

# Young People's Education and Skills Board

Meeting to be held on 17 February 2022 at 1400

Councillor Nesil Caliskan, Leader of Enfield Council and  
London Councils Lead on Skills and Employment in the Chair

**Location:** Online via Microsoft Teams

**Contact Officer:** Peter O'Brien

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## Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Declarations of interest
3. Notes of last meeting and matters arising - For decision
4. Policy Update - For discussion  
**Paper – Peter O'Brien**
5. Performance Report - For discussion  
**Paper – Peter O'Brien**
6. Young People and Recovery - For discussion /action  
**Presentation – Josie Todd**
7. Action Plan - Progress - For decision / action  
**Paper – Peter O'Brien**
8. Any other business

**Date of next meeting: 23 June 2022 at 1400 (online)**

# Minutes

## Young People's Education and Skills Board meeting

<b>Date</b>	21 October 2021	<b>Venue</b>	Online via Teams
<b>Meeting Chair</b>	Councillor Nesil Caliskan, Leader Enfield Council, London Councils Executive Lead on Skills and Employment		
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Peter O'Brien		
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### Attendance:

#### *Board Members:*

Councillor Nesil Caliskan	CHAIR, Leader, Enfield Council and London Councils Executive Member for Skills and Employment
Anthony Haines	Senior Manager, FE Territorial Team – London and South-East, Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
Benjamin Anderson	Community Manager, Landsec, London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP) – Board Member
Councillor Damian White	Leader, London Borough of Havering, London Councils Executive Member for Schools and Children's Services
David Steeds	Employer and Skills Lead, London and Essex, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) representing Sarah Hernandez
Gail Tolley	Strategic Director for Children and Young People, London Borough of Brent representing the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS)
Professor Graeme Atherton	Head, Centre for Levelling Up and Director of National Education Opportunities Network, University of West London

John Prior	Principal, Orchard Hill College, representing NATSPEC
Mary Vine Morris	Director, London Region, Association of Colleges (AoC)
Michael Heanue	Principal Policy Officer, Greater London Authority (GLA), LEAP - Officer
Rebecca Durber	Regional Engagement Manager, Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)
Dr Sam Parrett OBE	Group Principal and CEO, London and South East College Group, representing AoC – General Further Education
Sarah Wilkins	Head of Education and Youth (GLA), representing the Deputy Mayor of London
Yolande Burgess	Strategy Director, London Councils

*Officers:*

Peter O'Brien	Regional Manager Young People's Education and Skills (YPES), London Councils
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*Guest:*

Dianna Neal	Strategic Lead - Enterprise, Economy & Skills, London Councils (Presenter, Item 7)
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## **1 Welcome and introductions**

- 1.1 The Chair introduced herself and explained that she had been elected as Executive Member for Skills and Employment at London Councils' Leaders Committee's Annual General Meeting and would consequently take the chair of the Young People's Education and Skills Board. Board members then introduced themselves to the Chair and the meeting.
- 1.2 A particularly warm welcome was offered to Councillor Damian White and Rebecca Durber, who were attending their first meeting as Board members and those who were deputising for other Board members.

## **2 Declarations of Interest**

2.1 No interests were declared.

## **3 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

3.1 These were agreed.

3.2 The following matters arose from the minutes:

- Pan London Supported Employment Board: Yolande Burgess said that joint chairs had now been agreed and the first meeting would take place in February 2022.
- Letter to Ministers on Apprenticeship flexibilities: A letter had been sent, but the Minister declined to take the actions suggested.
- Reconnect London: It was agreed that Board members would report any specific areas of progress as necessary.
- A Performance Update is included in the agenda

## **4 Policy Update**

4.1 Peter O'Brien introduced discussion on this item, referring to the paper submitted with the agenda. In the ensuing debate:

- the Board was provided with clarification that London Councils had made the case for additional funding for the education, skills and employment needs of Afghan refugees. ALDCS has urged the government to provide additional grant funding to support the increased demand. Although principally helping people aged 19 and older, the GLA has agreed a change in the eligibility rules for the Adult Education Budget in London to enable Afghan refugees to be funded.
- Although there had been an impressive take-up in Kickstart, the eligibility criteria make it difficult for 16- to 18-year-olds to join the programme and there were some concerns over the conversion of starts into permanent jobs, the lack of training in the jobs and the continuing instability of the youth jobs market.

