

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 9
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Report of the Executive Directors of Children's and Adult Services

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THE BIG DEBATE – A RESPONSE FROM ADULTS & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise and comment upon the response made by both Children's and Adult Services to issues raised at the Scrutiny Big Debate held earlier this year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee considers the content of the responses provided notes the intended actions and makes any further recommendations.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 The programme of Big Debates tackled a range of issues directly relevant to the Sustainable Community Strategy.

4. BACKGROUND

There are two parts to this report:

- a) The Children's Services response to what young People were asking for during the Big Debate which is contained in Appendix 1 and
- b) The Adult Social Care Services response which is contained in Appendix 2

5. CONSULTATION

A wide variety of individuals and organizations attended the Big Debate. This report will serve as a response to the issues raised during the debate itself.

6 NEXT STEPS

The actions proposed in the report will continue. Committee may wish for a further updated report in six months.

The Children's Services Response

Appendix 1

Issue Ref	Issues arising from the Big Debate	Response / Action Being Taken
A1	Young People / Job Skills Provide job subsidies for young people	<p>Young People / Job Skills</p> <p>The group of people who will be most affected by the changes in the government policy around education and training will be young people 16 – 25. Unemployment in this sector is likely to increase and this will be compounded by the difficulties faced by young people in accessing university places as well as the shortage of paid employment.</p> <p>A progression pathway that is being strongly supported by the current coalition government is the Apprenticeship Pathway. This in essence provides a form of 'job subsidy' for young people and employers in that the government has fully committed to funding the vocational training and accreditation for young people on the programme with the employer funding the salary to the requirements of the national minimum wage.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Programme is one that is to be supported and promoted by the council and its partners as it provides a valuable opportunity for young people to gain nationally recognised work experience with respected accreditation. However, the Apprenticeship Programme is only suitable for those learners who can achieve a Level 2 or above. What is still needed are safe employment opportunities/work experience and progression pathways into work for those young people who will find it difficult to achieve a level 2.</p> <p>The 8 -19 Service has recently recruited to the team a young peoples' employment adviser whose role will be to work with employers to develop employment opportunities for identified groups of young people.</p>
A2	Give more guidance for young people	<p>The 8 -19 Service has plans to raise the focus and status of the City Centre Young Peoples' Access Point and make the centre the first port of call for young people seeking independent advice and guidance. The Next Steps event that took place during the week young people received their GCSE results was highly successful resulting in over 120 young people attending the event which was held over two days.</p> <p>The 8 -19 Service has concerns about the quality and independent advice given to young people in schools. One of the service's priorities for this year will be to support schools in terms of their understanding of the learning choices/pathways available for young people in the city and how these learning pathways can lead to accessing higher education opportunities and employment opportunities in the city.</p> <p>For the second year running the 8 -19 Service is holding a 'Choices' event in conjunction with Peterborough Regional College. This two day event provides an opportunity for young people to meet all of the learning providers post 16 across</p>

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		<p>the city and receive information about the courses on offer. The first day of the event is targeted at young people who may be at risk of becoming NEET. The second day, the Saturday, is open to all young people across the city.</p> <p>In addition to the high profile Information, advice and guidance events, young people can access information through the Area Wide Prospectus. The prospectus is now in its third year and the information on this website has developed and improved considerably over the period of time. The Area Wide Prospectus provides young people with the information about courses on offer post 16 across all providers – schools and colleges – in the city.</p> <p>The last academic year saw the introduction of the Common Application Process (CAP). This is an electronic, web based centralised application system which together with the Area Wide Prospectus allows young people to apply for post 16 courses in other institutions. Initial evaluation of the CAP has identified that more young people than in previous years have chosen to follow post 16 courses outside of their home institution and make decisions about courses studied based on a real choice of offer.</p>
A3	Introduce local employment agreements for young people	<p>The 8 19 Service, as well as the Adult Learning and Skills Board is working with Opportunity Peterborough to lobby the procurement team in the city council to ensure that through contract negotiations the learning and skills agenda figures prominently.</p> <p>Opportunity Peterborough sees the growth agenda for the city being predicated on a strong learning and skill base with employers committed to providing apprenticeships as well as supporting schools through work tasters and work experience programmes. The Bond Holder scheme and the Skills Pledge will encourage businesses to become more fully involved in the learning and skills agenda and will recognise and reward business for their contribution.</p>
A4	Introduce guaranteed interview schemes	<p>Guaranteed interview schemes are valuable in that they provide motivation to young people and an incentive to achieve. Any such scheme introduced in Peterborough should be linked to identified expectations for the young person concerned and clear aspirational targets. For example, if a young person achieves their target grades at GCSE then they will be guaranteed an interview with an employer or with a post 16 learning provider.</p> <p>A ‘Passport’ scheme is already in operation for University Centre Peterborough. Young people in school work on UCP delivered programmes, giving them UCAS points and an opportunity of a place on their chosen course at the university.</p>

