

Heart of SW LEP CIC Board meeting

Paper 4.1 March 2017

Report title: Area Based Review

Report theme: Board

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Purpose of the report

Government has been progressing a series of 'Area based reviews of post -16 education and training institutions'. The review for our area was undertaken in conjunction with Cornwall and the review recommendations have just been circulated. As part of the review the desire for broader HE provision in Somerset was highlighted and a presentation on this will be provided to the Board. This report also sets out the review recommendations and will be accompanied by a verbal commentary from Stephen Criddle as Chair of our People Leadership Group.

Recommendations

The LEP Board notes the recommendations

Background

The government's policy statement '[Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions](#)' sets out the approach to its review of the further education sector through 37 area reviews of post-16 provision.

The aim of the reviews is to create strong and financially resilient colleges which are specialised centres of expertise that are able to work together to produce the skilled workers that local businesses need.

The Government's vision is that institutions will work with other colleges and providers to deliver high-quality technical and professional education. We were part of the last wave that started in November 2016 and our area included Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Each review is led through a steering group made up of representatives from our areas including:

- college chairs of governors supported by their college principals
- local enterprise partnerships
- local and combined authorities
- further education and sixth-form college commissioners
- regional schools commissioners

Each review started by assessing the economic and educational needs of the area, and the implications for post-16 education and training provision, including:

- school sixth forms
- sixth-form colleges
- further education (FE) colleges
- independent providers

The reviews will then concentrate on further education and sixth-form colleges and at its conclusion the SFA support team are producing a report covering the recommendations that the steering group has agreed and which they expect colleges to implement. This summary of recommendations circulated by the SFA are attached below.

Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Area Review Governors' Briefing

Objectives of the Review

Each area review should establish the best institutional structure to offer high quality provision based on the current and future needs of learners and employers within the local area



The Need for Change (1)

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LA and LEP

- Diversity of provision required to meet the needs of a geographically challenging area, transport links between main towns are variable
- Cornwall's KS5 performance is variable across institutions
- Lower proportion of young people in Apprenticeships (4.2%) compared to regional (7.8%) and national (7.3%) averages (CCIS March 2016)
- Proportion of young people progressing into HE is lower in Cornwall compared to national averages, for those that do progress to HE a significant proportion study at local institutions staying in the South West
- Proportion of young people not in education and training (NEET) generally lower than national averages but geographical variations across Cornwall



The Need for Change (2)

- Quality and consistency of careers advice on the full range of options unacceptably variable across institutions
- Tackling mental health problems early improves educational attainment and employment opportunities

High Needs

- establishing clear pathways for high needs learners to ensure choice at different points of transition
- provision of supported internships and traineeships
- proportion of post 16 placements in FE Colleges rather than ISPs



The Need for Change (3)

Heart of the South West LEP and Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay LAs

- Aspiration for broader HE offer in Somerset
- Plymouth take-up strongly skewed towards 6th form provision
- Colleges generally performing well locally
- Need to maintain rural/agricultural provision
- Need to ensure that the offer of FE provision across the whole of east Devon meets the needs of learners
- Issue with distance travelled to learn/work in more rural areas
- NEETS are low but vary by locality
- LLDD (SEND) provision is good – further expansion of work focused opportunities and pathways required
- Career Education Information Advice and Guidance is still a major issue

Steering Group role

- Review tested and recommended options and:
- Consider the capacity of each option to generate a business plan which can create confidence in each institution fulfilling the objectives over the long term.
- Consider the impact on groups of learners with protected characteristics in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.



Decision Making

- Governing bodies will be responsible for deciding whether to accept the Steering Group's recommendations in relation to their institutions.
- This is an 'in principle' commitment to deliver the recommendation, subject to due diligence, statutory consultation, and the agreement of creditors where required, and the business case and plan for the structural change being approved by the college's board prior to the change.



Testing of options

- Financial assessment
- Reviewed against Annex A criteria
- Summary of evidence
- Agreement of recommendations



Recommendations

Bridgwater and Taunton College

Bridgwater and Taunton College to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Somerset to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.

Richard Huish College

Richard Huish College to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Somerset to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.

Strode College

Strode College to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Somerset to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.



Recommendations continued

Richard Huish College and Strode College

Richard Huish College and Strode College to establish a joint apprenticeship venture to increase the quantity and quality of apprenticeships to meet local skills needs.

Yeovil College

Yeovil College to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Somerset to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.

Somerset Colleges

Bridgwater and Taunton College, Richard Huish College, Strode College, and Yeovil College to collaborate to meet priority skills and education needs of the county and wider LEP area and to support the financial sustainability of provision and institutions in Somerset review area.



Recommendations continued

City College Plymouth

City College Plymouth to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Devon to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.

Exeter College

Exeter College to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Devon to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.

Petroc

Petroc to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Devon to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.



Recommendations continued

South Devon College

South Devon College to continue as a stand-alone institution, collaborating with the other three colleges in Devon to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county and the wider LEP area.

Devon Colleges

City College Plymouth, Exeter College, Petroc, and South Devon College will continue to work through the Devon Colleges' Group (DCG), ensuring that Devon has the right mix and balance of provision, including the staff expertise, curriculum and infrastructure capacity to deliver on local, regional and national agendas.

Recommendations continued

Cornwall College

Cornwall College to remain as a stand-alone institution with a Fresh Start approach to deliver financial stability. The Fresh Start approach to include securing the service of a Turnaround Director to support accelerated recovery. The revised college business plan to include sustaining land-based provision at Bicton.

Truro and Penwith College

Truro and Penwith College to continue as a stand-alone institution working with Cornwall College to meet the priority skills and education needs of the county.

Recommendations continued

The Cornwall Colleges

Cornwall College and Truro and Penwith College to establish a joint project group with an independent chair to oversee the relationship between the colleges and facilitate closer collaboration including in the following areas:

- the delivery of Higher Education, provision for students with high needs, and Apprenticeships;
- joint protocol on delivery of provision at Callywith;
- how governance can be strengthened by sharing expertise.

Institutes of Technology (IoT)

The Colleges in Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly to explore proposals for Institutes of Technology either as stand-alone organisations or through hub and spoke models, aligned to the requirements of emerging national IoT policy and the productivity challenges of the review area.

Next Steps

- Communications
- Report finalisation and publication
(including annexes)
- Implementation of agreed
recommendations