- The tremendous increase in demand for places for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), especially those with complex and high needs was adding significant pressure on budgets.

## **5 Performance Report**

5.1 Peter O'Brien spoke to the report provided to the Board, referring to the main conclusions and the evidence that supported them. He explained how the report supported both planning and monitoring by the Young People's Education and Skills team at London Councils.

5.2 In discussion, the Board raised the following:

- Local data is also available through Intelligent London<sup>1</sup>
- A significant proportion of young people excluded are believed to have speech or language issues, which their educational setting may not be able to fully provide support
- Population shifts, which may be related both to the pandemic and the UK's new relationship with the European Union, appear to have resulted in fewer young people enrolling in FE Colleges this academic year, although the proportion and numbers taking up places in school sixth-forms remains very high.
- The disparities in performance noted in the report often pre-date the pandemic. The GLA is due to publish a report, carried out with the Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) in December that will cover this in greater depth.

**Action: Sarah Wilkins to provide Peter O'Brien with a copy of the GLA's report on performance disparities for despatch to the Young People's Education and Skills Board.**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.intelligentlondon.org.uk/>

## **6 New Deal for Young People**

- 6.1 Sarah Wilkins delivered a presentation that provided the meeting with an update on the progress being made on the London Recovery Board's New Deal for Young People mission, which included introducing the mentoring confidence standard and preparing a mentoring quality statement. Further development work on these key areas of work is in hand, together with commissioning and capacity building.
- 6.2 The Chair thanked Sarah for the presentation and invited comments from Board members during which the following comments were made:
- Insights from Higher Education's experience in mentoring may assist in the development work currently under way.
  - Businesses may also be able to support the development work and provide mentors.
  - The more targeted approach now being pursued was welcomed and further involvement of senior local authority officers may help achieve further breakthroughs in development and delivery.

**Action: The presentation on New Deal for Young People to be provided to the Board in the post-meeting note.**

## **7 London Economic Recovery Framework**

- 7.1 The Chair welcomed Dianna Neal to the meeting. Dianna spoke to a presentation in which the impact of the pandemic on young people, particularly young women, young Black Londoners, and those with low or no qualifications, was demonstrated. Dianna described the London Economic Recovery Framework in the context of the Recovery Missions. The Framework, which is being finalised prior to publication, is based on 'pillars' (Jobs, Business, Thriving Neighbourhoods, Connected City and Global London) founded on the cross-cutting themes of Achieving Net Zero - Green Economy and Narrowing Social, Economic and Health Inequalities. Dianna explained London's response to date, the positions taken in London Councils'

submission to the Spending Review and the proposals for a London Youth Employment Pledge, to which contributions were requested.

7.2 In the debate, Board members:

- Referred to their own responses to the Spending Review and sought opportunities to work more closely together on issues of common concern, such as reforms to Apprenticeship funding.
- Discussed industry-specific employment issues, particularly retail and hospitality as these were often sectors in which young people entered the labour market for the first time
- Noted that the pan-London Supported Employment Board would add impetus to employing young people with SEND.

**Action: Peter O'Brien to include the slides on the London Economic Recovery Framework and a summary of London Councils' submission to the Spending Review in the post-meeting note.**

## **8 Young People's Education and Skills Action Plan 2021 to 2022**

8.1 Peter O'Brien explained how the plan was the culmination of the process followed by the Board in its previous meetings. Peter also said that the agreed plan would form the basis of the team's engagement with borough officers and partners through the Operational Sub-Group (OSG).

8.2 In the debate, Board members:

- Agreed that the Action Plan brought together all that had been discussed during its recent meetings and demonstrated how the resources available would be used.
- Further agreed that the Action Plan was appropriately based on and aligned with the recovery Missions, that it provided the basis for partnership working and that partners should make appropriate reference to the Action Plan when developing their own policies and programmes.
- Were content that new areas of work, such as homelessness, were being taken forward in conjunction with borough officers and the OSG.

