

# Scrutiny Board Meeting

Tuesday, 8 November 2016

Dear Councillor

## SCRUTINY BOARD - TUESDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER, 2016

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Tuesday, 8th November, 2016 meeting of the Scrutiny Board, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No	Item
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8	<b><u>Post 16 Update</u></b> (Pages 3 - 24)
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[To consider a cabinet report in relation to post-16 priorities for the City of Wolverhampton and work being undertaken to meet future employment and skills needs of post-16 learners in the City – the report will be sent to follow].

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

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<b>Report title</b>	<b>Post-16 Education and Skills Report</b>	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Claire Darke Education Councillor Val Gibson, Children and Young People	
<b>Key decision</b>	No	
<b>In forward plan</b>	No	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Julien, Kramer Director of Education	
<b>Originating service</b>	Education	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Kate Howard	Post-16 lead
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<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Strategic Executive Board 11 October 2016	

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## Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve Post-16 priorities for City of Wolverhampton summarised in section 3.1
2. Endorse additional work being undertaken to meet future employment and skills needs of Post-16 learners in the City

## Recommendations for noting:

The Cabinet is asked to note:

The report on Post-16 education and skills outlines the City wide commitment to support Post-16 learners in accessing education, training and employment opportunities.

## **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Post-16 education and skills landscape and a strategic plan to deliver Post-16 priorities which have been endorsed by SEB in March and June 2016 and the Education Board in June 2016.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 **Wolverhampton's Post-16 Commitment to Young People: To improve outcomes and raise aspirations of young people meeting learner and employer need**

### **Guiding Principles**

There are four guiding influences which inform all Post-16 strategy and delivery:

- Quality
- Choice
- Progression
- Viability

There is a commitment to improved cross-Directorate working as well as a more integrated approach to working with external partners across the city and region eg City of Wolverhampton College, University of Wolverhampton, employer forums and other local authority 14-19/Post-16 leads.

## **3.0 Progress, options, discussion, etc.**

### **3.1 5 Priority areas to support the Post-16 City strategy**

There are 5 priority areas which are supported by an implementation plan, endorsed by The Young People Skills and Employment Group, SEB and Wolverhampton Education Board:

#### **Priority 1: Improving Partnership and Collaboration**

- Deliver LA statutory requirements to support participation in education, training and employment
- Develop networks to support development of City wide Post-16 offer, in line with the *Post-16 Skills Plan* and to improve employment/ skills and progression opportunities for all learners
- Integrate existing networks into city partnership structures
- Engage with learner/parent/ focus groups – consultation exercise on learner aspirations and expectations to inform the Post-16 offer
- Establish Business Champions and Careers Enterprise Company initiative focusing on improving business engagement with all secondary schools across the city

- Develop new employer partnerships with LA/college and university to support Post-16 progression
- Provide additional work related learning opportunities Post-16

### **Priority 2: Supporting Aspirational Attainment**

- Support schools with national, regional, local and statistical data to inform school improvement strategies
- Support early intervention in maintained schools and in response to Regional School Commissioner requests for academy support
- Broker school to school support where Post-16 provision or performance issues identified
- Review quality and breadth of provision to meet the needs of vulnerable learners
- Meet LA Post-16 statutory requirements including data analysis; tracking of vulnerable learners and support data sharing protocols to provide challenge and inform evidence based planning
- Analyse value added data on performance to provide challenge to coasting schools
- Audit Post-16 academic and vocational provision across the city to inform future need
- Create Post-16 school task and finish groups to address Post-16 provision and performance issues

### **Priority 3: Ensuring Demand Led and Inclusive Post-16 Provision**

- Identify new skills and provision needs through employer forums/ FE/HE/Employer networks/LEP/BCC
- Develop Apprenticeship Hub - Post-16 apprenticeships and higher apprenticeships with Wolverhampton University and City of Wolverhampton College/ other Training Providers (The Government's *Post-16 Skills Plan* has progression onto apprenticeships as its core commitment. There will be 15 sectors to provide the framework/standards for industry, led by employers. Currently the take-up of apprenticeships as a route to employment is low in Wolverhampton.
- Develop new pre-apprenticeship, traineeships, internship programmes with schools, college and university
- Review the current 14-19 alternative learning offer and
- Develop a 14-19 quality assurance framework for alternative provision
- Develop SEND Post-16 provision focussing on progression into sustained employment
- Review Post-16 study programme models across all settings to ensure appropriate and financially effective models are being delivered in response to learner need

#### **Priority 4: Developing a Skills Pipeline to Sustainable Employment**

- Align Post-16 Priorities with Wolverhampton's economic and skills development plans and *Post-16 Skills Plan* priorities
- Deliver the Youth Employment Initiative objectives, including Talent Match to provide targeted support for young people (See Appendix 1 for further information on employability/Youth unemployment/Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance issues and initiatives)
- Develop a quality kite mark in schools to improve Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in schools
- Develop and deliver Work Box
- Improve progression pathways into internships and apprenticeship programmes
- Develop a Post-16 prospectus to support informed choice

#### **Priority 5: Planning Capital Investment**

- Ensure rationalisation of City wide Post-16 provision is factored into secondary school sufficiency planning and future planning for The City Learning Quarter plans

NB 'First Planner' is also undertaking a Council funded project to focus on space utilisation across the City's schools, supported by the secondary headteachers' workshops on sixth form viability to inform future school sufficiency planning.