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A5	Provide more training and work experience	<p>Currently the cost of work experience is subsidised by funding directed to the Education Business Link Organisation (EBLO). EBLO contract out to the Cambridgeshire work experience team to find work placements and to organise health and safety checks on employers. Funding for work experience will be cut from 2011 and schools will have to bear the cost of continuing to offer a universal programme of two weeks work experience. As funding is reduced for schools the likelihood of this universal work experience programmes in schools will diminish.</p> <p>The 8 -19 Service has worked closely, through our employer engagement consultant, to develop targeted work experience linked to the business sectors.</p> <p>In addition, the UK Careers Academy which offers young people over 16 in schools a chance to gain financial knowledge through work experience and accreditation operates in two secondary schools in Peterborough. There is a move to develop a Peterborough Careers Academy, engaging local businesses, to provide similar experiences.</p>
A8	Need to identify children earlier who need support than before 14-19 years	<p>Working with the data and research team the 8 -19 Service has established 'Risk Registers' of those young people at risk of becoming NEET for all cohorts from years 8 to 11.</p> <p>These 'Risk Registers' will be used to plan targeted interventions, deploy resources to settings and identify the ward areas where the majority of 'at risk' young people live.</p> <p>The next steps in working with this 'at risk' data will be to confirm with schools the names on the individual school lists and then to work with schools to define what interventions are appropriate.</p> <p>The local authority has considerable concerns about the number of young people who leave education at the end of year 12 or drop out of education during year 13. There are a number of reasons for this, but predominantly young people, through inadequate IAG, find themselves on courses that they are not suited to or do not have the prior attainment profile to be successful in. The measures identified above around IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) will go some way to address this issue. Further, the 8 -19 Service is planning to introduce a Learner at Risk Panel, for year 12 students, at the end of this term in order to identify, in advance, young people who might not return to education after Christmas. The 8 -19 Service will then be able to work with these young people in order to provide a more appropriate learning/employment route and thus reduce the likelihood of them becoming NEET.</p> <p>The local authority's Participation Group is made up of all post 16 learning providers (excluding school 6th forms) in the city. The purpose of this group is to ensure that learners in one organisation at risk of not continuing in education are identified early and supported to move across providers to more suitable learning provision.</p>

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	Views of Young People	Views of Young People
B1	Make lessons more interesting	The 8 -19 Service, in conjunction with School Improvement, is working closely with headteachers to improve the quality of learning and teaching post 16. The service will be conducting two reviews of post 16 provision in this coming term and will make clear recommendations for improvement.
B2	Provide more activities out of school and college	The 8 -19 Service provides positive activities for young people in localities and through schools. The service also works with other providers to ensure coverage across the city. However, with reduced funding the universal nature of this provision is likely to be at risk with, in future, activities targeted at the most vulnerable young people in communities.
B3	Provide more advertising of Connexions	The 8 -19 Service recognises that there is a need to further promote the work of the guidance staff and the Connexions profile. The City Centre Access Point will in future be the main focus of universal guidance activity across the city.
B4	Provide more courses out of the Prince's Trust so that more young people can go on them	Prince's Trust courses are funded through the Young Peoples' Learning Agency with clear parameters associated with numbers. The local authority team is contracted by Peterborough Regional College to deliver this programme. The 8 -19 Service is currently working on a similar programme to that of Prince's Trust funder through our own resources.
B5	Provide free education for 19 – 25 year olds	Currently learning is funded up to the age of 19 and to 25 for learners with LLDD. It is unlikely in the currently economic climate that funding will be made available for post 19 learners.
B7	Let young people have a say	The service, through funding from Aim Higher is working with the University of Hull on a research project focusing on young people's views regarding higher education – where they would want to study and what barriers prevent them from pursuing higher education. The outcomes of the research will support the planning and development of the new Universities@Peterborough concept as well as informing the University Centre Peterborough of the needs of young people who would want to continue their studies in Peterborough.
B9	Provide more vocational training for those who are not academic	The coalition government has commissioned Alison Wolf to lead a review of vocational education 14 -19. The expectation is that there will be a greater focus on the Apprenticeship pathway both pre and post 16 with some considerable re thinking around the diploma pathway and the 5+ A* to C equivalence of the current Btec suite of qualifications.