## **9 Any Other Business**

- 9.1 Michael Heanue said that GLA and London Councils officers were preparing a paper for the London Recovery Board about young people and recovery. An outline of the paper and an opportunity to contribute will be shared with the Board.

**Action: Michael Heanue to provide an outline of the paper about young people and recovery to Peter O'Brien for inclusion in the post-meeting note.**

## **10 Any Other Business**

- 10.1 The date of the next meeting and programme of meetings for 2022-23 will be confirmed shortly.



# Young People's Education and Skills Board

## Policy Update

Item 4

**Date** 17 February 2022

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**Summary** This paper summarises the policy updates that have been published since the last Board meeting and outlines current developments of government policy on Levelling-Up, which were announced in February.

**Recommendation** The Board is asked to discuss this paper and agree any action necessary.

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 Since the Board met on 21 October 2021, two policy updates have been published (November 2021 and a combined December 2021/January 2022). The government made major policy announcements early February about its levelling-up agenda, coverage of which can be found in paragraph 4 of this paper ahead of its inclusion in the next published Policy Update.
- 1.2 The format of the Policy Updates changed in October so that they are shorter, more accessible and easier to navigate, while still providing extensive coverage of the policy, research and intelligence that relates to 16 to 18 education and skills. Alongside this change, we modified the webpage<sup>1</sup> dedicated to the Policy Updates so that it provides instant access to essential information. In addition to the Young People's Education and Skills Board members and the Operational Sub-Group, Policy Updates are circulated to councillors and officers in London's councils and to other partner and stakeholder organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/37307>

- 1.3 All our updates provide an overview of developments in national policy, Parliamentary activity (including legislation), research and opinions that are shaping the education and training of Londoners aged 16 to 18.

## **2 Policy Update – November 2021**

- 2.1 In November, we reflected on COP26 and the various responses within the sector. We also noted the impact of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 and the various mechanisms in place to control its spread. We also covered a great deal of activity in Parliament that had an impact on education and skills, including further progress on the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill and included various statistics and reports on the labour market and youth employment and some developments on London's recovery.

## **3 Policy Update – December 2021 and January 2022**

- 3.1 The combined Policy Update for December 2021 and January 2022 was issued in parallel with the papers for this Board meeting. It provided coverage of the funding decisions that flow from the government's Annual Budget and Spending Review of November 2021, particularly, the priorities for the Department for Education (DfE) and the issues for local government in London. It also contained links to the significant body of research that showed:
- the continuing concerns about the pace of recovery in the labour market, particularly as it affects young Londoners
  - young people's mental health is a focus of attention
  - the volume of research into climate change and progress to net zero has increased in the wake of COP26.
- 3.2 The update again referred to activity in Parliament and anticipated that levelling-up will be a major topic for the February update, providing links to announcements (though made in February, it was appropriate to alert the Update's readership).
- 3.3 Board members are invited to comment on any issue raised in the November or December/January Policy Updates.

## 4 Levelling Up

4.1 On 2 February 2022 the government published the White Paper, *Levelling Up the United Kingdom*<sup>2</sup>. The White Paper provides substance to the government's 2019 manifesto pledge to share opportunity more equally across the country and includes details of its intention to introduce a new devolution framework, the establishment of a new independent data body and a new Levelling Up Advisory Council.

4.2 The White Paper is framed around 12 missions within four broad areas:

- boosting productivity and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
- spreading opportunities and improving public services, especially in those areas where they are weakest
- restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
- empowering local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency

4.3 It commits to:

- further consultation on the measurements used to judge the success of the missions and on giving the government a statutory responsibility to report on progress
- a comprehensive programme of engagement across the UK
- consultation on the devolution framework
- the establishment of a new body focusing on local government data
- appointing Levelling Up Directors across the UK
- simplifying growth funding
- creating three sub-groups to support a new Levelling Up Advisory Council.