The five Post-16 priorities under development endorse City and Black Country strategic priorities and are responding to national policy changes and contribute to targets outlined in the City of Wolverhampton corporate plan. The need to support quality provision for Post-16 learners was also highlighted in Wolverhampton's Employment and Skills Commission report, (2015):

- Holistic careers advice: joined up approach for people of all ages
- A city skills system: improved use of resources and clearer roles for providers
- Ready for work: Improving soft skills and addressing barriers to work
- Cross sector collaboration: Improving communication and collaboration with employers

The Skills and Employment Commission recommendations have informed the Post-16 priorities and are embedded in The Standards Corporate Plan objective for 2016 to, "Challenge and support schools to provide the best education for children and young people." Education and skills need to support young people in their transition to adulthood and further career and life opportunities.

See Appendix 2 for overview of Wolverhampton's Post-16 educational landscape/Post-16 estate

The City's schools have been on a rapid journey of improvement in the last two years: The City has moved up 27 places in the national league tables this year, making Wolverhampton the most improved local authority in the West Midlands and in the top 20% most improved authorities in the country in 2015.

Wolverhampton's Post-16 learners are performing well and the authority has recently received favourable reviews by the regional Ofsted HMI and the Schools Commissioner.

The City provides some excellent opportunities for Post-16 learners, particularly on vocational pathways and is expected to show further improvements when validated data is released in early 2017. See Appendix 3 for additional data on attainment and achievement in Wolverhampton schools

However, the needs of all learners are not being met, in particular, some vulnerable and highest attaining learners. Improving provision for vulnerable learners is essential. The Full Joint Inspection of Wolverhampton Youth Offending Team inspection report of Wolverhampton's Youth Offending Team, (February 2016), was very positive but identified some weaknesses in the quality of the educational offer for young offenders, pre and Post-16 provision which did not always meet individual learner need, "Education, training and employment for children and young people should be improved to ensure they are equipped with skills that contribute towards maximising their chances of employability." The post inspection action plan reports on milestones and progress.

New alternative provision is planned and a new quality assurance framework is in place for alternative provision which will also improve the commissioning and monitoring and evaluation processes.

Curriculum changes, statutory requirements and budgetary constraints are impacting on the planning and delivery of Post-16 learning across the country. Understanding current provision and the priorities for an inspired and sustainable model is important if the future education and skills needs of learners are to be addressed. (Appendix 4 - Audit of Post-16 priorities and overview of Wolverhampton's school sixth forms, class sizes).

### **BIS/DfE Post-16 Skills Plan: Implications for the City of Wolverhampton**

The Government's recent *Post-16 Skills Plan* (July 2016) provides a new framework for Post-16 learning.

The Government wishes to see much greater focus on technical/vocational delivery in colleges and other Training Providers and to have academic provision as the priority for schools. (proposed technical/vocational and academic pathways – see Appendix 5). There is currently lack of clarity over which technical qualifications may be delivered by schools. Further information will be available by December 2016. The Government's key target is to increase progression onto apprenticeships.

The *Post-16 Skills Plan* raises specific issues for Wolverhampton schools which have particular success in the delivery of technical/vocational learning which does not match the Government's expectations of schools specialising in academic provision.

## **Black Country Area Review and Post-16 Provision Analysis**

As preparation for the Black Country Area Review of FE and sixth form colleges this year, in depth data analysis of Post-16 provision was undertaken. As well as informing the LA's response to the review, the analysis has provided additional data to inform strategic planning in relation to Post-16 provision and skills priorities. The review has led to Black Country Colleges working together with partners on 5 areas:

- Apprenticeships
- High Need SEND provision
- Learners with no qualifications
- Level 4 provision
- English and Maths

The development of a City Centre Campus for the College is also a priority for Wolverhampton and City wide consultation and planning is underway, as part of the proposed Learning Quarter development.

The LA is brokering discussion with Headteachers, College and University on opportunities for future collaboration, particularly in relationship to The Learning Quarter plans including new City Centre Post-16 provision for the College and other potential partners. The Learning Quarter will be developed and promoted as an attractive and viable offer which can support many, if not all, schools in the city.

