

## Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

**Meeting:** Children, Families and Schools Sub-Committee

**Date:** Monday 29 November 2004

**Report of:** Director of Children, Families and Schools

**Subject:** Update on the Management of the Brighton and Hove Learning Partnership

**Ward(s) affected:** All

### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on a reorganisation of the Learning Partnership and the new three year development plan, which has been submitted to Sussex Learning & Skills Council

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the new three year development plan for the Learning Partnership as outlined in Appendix 1 be agreed.

### 3. Information/background

- 3.1 Learning Partnerships were set up across the country in early 1999 to promote a new culture of provider collaboration across sectors (schools, FE, work-based learning and adult & community learning) and to rationalise the plethora of existing local partnership arrangements covering post-16 learning.
- 3.2 In the three and a half years of their existence Learning Partnerships have been through an almost constantly changing policy environment, including, in particular, the introduction of the Learning and Skills Council and Local Strategic Partnerships. Indeed many Learning Partnerships, like Brighton

& Hove, have taken on the learning arm role of the Local Strategic Partnership. The remit of the Learning Partnerships and their relationship to these other bodies have, as a result, been subject to change a number of times. The most recent national review has highlighted two core roles of promoting provider collaboration in support of lifelong learning and maximising the contribution of learning to local regeneration.

- 3.3 According to guidance issued by the Learning and Skills Council the core budget to cover the work of the Learning Partnership will be provided by Sussex Learning & Skills Council and during 2003-04 funding for Learning Partnerships was ring-fenced in the Local Intervention and Development budget allocated by local Learning & Skills Councils. For 2004-05 this funding is no longer ring-fenced and the allocation to local Learning & Skills Councils for Local Intervention and Development budget has reduced. Therefore it is now for local Learning & Skills Councils to prioritise their budget and allocate funding to support Learning Partnerships accordingly. There is an expectation upon local Learning & Skills Councils to seek to sustain viable partnerships to deliver their core role but the National Learning & Skills Council has recommended no minimum or maximum levels of funding. Therefore it is more important than before to make a case to Sussex Learning & Skills Council that the role of the Learning Partnership is valuable and should continue to be funded.
- 3.4 The funding to the Learning Partnership is subject to the approval of a three year development plan including an annual business or operational plan, which can be adapted to local purposes. Local Learning & Skills Councils will also agree with Learning Partnerships a local protocol that sets out arrangements for joint working and a payment schedule, which reflects the activity taking place during the year. Appropriate funds can then be released quarterly or monthly to the Learning Partnership.
- 3.5 The Board of the Learning Partnership met on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2004 and approved a number of measures designed to make the Partnership more action-focused. These include a stronger emphasis upon management rather than co-ordination, and the production of a new three year development plan that clearly focuses on tangible outcomes and the delivery of Best Value.
- 3.6 A new Learning Partnership Manager is to be appointed to replace the role of Co-ordinator. The new Manager will primarily have to implement the new three year development plan as well as to:
- Ensure practical improvements to the ability and capacity of all partners to deliver against agreed national and local targets.

- Develop new strategies and projects, that involve more than one partner, to provide greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness in meeting set targets
- Advise and make practical recommendations to all partners in realising organisational change that will enable greater partnership working
- Standardise 'community learning' elements relating to the wider agendas of Regeneration and Community Renewal

3.7 It is intended that this new role of Learning Partnership Manager will also begin to mainstream some aspects of the Single Regeneration Budget work that has been carried out successfully by the Learning Partnership Project Officer. It is intended that the new Manager will have significant experience in both Learning Partnerships and Regeneration & Renewal work.

#### **4. Further information**

- 4.1 The priority areas for Learning Partnership activity 2004-07 are to
- Generate partnership projects that develop and deliver the recommendations of the 14-19 post OfSTED Action Plan.
  - Improve workforce development initiatives, including increased collaborative working by training providers in the public, private and voluntary sectors.
  - Working effectively and collaboratively to increase the quantity and quality of Skills for Life provision with other agencies including Sussex Learning and Skills Council, Skills for Life Development Centre and Jobcentre Plus.
  - Raise the quality and standard of provision, and build capacity within specialist community, voluntary and commercial learning providers by showcasing examples of good practice.
  - Build closer links and enable further collaborative work within all sectors to develop innovative ICT and e-learning activities.
- 4.2 The work outlined in the new three year development plan will be carried out both by the Learning Partnership Manager, and support staff as required, as well as by partners who are represented in the working groups.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the acting Learning Partnership Manager.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The recent reorganization of the Learning Partnership has been an opportunity to consider practice and the new three year development plan will provide a platform for further development.

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#### **Financial implications**

Final confirmation of the funding has not yet been confirmed. If agreed there will not be any additional financial implications for the three year development plan as the authority will receive external funding from the Learning and Skills Council and Single Regeneration Budget. If the funding is not agreed a further update is recommended to quantify in detail the financial implications.

*Finance Officer consulted: Paul Brinkhurst Date 11<sup>th</sup> November 2004*

#### **Legal implications**

The committee is asked to agree a new three year development plan for the Learning Partnership. The plan aims to assist the council in delivering and being responsive to current local, regional and national priorities.

*Lawyer consulted: Natasha Watson Date: 16<sup>th</sup> November 2004*

#### **Corporate/Citywide implications**

This recommendation will provide clarity on the role of the Brighton & Hove Learning Partnership and maximize the strategic and practical potential of the Partnership to achieve tangible benefits for the residents and workforce of the city.

#### **Risk assessment**

The opportunities to increase future funding from Sussex Learning & Skills Council for strategically aligned partnership work across the city could be lost if the Learning Partnership was perceived to not be fulfilling an important role or failed to submit an acceptable development plan.

#### **Sustainability implications**

The new three year development plan will enable the City Council to continue to draw down funding from Sussex Learning & Skills Council to work in a partnership that already has strong mainstreaming links with the Single Regeneration Budget and is developing links with the Area Investment Framework and the Equal Programme.

#### **Equalities implications**

The new three year development plan is also part of the mainstreaming of the European Equal project that focuses upon BME groups and Refugees & Asylum seekers as target groups. The Learning Partnership will play an important role in underpinning work with these groups.

### **Implications for the prevention of crime and disorder**

A successful Learning Partnership should increase education, especially for 14-19 year olds and adults engaged in Workforce Development. According to the analysis of area level crime data for the 43 police forces of England and Wales from 1975-1996, conducted by Machin and Meghir in 2000, increases in education where this leads to higher wages is likely to reduce the likelihood of individuals engaging in crime. Although this only relates to property crime and not violent crime, a 10% increase in the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile wage could reduce the vehicle crime rate by 4.8 percentage points, the theft and handling rate by 0.4 and the burglary rate by 0.18. All these effects are strongly statistically significant.

Feinstein, L (2002) Quantitative Estimates of the Social Benefits of Learning,1:Crime Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning

### **Background papers**

Department for Education and Skills (2003) National Evaluation of Learning Partnerships: Final Report by York Consulting Ltd

Feinstein, L (2002) Quantitative Estimates of the Social Benefits of Learning,1:Crime Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning

Learning & Skills Council (2003) Learning Partnerships: Operational Guidance for Local Learning and Skills Councils, covering the period April 2004 to March 2005

### **Contact Officer**

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