Adult Social Care Response & Suggestions

Appendix 2

Issue Ref	Issues arising from the Big Debate which can be considered as part of the theme (quoted directly from the feedback)	Theme / Action Being Taken	Feeds into which Policy / Strategy	Partnership working /Other policies	Recommendations Short / Medium /Long Term
C1	“Living My Life” “Help PCC/PCT identify which sectors and clients have needs and that they can support (either through funding or additional in-kind support) – in close liaison with the voluntary sector”.	“Living My Life” NHS Peterborough has a major priority work programme to implement personalisation and transform adult social care services. The national policy “Putting People First” has a number of specific milestones which must be achieved including the introduction of personal budgets (already well advanced) and the provision of universal information and advice (in development). Choice and control for service users is at the heart of the policy and this local programme.	Living My Life	Safeguarding, carers, prevention, universal services.	Schedule a session to scrutinise progress on implementing “Putting People First” in Peterborough or suggest that the Health Scrutiny Commission with its remit for adult social care does this (it receives the quarterly performance reports).
C3	“Encourage the development of needs-led services that build on existing knowledge and good practice (e.g. Peterborough Disability Forum) – in close liaison with the voluntary sector”.				Given the interest in this area during the Big Debate, this could be specifically advertised and could directly contribute to the need to raise awareness about how services are now delivered.
C7	“Provide financial training to people on how to manage their own finances and budget”.				
C8	“Raise mental health awareness and disability amongst organisations to become sustainable”.				

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C9 D3 D4	<p>“Examine ways of providing services that emulate MIND’s advocacy service – to help people put their point across”.</p> <p>“Need to raise awareness and understanding of what a personalised budget means”.</p> <p>“Take forward family working and the personalisation agenda”.</p>				
C1	<p>Services to support disabled and vulnerable people in the future – national and local financial context</p> <p>“Help PCC/PCT identify which sectors and clients have needs and that they can support (either through funding or additional in-kind support) – in close liaison with the voluntary sector”.</p>	<p>Services to support disabled and vulnerable people in the future – national and local financial context</p> <p>Several comments were received regarding how to sustain effective services. The City Council's budget setting process, set within the tight public sector financial context, provides an opportunity for reflection on these issues. Investing in prevention and ensuring that services are available to support people's needs, will continue to be critical.</p>	Living My Life, PCT five year Strategy, PCC medium term financial strategy	Carers	<p>Scrutiny session on upcoming budget consultation – the committee can ensure that the relevant comments from the Big Debate are put forward and responded to as part of the consultation. The committee could also consider any impact during the course of the next financial year.</p> <p>Councillor Thacker is already leading work to</p>

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C3	"Encourage the development of needs-led services that build on existing knowledge and good practice (e.g. Peterborough Disability Forum) in close liaison with the voluntary sector".				look at future arrangements for disability organisations in the city – some comments can be considered as part of this work.
C4	"Highlight key issues around the resilience of services, the changing landscape and the need for evaluating the impact of financial inclusion work – in close liaison with the voluntary sector".				
E3	"Recognise that public feedback of the Council's budget process highlighted how many people did not know what services are available, so there is a need to consider how we do this better in the future".				

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C5	Equalities & Diversity “Examine how people get involved in impact assessments and policy issues”.	Equalities & Diversity The specific comments received relate to impact assessments.	Single Equality Scheme and all policies		The committee may wish to consider how it scrutinises the issues captured by equality impact assessments when it considers items on its agenda. Both the PCT and PCC are developing their Single Equality Schemes and the Committee may wish to have sight of these documents as appropriate.
C6	“Examine how people with disabilities are not faced with barriers to accessing mainstream services”.				
D1	Whole Family Approach “Adopt a whole family approach so the right response is given by the right organisation at the right time”.	Whole Family Approach Work has commenced in Peterborough looking at the most vulnerable families in the city. This work crosses children's services, criminal justice services, adult care services and other public sector functions. The scheme is a potentially critical part of getting the right preventative services in place to tackle chronic problems which require large volumes of costly public sector services to deal with.	Prevention	Whole systems approach across public sector organisations, greater Peterborough Partnership	The committee may wish to consider looking at this project during its development or once it is up and running perhaps, June 2011
D2	“Develop a joined up approach for adults and children recognising the problems inherent in the structures for health and LA having different purposes”.				

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D5	<p>Other Matters</p> <p>Some comments made during the Big Debate are for noting, concern business as usual activity or are single issue comments.</p> <p>“Identify opportunities to work more closely with Job Centre Plus”.</p>	<p>Other Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – to be taken forward by the Executive Director of Children’s Services and Assistant Director of Adult Social Care recognising the role of Job Centre Plus”. 	Various	Various	The commission could note these comments and updates when considering the big Debate report.
E2	“Provide better sign-posting for services at Job Centre Plus”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JCP to be appraised as a Children’s Trust member. JCP are already represented on adult social care partnership boards e.g. the learning disability board. JCP to be encouraged to take up their place on the Adult Safeguarding Board which they have been unable to attend. 			
D6	“Recognise the need for genuine decent welfare reform”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local consultation and a response was made to the previous government’s “Big Care Debate”. The City Council and partners have also responded to the Health White paper and will also consider the future White Papers on public health, adult social care and other welfare reforms. 			
D8	“Treat service users as an individual not a number”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noted – a principle that we would all agree and one that is fundamental to how services are delivered. 			