### **Additional audit and infrastructure development**

#### **Wolverhampton's Young People Skills and Employment Group: strategic oversight of Post-16 strategy and implementation**

The development of a Post-16 strategy which covers many aspects of provision for young people from 14-25 is complex and Wolverhampton's Young People's Skills and Employment Group was created in May 2016 to provide an accountability framework and steer on Post-16 priorities to support young people in the City. The Group reports to Wolverhampton's Skills and Employment Board. See Appendix 6 for details of this and other networks to support Post-16 learning across the City.

### **4.0 Financial implications**

- 4.1** Advice will provide by finance colleagues but accountability for appreciating and detailing the legal implications remains with the accountable officer(s). Activity that is contributing to reducing youth unemployment is funded from a range of sources including mainstream, traded activity through schools and external funding including Big Lottery (Talent Match) and European Social Fund and Youth Employment Initiative (Impact). DWP have offered to co-fund a Youth Investment Fund to address youth unemployment in Wolverhampton.

MF/02112016/1



## **5.0 Legal implications**

- 5.1 Local authorities have broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. Specifically these are:
- To secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained. This is a duty under the Education Act 1996 To fulfil this, local authorities need to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area and to identify and resolve gaps in provision.
  - To make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training under Section 68 of ESA 20082 Tracking young people's participation is a key element of these duties.
  - Local Authorities must promote the effective participation in education and training of 16 and 17 year olds in their area with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.
  - Local authorities must maintain a tracking system to identify 16 and 17 year olds who are not participating in education or training, putting in place robust arrangements to identify young people who are not engaged in education or training or who have left provision and to offer support as soon as possible.

The City of Wolverhampton Council has entered into a collaboration agreement in relation to the delivery of the Impact project with the accountable body, Dudley MBC, through a Black Country European Social Fund bid which was successful for delivery of this Youth Employment Initiative across the four Local Authorities. RB/02112016/Q

## **6.0 Equalities implications**

- 6.1 All provision is required to meet equality and diversity standards. Various groups inform this process including inclusion advisory forums and individual institutional policies and procedures. Initiatives that help to tackle youth unemployment will have a positive implication since it is targeted young people at disadvantaged in the labour market.

## **7.0 Environmental implications**

- 7.1 Environmental implications are undertaken through provision planning. Sustainability is a cross cutting objective of all European funded bids and considered in the delivery of all European funded projects.

## **8.0 Human resources implications**

- 8.1 Rationalisation of provision may have HR implications but would be the responsibility of lead institutions. The core team of Impact Project Co-ordinator, Administrator and Employer Engagement officer will be based at the civic centre with Key Workers based outreach but with hot desking facilities in the civic centre.

## **9.0 Corporate landlord implications**

9.1 There will be significant property implications for any future school or college developments which will be reviewed as part of the options appraisal and through The Learning Quarter planning process.

## **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

10.1 Post-16 Review: SEB March 2016. Black Country Area Review: SEB May 2016. Post-16 priorities update June 2016. Education Board May 2016, August 2016 and September 2016

## **Appendix 1**

### **Employability/youth unemployment/careers information, advice and guidance – City issues and initiatives**

The City is not seeing a sufficient decline youth unemployment - currently 4.9%, which is more than double the national rate of 2.12%. Wolverhampton is working collaboratively to address this issue.

European Social Fund (ESF) and Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) funded 'Impact' Black Country project to in the Black Country will support young people between 15 and 29 not in employment, education or training. Wolverhampton's targets are to engage 3,342 young people, provide 1,237 with a customised support package and support 920 into employment, education and training. However the City is working collaboratively and in partnerships to provide an offer which is preventative, Specific initiatives to provide inclusive learning and an improved employment offer to young people.

Many young people in Wolverhampton experience multi barriers to moving into employment. The following initiatives are specifically targeting those with multiple barriers:

- Talent Match Black Country targets young people aged 18-24 who have been out of work, training or education for at least 6 months and who require additional support to overcome specific barriers to employment. The focus is on young offenders; young carers/parents; travelling families; disabled young people; young people engaged in substance misuse; and those who are homeless. The local hub is based on the YMCA.
- Supported Internships are personalised study programmes for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 16 to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so.
- Headstart will equip young people to cope better with difficult circumstances, preventing them from experiencing common mental health problems before they become serious issues.
- Individual Placement Scheme (IPS) evidence based approach to supported employment for people who have a severe mental illness.
- A timetable to address specific actions to reduce youth unemployment, including access to pre apprenticeships and apprenticeships is in place.
- Youth Offenders education and skills programme pilot is in development: a collaboration between the Local Authority, police and businesses.