4.4 The main implications for the Board are:

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

- the government will set out a plan for streamlining the local growth funding landscape to reduce the number of individual funding pots and introduce better coordinated bidding processes. It wants to ensure that places have robust monitoring and evaluation plans to assess the impact of their investment and spending and tailor spending and delivery to the local landscape. However, the White Paper does not offer any new spending and investment and it implies that London and the south-east will receive only highly targeted additional funding in the future. It is unclear whether the full range of services that supported young Londoners through the former European Structural Investment Funds will continue under the proposed funding regime. In particular, the programmes that encouraged young people at risk of early-leaving to continue in learning and the rapid re-engagement of young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and provided valuable support each year to thousands of young Londoners may not continue in the shape and volume to which we have become accustomed.
- The government is encouraging the integration of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and their business boards into Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), the Greater London Authority (GLA) and County Deals, where these exist. It is unclear whether these arrangements will provide the basis of employer-led approval of the Local Skills Improvement Plans envisaged by the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill.

4.5 Central to the White Paper are 12 new missions which cover the four broad areas noted at paragraph 4.2. The timescale to achieve these missions is 2030 and they will be subject to periodic review by government. The missions are included in an annex to this paper.

4.6 The missions are of greatest relevance to the Board are:

- By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90 per cent of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.

### *Metrics*

- Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by end of primary school
  - Percentage of young people achieving GCSEs (and equivalent qualifications) in English and maths by age 19
  - Percentage of schools rated good or outstanding by Ofsted
  - Persistent absences for all pupils and disadvantaged and vulnerable cohorts of children
  - Percentage of 5-year olds achieving 'expected level' on literacy, communication and maths early learning goals
- By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.

### *Metrics*

- 19+ Further Education and Skills Achievements (qualifications) excluding community learning, Multiply and bootcamps
- Number of starts, and achievements, on apprenticeships per 1,000
- Proportion of the population aged 16 – 64 with level 3+ qualifications
- 19+ further education and skills participation

4.7 Beneath these missions are a depth of detail that relate to the entire education and skills systems and the continuum of learning across age groups and stages of learning. Their success depends on the emergence of a well-connected education, skills and employment system that equips young people with the resilience they need to make transitions at each key stage and into employment.

4.8 **Education mission:** The White Paper proposes further school improvement through new Education Investment Areas (EIAs), covering the third of council areas where educational attainment is weakest, plus any additional local

authorities that contain either an existing Opportunity Area or were previously identified as having the highest potential for rapid improvement. The DfE will also consult on moving schools in these areas with successive 'requires improvement' Ofsted judgements into strong multi-academy trusts, "so that they can better access the support they need to improve". The government "will ensure that talented children from disadvantaged backgrounds have access to a post-16 provider with a track record of progress on to leading universities by opening new 16-19 free schools targeted in areas where they are most needed, such as high priority EIAs."

- 4.9 In addition, the White Paper promises to create a new digital education service, the UK National Academy, which will support pupils from all backgrounds and areas of the UK to succeed at the very highest levels.
- 4.10 *Reflection:* While these proposals are based on sound evidence, it should be noted that the pandemic has disrupted the education of all pupils. Over the last two years we have pointed to the effects the pandemic has had on those from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds. The impact of the disruption to education is likely to be felt for several years and is not confined to those with historic performance or quality issues. There is a case for funding to match the needs of individuals who have lost learning as well as areas and institutions.
- 4.11 When considering whether to move schools into multi-academy trusts (MATs), the experience of borough support for improvement should be considered (boroughs are being enabled to set up their own MATs). We have maintained a position that decisions on academisation should be based on what is in the best interests of pupils and improving their outcomes.
- 4.12 **Skills mission:** The White Paper sets out five elements to support this mission:
- putting local employers at the heart of provision
  - strengthening locally accessible institutions
  - ensuring all individuals have lifetime access to training
  - offering new opportunities to access high quality work and progress in the workplace

