businesses know where to go and who to contact.
- Make connections with schools and young people as easy as possible, especially for SMEs, recognising the challenge to/commitment required from businesses to do this well.
- Consider a form of “kite mark” accreditation.
- Capture positive experiences; establish who is already doing this well, learn and share best practice.

The comments from the Board should be included in the consideration of the Engagement Hub development and offer.

***What could we ask from city partners, through the city office?***

Comments from group discussion:

- Encourage businesses/organisations to “step up to the plate” and enhance their work experience offer, especially to 16-19 year olds.
- Try to secure a minimum number of work experience ‘days’ as a “standard” offer.
- Improve pathways so that schools and employers can communicate more easily about opportunities. Can the city office help provide the ‘glue’ to make this work?
- Organisations to consider putting on more open days, showcasing the variety of jobs available in businesses/different sectors, and the varied routes people follow into jobs.
- Ask partners to “pair” with a school or educational institution.

The comments from the Board to be shared as part of a presentation to the City Office event taking place on 28 September.

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The Mayor thanked Board members for their attendance and contributions.  
The meeting finished at 5.30 p.m.