### **Employability Skills**

- Employability skills are taught in schools and colleges but this is an area which needs additional focus. Two options may provide improvements. The Education Business Partnership (EBP) has developed a prototype of the 'Four Plus' campaign – if young people have four or more engagement with employers, they are five times less likely to

be NEET and five times more likely to achieve a career destinations and have better wage premium (Education Employers Taskforce)

- Other cities have developed employability passports which target supporting and celebrating employability skills. The passport can either focus on a learner model, (Plymouth) or an award for organisations, rather like Investors in People but for young people (Bristol model)
- Wolverhampton's Post-16 education and skills priorities have integrated recommendations from other policy documents eg '*The Employment Landscape for Young People in the UK-Challenges and Opportunities*', (July 2016) report recommendations to focus on employer engagement and local solutions: priorities have included a commitment to increase school-secured work experience, and the city is also committed to listening to young people to help shape, designing and testing solutions

### **Careers, Education, information, Advice and Guidance**

Issues around employability skills, Careers, Education, information, Advice and Guidance; curriculum quality; breadth of provision and progression need to be addressed to provide the scaffolding to enable progression into employment or further education; higher education or employment. Further statutory guidance is expected later this year as, nationally, there is inconsistency in the offer.

Locally, Connexions offers information and advice to young people helping them to get ready for adult and working life through: independent careers advice in schools provided by a qualified careers guidance professional; support through Connexions Personal Adviser and one-to-one confidential impartial advice for schools leavers on options available and guidance on careers and other issues such as housing health and benefit.

Schools currently commission relevant support including CWC traded services however new statutory guidance is expected as nationally, access to impartial information advice and guidance lacks consistency. The City Work Box is an important commitment to counter this trend and is supported by all the schools, The Way, the college and other settings.

Development of the '*Aspire*' programme in schools exists to make young people aware of the full range of career opportunities.

Most schools are now engaging with the Careers Industry kite mark Quality Award, with the others expected to be on board next year. This qualification is robust – the programme even includes a module on understanding labour market information to inform future career options for local learners.

### **Wolverhampton Education Business Partnership**

Wolverhampton Education Business Partnership (EBP) engages the support of local employers to develop the skills required of young learners ready for work. It facilitates a wide variety of activities organised into five programme areas: work experience or work based learning; professional industrial and business development placements for teachers; work related learning preparing students for the transition to work including careers events, visits to industry,

interview skills and CVs; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) ambassadors and activities/ events/ initiatives. In addition, local schools are benefiting from the national scheme.

### **The Careers and Enterprise Company Initiative**

The Careers and Enterprise Company initiative aims to match an Enterprise Adviser and secondary school on a one to one basis to develop an enhanced Careers, Enterprise and Employer Engagement Strategy for the school helping the school to access relevant local labour market information and signpost careers and enterprise activities in the local area. 19 schools in Wolverhampton are currently involved in the project working with years 7 – 13 and engaging over 4100 students.

### **Wolverhampton's Business Champions**

Wolverhampton's Business Champions represent the city's leading strategic businesses and together support 2,625 apprenticeships across the city and also offer work with schools to build links between education and business. The city has 8 champions, 20 companies engaged and 30 schools engaged in this programme.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Wolverhampton's Post-16 educational landscape/ Post-16 estate**

Of the 20 secondary mainstream schools, 15 are academies, (2 of which are free schools) 4 are LA maintained schools and 1 is a voluntary aided school. All but two of these schools offer education up to 19. The two that do not offer education up to 19 are St Matthias and The British Sikh School (currently only years 7 and 8). West Midlands Construction UTC offers courses for 14 – 19 year olds and The Royal takes pupils from 4 through to 19. Ten of the Wolverhampton Schools have expressed an interest in becoming an All Through School which would cater for Children from the age of 4 – 19. Any reconfiguration of provision is subject to an analysis of pupil place planning across the City.

The 15 Academy Schools are made of 12 different Multi Academy Trusts. Wolverhampton Vocational Training Centre (WVTC) opened in September 2015 and provides a unique learning environment to young adults, aged 16-18 with Special Educational Needs.

Additionally, the City of Wolverhampton College offers education mainly for 16+ learners. Their ambition is to increase pre-apprenticeship provision 14-19, by gaining Department for Education centre status so 14-16 provision can be delivered. The college also wishes to improve collaboration with local schools for part - time provision and progression onto apprenticeships, traineeships and Higher Apprenticeships, Post-16. The college is also expanding provision for SEND and other vulnerable learners.