- providing employment support for disabled people and people with health conditions.
- 4.13 The White Paper and its accompanying announcements by the DfE raise the prospect of a joined up, locally responsive employment and skills offer to help people increase their skills and progress in work without having to move away from home. The system in England is complex and difficult to join up for people, places and employers given there are 50 different national skills and employment programmes with separate objectives, eligibility, incentives, accountabilities, and providers operating across different areas. The White Paper confirms an increase in apprenticeship funding.
- 4.14 *Reflection:* The White Paper opens the possibilities of a better connected system working in the interests of Londoners and businesses. This has been an aspiration for some time and partners have been working towards this goal. Consequently, London is well placed to capitalize on the proposed reforms. We would, however, have preferred to have seen a more fundamental change to the Apprenticeship Levy and will continue to lobby for this with government and in debate on forthcoming legislation.
- 4.15 **DfE Announcement:** The DfE announced the education elements of the White Paper a day ahead of its official release<sup>3</sup>. This included:
- confirmation of the education mission and the Education Investment Areas (none of which are in London)
  - a National Youth Guarantee so that every young person in England will have access to regular clubs and activities, adventures away from home and volunteering opportunities by 2025 (this is also supported by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport<sup>4</sup>)
  - additional investment in the Supporting Families Programme

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/package-to-transform-education-and-opportunities-for-most-disadvantaged?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm\\_source=b89c0ef0-099f-4c54-91d1-65342ac70372&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/package-to-transform-education-and-opportunities-for-most-disadvantaged?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=b89c0ef0-099f-4c54-91d1-65342ac70372&utm_content=daily)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-outlines-ambitious-plans-to-level-up-activities-for-young-people?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm\\_source=b1ab2e4b-dd5b-4606-8ac1-0f30a9c9e07e&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-outlines-ambitious-plans-to-level-up-activities-for-young-people?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=b1ab2e4b-dd5b-4606-8ac1-0f30a9c9e07e&utm_content=daily)

- establishing a new Future Skills Unit which will look at the data and evidence of where skills gaps exist and in what industries
- making Institutes of Technology (IoTs) the pre-eminent organisation for technical Science, Technology Engineering and Maths education in England, through which successful IoTs may apply for a Royal Charter, as this is seen as helping them “secure their long-term position as anchor institutions in their regions, placing them on a par with the UK’s world-leading historic universities”
- doubling the capacity of the Supported Internship programme to provide thousands more young people who have additional needs with the skills to secure and sustain paid employment and drive up the standards and quality of internship delivery across the country for students who have an education, health and care plan.

4.16 *Reflection:* Achieving the education mission and its elements requires action throughout the education and training system. While improvements in the basic skills of children (literacy, numeracy and digital skills) will underpin academic attainment in later life and form a more effective basis to acquire higher and technical skills, this will only achieve the ultimate goal of a more highly skilled and competitive workforce in the long-term if young people are adequately supported through each transition point in the stages of learning and, in particular, provided with relevant, high-quality careers advice.

4.17 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund:** The Government published the pre-launch guidance for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)<sup>5</sup> in conjunction with the Levelling Up White Paper. It confirmed that the UKSPF will be £2.6 billion allocated up to March 2025 and will be allocated to places rather than through a competitive bidding process. In London, the allocation will be made to the GLA. The fund will support programmes under the priorities of communities and place; local businesses; and people and skills. Lead bodies will commence the development of Local Investment Plans with local partners from March 2022 to determine the priorities and outcomes for their local area. Details of allocations, the Multiply Programme and guidance for

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-pre-launch-guidance>



investment plans are expected soon. The government is encouraging lead authorities to start collaborating with local partners ahead of the publication of the guidance.

- 4.18 *Reflection:* It appears that the UKSPF will provide lower funding than was available through the European Structural Investment Funds and it may not therefore be possible to provide all the programmes that supported young Londoners who are, or are at risk of becoming, NEET.

## **5 Recommendation**

- 5.1 The Board is asked to discuss this paper and agree any action necessary.

## Annex - Levelling Up Missions

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**Theme:** Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging

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Focus area	Mission
Digital connectivity	By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, and the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
	By 2030, domestic public investment in research and development (R&D) outside the greater south east will increase by at least 40%, and over the Spending Review period by at least one third. This additional government funding will seek to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.
	By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.
	By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.