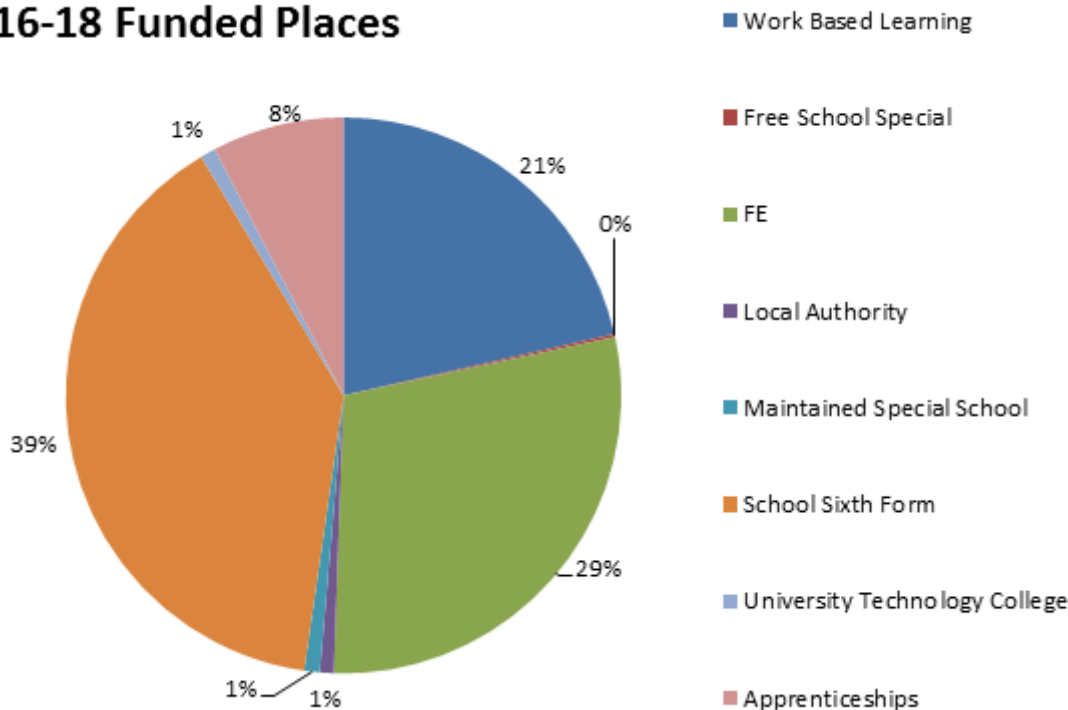
Excluding the City of Wolverhampton College, there were 2,700 students in Post-16 education in Wolverhampton in 2015/16. All schools, with the exception of two, offered Post-16 courses but in due course both of these schools have expressed interest in offering Post-16 education in the future.

Pupils aged 16+ remaining at school

- 55% pupils aged 16 years stayed on at school in September 2015 (School Census Spring 2016), with 47% of pupils aged 17 years still in school.
- Staying on rates vary considerably from school to school. The sixth form at Wolverhampton High School is larger than the related Year 11 cohort with additional pupils joining the school.
- The percentage of 16 year old staying on generally ranges from 39% to 85%.
- Over the last three years the percentage of pupils aged 16 years remaining at school has remained almost static.
- Out of the 1376 16 year old pupils staying on at school in 2014, 1182 continued for a second sixth form year; there are therefore some one year sixth form courses and/or some drop out from Year 12 to 13.

### Post-16 % Participation Breakdown

#### 16-18 Funded Places



### Appendix 3

#### Data on attainment and achievement in Wolverhampton schools

Wolverhampton performs relatively well with educational attainment (measured by 5 or more GCSE's including English and Maths) closing the gap with national average, high levels of educational participation and low levels of young people not in employment or training (NEETs).

The Wolverhampton average points score per A level entry, expressed as a grade, is C; this is in line with national. 8 out of 16 schools have an average grade of C and one school has a higher grade. 7 schools have grades lower than C, 5 of these are significantly lower than C (D- to D+)

There are wide variations across schools in the percentage of A level students achieving at least 3 A-levels at A\*-E. In some schools this figure is below 30% whilst in others it is above 60%.

The percentage achieving grades AAB or higher in at least two facilitating subjects is below the national figure of 12% in all schools with exception of the selective school.

For technical/vocational subjects the average point score per entry is above national for Wolverhampton and is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>, largely through delivery of BTEC programmes and for

### **Wolverhampton's Post-16 Education Achievement (2014/15)**

Secondary schools were rated as 108<sup>th</sup> in the country in December 2014 and this year being rated joint 81<sup>st</sup> and giving the City of Wolverhampton the accolade of being in the top 20% of **most improved authorities in the country.**

### **Overall Strengths in Post-16 results 2015**

- High Level 3 average point scores: At the end of Level 3 study (A level, academic and vocational combined) the average point score per entry in Wolverhampton for 2015 was 217.4. This was above national (215.9) and statistical neighbours (208.63) and Wolverhampton is ranked as 26<sup>th</sup> nationally on this measure.
- For all level 3 qualifications (A level, Academic and Vocational combined) the City of Wolverhampton is ranked 14<sup>th</sup> nationally, largely due to successful delivery of BTEC programmes, (753.1 compared to a national average of 717.8). The City a higher APS per student than any of our regional or Statistical Neighbours and is 26<sup>th</sup> in the country.
- Nationally the City are ranked 26<sup>th</sup> nationally (2014 - 19, 2013 - 42, 2012 - 68, 2011 - 79, 2010 - 129, 2009, 145, 2008 - 145) for average point score per entry, (217.4 compared to a national average of 215.9) and the City have a higher APS per entry than any of our regional or Statistical Neighbours
- Wolverhampton students continued to perform strongly in vocational subjects in 2015, making Wolverhampton an impressive 3<sup>rd</sup> in the country with an average points score of 740.4 at Key Stage 5. In 2015 results for technical/vocational and academic courses were the best in comparison with statistical and regional neighbours - 35.3 points higher than the national average
- 83.3% of people aged 19 were qualified to at least level 2 in 2014 which is below national but above statistical neighbours. The recent rate of improvement in this figure has been greater than that seen nationally
- The inequality gap in level 2 qualifications, between 19 year olds who had been claiming free school meals at 16 and those that had not been eligible for free school meals, has narrowed at a faster rate than national or statistical neighbours. The LA is ranked 30<sup>th</sup> on this measure

- 55% of people aged 19 in 2014 were qualified to at least level 3. This is below national but has recently increased at a faster rate than national
- The inequality gap in level 3 qualifications, between 19 year olds who had been claiming free school meals at 16 and those that had not been eligible for free school meals, is lower than national or statistical neighbours. The LA is ranked 37<sup>th</sup> on this measure.

### **Overall Weaknesses**

- Considerable variation in A level attainment between schools
- Low numbers achieving 3 A – levels and A levels in facilitating subjects
- The percentage of pupils achieving grades AAB or better in A-level qualifications (10.7%) was below national and statistical neighbours. Nationally this measure has seen a slight decline over the last 5 years but in Wolverhampton the decline has been greater than national or statistical neighbours; the LA is ranked at 111 on this measure
- For certain cohorts, progression into employment or further education or training reflected in the high 18-25 unemployment data
- Lack of a city wide framework to provide consistency in the delivery of employability skills in all settings

### **Appendix 4**

#### **Audit of Post-16 priorities and overview of Wolverhampton's school sixth forms, class sizes**

Further analysis was undertaken including an audit of Post-16 provision and Post-16 value added data (how much progress learners make). Insufficient Post-16 progress based on value added data (indicating how well a school has brought on pupils from one test level to another (eg GCSEs) is prevalent across some secondary schools.

Value added was significantly below average and in the lowest 10% for the qualification type(s): academic/ vocational/ GCE A level/ GCE AS level in 3 schools. Academic/ Vocational/ GCE A-level/ GCE AS-level value added was significantly below average and in the lowest 10% for the group(s): Free School Meals (FSM) / non-FSM/ male/ female in 5 schools. More work on how to improve value added results through school to school support is now under development.

The audit also provided a gap analysis of provision in the city, especially around apprenticeships and some academic subject areas eg Modern Foreign Languages. The data collected is informing discussions with schools on Post-16 learning: financial viability; provision planning; small sixth forms and small class sizes.

Lack of qualifications; SEND High Needs Provision, Apprenticeships and GCSE English and Maths are areas of concern for Post-16 learners being picked up through the Review and LA joint planning, including improving employability skills and access to employment issues.



From January – March 2016 a review of Post-16 priorities was undertaken. Fifteen priorities were identified following consultation with various stakeholders including secondary headteachers and internal and external partners/stakeholders. These have now been actioned and outstanding issues incorporated in the subsequent planning document detailed later in the report. New networks are in place to provide additional infrastructure and direction:

- Apprenticeships: brokered by LA
- Post-16 Schools Network
- Post-16 Subject Network – supported by Wolverhampton University
- The Learning Quarter development now has an internal LA Steering Group, including education
- Wolverhampton’s Young People Skills and Employment Group provides overall strategic lead on Post-16 strategy (There is a parallel adult Group to provide continuity across all phases).

Additional sectoral analysis was undertaken to identify how local provision aligns or otherwise to Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) priorities. As part of the Black Country Area Review additional data was collected on NEET learners, learner preferred destinations, travel to learn/work patterns as well as highlighting activity to support NEETs and at risk of NEETs eg Youth Employment Initiative and High Needs SEND learners with a focus on progression into employment.

### **Financial viability**

Small sixth forms are not financially viable. Further work on financial viability of sixth forms was shared at a secondary heads’ workshop to inform future planning of sixth forms and to inform consideration of developing Post-16 provision within the proposed Learning Quarter. Developing the Post-16 vision will bring more solutions and the schools are certainly more open to the discussions than they were at the beginning of the last academic year.