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**Theme:** Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest

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Focus area	Mission
Education	By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
Skills	By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
Health	By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by 5 years.
Well-being	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.

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**Theme:** Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost

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Focus area	Mission
Pride in place	By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
Housing	By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas. (1)
Crime	By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst affected areas.

(1) Government will consult on the impact on the private rented market and particularly those on the lowest incomes. Further detail will be set out once the review of the Decent Homes Standard has concluded.

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**Theme:** Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency

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Focus area	Mission
Local leadership	By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement

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# Young People's Education and Skills Board

## Performance Report

Item 5

**Date** 17 February 2022

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**Summary** This paper provides a summary of the latest Performance Report, which is now available on a dedicated webpage.

**Recommendation** Board members are invited to comment on any aspect of the Performance Report and recommend any necessary action.

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 Following the last meeting of the Board, the detailed Performance Report that underpins our planning and monitoring process has been updated and, in line with our commitment to transparency, has been published<sup>1</sup> on the internet. It is our intention to refresh the Performance Report regularly as new data becomes available. The focus of the Report is on our interpretation of the data and the conclusions we draw from them, referring also to the analysis in Intelligent London<sup>2</sup>. Surveys and opinions of other organisations continue to be reported to the Board and other partners through our monthly Policy Updates.
- 1.2 While the main updates in statistics are expected in March, this paper provides a brief overview of the latest performance report.

## 2 Coverage

- 2.1 The main Performance Report has five sections: Contextual Information (that is, population forecasts and information about the characteristics of learners), Participation (using the definition of “effective participation”), Achievement,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/39414>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.intelligentlondon.org.uk/>

Progression and Learning Journey. It is prefaced by a brief summary and updated statement of “The Story of London”.

### **3 Summary of Performance**

- 3.1 The main findings and conclusions from the Performance Report are attached to this paper as an annex.
- 3.2 In the new Learning Journey section of the report, reference has been paid to a recent report from the Office for National Statistics *Education, social mobility and outcomes for students receiving free school meals in England: initial findings on earnings outcomes by demographic and regional factors*<sup>3</sup>. Using data to track individuals’ progress through the education system and into employment, this report demonstrates that children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) are more likely to move into jobs that are lower paid than the jobs entered by children who were not eligible for FSM.
- 3.3 The September Guarantee figures for 2021<sup>4</sup> have also been published recently.

### **4 Recommendation**

- 4.1 Board members are invited to comment on any aspect of the Performance Report and recommend any necessary action.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/educationandchildcare/articles/educationsocialmobilityandoutcomesforstudentsreceivingfreeschoolmealsinengland/initialfindingsonearningsoutcomesbydemographicandregionalfactors>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/september-guarantee-offers-of-education-or-training-for-16-to-17-year-olds>

## **Annex – Extract from the Young People's Education and Skills Performance Report, February 2022**

### **Main findings**

1. London's diversity is evident when looking at any aspect of the education and training of 16- to 18-year-olds: participation, achievements and progression vary significantly between boroughs, neighbourhoods and according to individual characteristics. While it is true that most pupils, students, apprentices and trainees are likely to need additional help post-Covid, the Summary of the Evidence Base and the research we conducted before the Covid-19 crisis suggest that those children and young people who fared less well in education before the emergence of Covid-19 are most likely to need extra support during the recovery. For example:
  - White British young people aged 16 to 18 have the lowest rate of participation in learning of all of London's ethnic groups. White British young people may therefore need greater encouragement to return to and stay in their education setting.
  - Studies have shown that, of White people, there is a specific issue of lower participation, achievement and progression from "working class" and lower income families.
  - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) and Black Caribbean children and young people have high rates of permanent exclusion and there is a strong correlation between exclusion and both low attainment and poor progression outcomes, short-term and long-term. This could mean that considering the most suitable provision for GRT and Black Caribbean young people may be essential if all young people are to return to and remain in their education setting.
  - Children and young people from low-income families and those in large family groups are likely to have found it more difficult than most to participate in on-line and distance learning and may be in greater need of support on their return to learning.