### **School Sixth Forms**

Historically the schools have a desire to maintain sixth forms for three reasons. These are:

- A. Financial
- B. Recruitment and Retention
- C. Prestige

A. To lose sixth form funding would have a big impact on the schools finances, even though small class sizes and sixth forms are not financially cost effective. Progression to apprenticeships is not always promoted, resulting in some learners staying on in school rather than following work based learning pathways.

- B. The recruitment and retention issue is the belief that the opportunity to teach 6<sup>th</sup> form is a draw for teachers and if schools lost this it would make recruiting teachers more difficult.
- C. It is generally perceived by schools and parents, that a well-functioning and successful 6<sup>th</sup> form is important, especially when other schools have high performing 6<sup>th</sup> forms. Appendix 4 provides a summary of the Wolverhampton school sixth form and college recruitment profile for 2015/16. The Department for Education recommends a minimum sixth forms size as 200 learners as small sixth forms reduce learner choice, are less efficient and not financially viable.

### Small School Sixth Forms

#### Summary of Wolverhampton Schools 6 Form and College Recruitment Profile 2015/16

Aldersley High School	118
City of Wolverhampton College	1,986
Colton Hills Community School	159
Coppice Performing Arts School	126
Green Park School (SEND provision)	8
Heath Park	218
Highfields School	290
Moreton Community School	139
Moseley Park	106
North East Wolverhampton Academy	280
Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Sports College	117
Penn Fields School	25
Penn Hall School	11
Smestow School, A Specialist Sports College	173
South Wolverhampton and Bilston Academy	150

St Edmunds Catholic Academy, A Specialist Mathematics & Computing College	107
St Peter's Collegiate Church of England School	205
Tettenhall Wood School (SEND provision)	8
The King's Church of England School	116
Wednesfield High School, A Specialist Engineering College	152
West Midlands Construction UTC	61
Westcroft Sport and Vocational College	10
Wolverhampton City Council	55
Wolverhampton Girls' High School	232
Wolverhampton Vocational Training (SEND provision)	12

It is significant and worrying that only five school sixth forms meet the Department for Education recommendation of 200 learners as a minimum size sixth form which raises questions about future viability and quality of provision. (Appendix 4)

Plans for a City Centre Campus which providing additional places for learners from unviable schools are under consideration.

### **Small Post-16 Class Sizes**

Over 200 classes taught in Wolverhampton Schools and the College have 3 or less students registered to them. This is clearly not helpful from a pupil learning environment or economically effective for the school.

An overview of small class sizes in vocational and academic provision has been distributed to schools to aid rationalisation and better collaboration across the city. Many sixth forms are not financially viable. In academic subjects there are significant numbers of classes which have less than 10 in a class and many only 10-15. The breadth of choice is also limited in some schools; these issues need addressing if a quality offer is to be achieved.

### **Collaboration**

There is some collaboration between schools with is organised locally by the schools and these roughly fall into geographic areas, i.e. Compton and the North Area. Voluntary partnership working by its very nature is fragile and does not lend to an open and inclusive partnership for all schools. They are also vulnerable to changes or cancellation of any agreement at any time and this can put pupils in a perilous position.

Over the course of conversations, views have softened and schools are looking at wider collaborations with other schools in their local area and some schools are now talking about structural change within their sixth forms.

There is an understanding that having a central 6<sup>th</sup> form centre/college where the heads have some ownership is a more attractive option than having a rival 6<sup>th</sup> form college.