- Attainment by young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those entitled to FSM and those in care or who have left care, though much improved in recent years, is still lower than average. Moreover, the progression rates for young people with these characteristics are still much lower than those without them.
  - Whereas the London average in all three of the indicators of 16 to 18 education and training prioritised by the Young People's Education and Skills Board (that is, participation, achievement and progression) is often leading the way for the rest of the country, this tends to mask the disparities based on where people live, their family background or their personal circumstances.
  - While the headline figures for participation and key stage 4 attainment appear good in comparison with the rest of the country, this is not the experience of every young Londoner; and indeed, in some cases, even being the best in the country means that London still falls short in some international comparisons. London's reputation as one of the leading world-class cities depends on continuous improvement in all aspects of educational performance.
  - Achievements at key stage 5 and by age 19 are improving and have been for some time, but the long-term outcomes of young people who do not go to university remains an issue.
2. This paper provides the data that illustrates this picture of 16 to 18 education and skills in London more vividly.

## Context

3. The Covid-19 pandemic affected participation, achievement and progression in different ways. While we can, with great confidence, report on historic performance up to 2019, we are taking on board the government's advice and express caution over some of the figures for 2020 and 2021. The main issues to consider are:
- *Participation*: More young people continued in learning after key stage 4



- As is typical during periods of uncertainty in the labour market, young people who may in other times have entered a job (including an apprenticeship) - and their families - judged it better to continue in learning and improve their qualifications rather than find work.
  - More young people achieved the grades at key stage 4 than enabled them to take up a place on a level 3 course.
  - It is unclear whether young people who continued in learning after key stage 4 and who may in other years have left their courses early, or whose attendance may not have been regular, participated effectively in their courses.
- *Achievement:* The differences between the methods for awarding grades in 2020 and 2021 from other years makes comparisons between years difficult, though the proportion of young Londoners attaining top grades in both GCSEs and A levels increased considerably.
  - *Progression:* Because of the grades awarded in 2020, more young people than would usually have been expected progressed from key stage 4 into level 3 courses and from key stage 5 into university.

## Overall Conclusion

4. Taken as whole, the performance of the education and skills system in London shows that many thousands of young people are very well served by a high quality curriculum delivered by first class teachers and tutors in well run institutions. It is a mature sector, exceptionally self-aware, conscious of its duties to young people and the wider community and with a track record of rising to the challenges placed before it. The challenges that the sector is facing now are:
  - Addressing disparities in performance based on the ethnicity, family income and background of students.
  - The data demonstrates very clearly that there is a long-standing cycle of disparities in educational performance based on family income leading to low paid employment. There is a pressing need to break this cycle and

promote social mobility. While this cannot be accomplished by the education system alone, working collaboratively to improve the prospects for low-income families is an important element of London's recovery.

- Ensuring young people can complete their studies and catch up on any learning they missed during the pandemic.
  - Resourcing an increase in participation.
5. London should be very proud of its 16 to 18 education and training system and for what it does for young people, businesses, communities and the future prosperity of London as a world-class city.
  6. In addition to being well-placed to capitalise on pending changes to Post-16 Technical Education, the sector also has the capacity to deliver excellent academic and theoretical education and to provide to the country – and the world – the research and development capability it needs to respond to both the pandemic (and any future similar emergencies) and climate change.
  7. Moreover, the sector continues to provide opportunities to young people who have emerged from compulsory education without the basic skills and qualifications they need to get work and get on in work. In the era of levelling-up, it is important that this section of London's population does not get left behind.
  8. In short, London's 16 to 18 education and skills system is conscious of the areas in which it needs to improve and, with the right funding and incentives, will be able to address them with greater pace.

# Young People's Education and Skills Board

## Action Plan - Progress

Item 7

**Date** 17 February 2022

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**Summary** This paper provides the Board with the progress being made against the ambitions and targets set out in the annual plan for academic year 2021 to 2022.