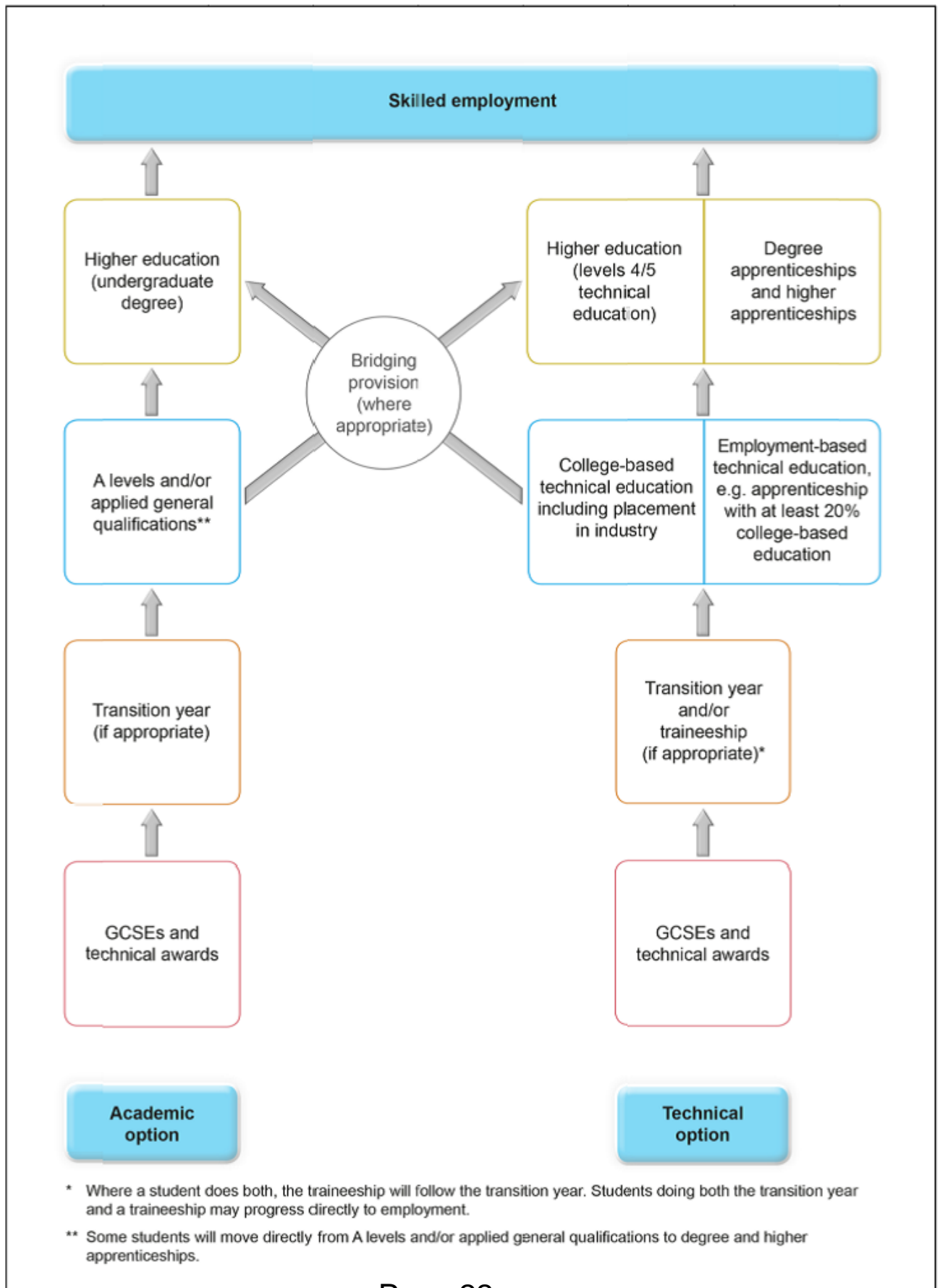
Collaboration with schools, employers, the University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton College and other Training Providers is essential to inform reconfiguration of Post-16 provision and progression planning.

The three Directorates now have significantly improved evidence for performance and provision, from which trends can be understood and education and skills issues better understood – the main outcomes are the need for significant reconfiguration of Post-16 provision across the City and better progression to employment or further training, in particular onto pre - apprenticeship/apprenticeship and Higher Apprenticeship programmes.



## Appendix 5

### Proposed Technical/Vocational and academic Pathways



## Appendix 6

### Wolverhampton's Young People Skills and Employment Group

The Group includes senior representation from the Local Authority; schools, University of Wolverhampton (Deputy Vice - Chancellor), Wolverhampton College (The Principal), other Training Providers, Connexions and connectEd. This forum will also consider the implications for post-16 learners to support Wolverhampton's aspiration to be a Learning City, currently positioned in the Capital planning section of the Post-16 priorities.

The focus of the group is to focus not only on education provision and support but the wider remit of skills and employment. The remit of the group will be 14-25 for many areas of its work to reflect the need for provision and progression from Key Stage 4 and to meet statutory requirements for vulnerable learners to the age of 25.

The development of a shared Post-16 learning vision, supported by the current City wide infrastructure changes is crucial to improving the quality of learning, access and choice for all learners across the city.

The Group also is advised on Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance issues which increasingly is providing support pre-16 to inform the Post- 16 offer.

The mapping exercise reviewing support available for young people will develop new approaches working with schools and the headline area for the Post-16 plan has integrated the need to considering broader barriers and addressing issues around both labour supply and demand.

The Group has endorsed the five Post-16 Priorities supported by an implementation plan. The outcome will be to ensure the delivery of future education and skills provision and support which meets national, regional and local priorities and responds appropriately to both learner and employer need.

The Group has prioritised four sectors to show impact on improving progression into key sectors with key educational institutions in the City to lead:

- Health and Social Care: Smestow School brokering collaboration
- Business/retail: Colton Hills School brokering collaboration
- Construction : UTC brokering collaboration

Engineering: Wednesfield School brokering collaboration

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