**Recommendation** The Board is asked to discuss the points raised in the paper and suggest further actions.

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 Having agreed its Annual Plan for 2021 to 2022, the Board asked for regular reports on the progress being made on the policies and targets contained in the plan. This paper provides the latest details.

## 2 Context

- 2.1 The Operational Sub-Group (OSG) is the principal means of taking forward the Annual Plan. It comprises officers responsible for 16- to 18-year-olds' education and skills in London's boroughs, officers from the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Although educational settings (schools, colleges, independent providers) can join the OSG there are no representatives at present. The OSG provides a mechanism to discuss issues in depth, share effective practice and develop policies collaboratively.
- 2.2 As outlined in our ways of working, the Young People's Education and Skills Team at London Councils also works in partnership with other stakeholder

groups and provides an effective link between the Board, OSG and the work of other organisations impacting on 16 to 18 year-olds in London.

### **3 Recovery**

- 3.1 The OSG has received regular reports from the GLA on the progress of the recovery missions. We have raised awareness of Careers Hubs (see paragraph 5 of this paper) and the mentoring programme, which is currently being commissioned by the GLA, to ensure the success of these initiatives.

### **4 Apprenticeships**

- 4.1 Since the start of the academic year, the OSG has developed its relationship with the Association of Employment and Learning Providers with the aim of increasing participation of 16- to 18-year-olds in Apprenticeships (the latest figures show that 1.4 per cent of the age group are taking an Apprenticeship).
- 4.2 A joint meeting was held in December with the Apprenticeship Sub-Group, which comprises officers responsible for recruiting staff in borough and city councils in London. The discussion particularly highlighted the need to enforce the Apprenticeship Minimum Wage and suggested that the transition from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) programmes could be incentivised. Building on this meeting, a practical workshop showing how to make better use of the Find an Apprenticeship Service is taking place on 15 February.
- 4.3 It is also proposed to hold an event about Technical Education Pathways in the summer – after councils meet following this year's elections. It is intended that the event would be useful to new councillors, particularly those with responsibilities for education and skills, as well as officers. We will report further on the impact of this work.

### **5 Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance**

- 5.1 Using the policy lines set out in the Annual Plan, we submitted a response to the All Party Parliamentary Group for Careers Guidance's inquiry into careers education. We propose to use this response and other policies established by the Board to respond to the House of Commons Education Select

Committee's inquiry on the same subject. Board members who wish to contribute further to this response are asked to contact [peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk).

5.2 The OSG has also engaged with GLA Officers responsible for Careers Hubs and facilitated introductions between borough officers and the organisations the GLA has commissioned to deliver sub-regional Careers Hubs.

5.3 We are working with the GLA to map out the alignment of Careers Hubs, the GLA's Mentoring Programme and the Integration Hubs (being delivered as part of the 'No Wrong Door' approach within the Good Work for All recovery mission). This will make it easier for boroughs to work with and support these initiatives.

## **6 Curriculum Offer in London at Key Stage 5**

6.1 The OSG discussed the curriculum offer at key stage 5 at its meeting in January. A summary of the discussion is appended to this paper. The OSG proposes to discuss this further as more timely data becomes available.

## **7 Youth Justice**

7.1 The OSG discussed youth justice in the context of working with Youth Offending Teams to improve participation in education and training, achievements and progression to positive destinations. The session was led by a borough with a good track record in all three metrics.

## **8 Partnership Working**

8.1 The team participates in Partnership for Young London's regional policy forum and works closely with the GLA on several activities, including the Young Londoners Fund, Higher Level Skills, the New Deal for Young People and Building Stronger Communities recovery missions. We are represented on the Linking London Steering Group, with a focus on the connections between Further Education (FE) and Higher Education.

## **9 Performance Data**

9.1 The OSG reviewed early figures for the September Guarantee and noted:

- there did not appear to be major concerns with the offers made this academic year from a London-wide perspective, though there could be some local issues that will be apparent in the final figures
- the number of young people staying on in their school after taking GCSEs had increased from an already high mark
- retention between years 12 and 13 did not emerge as an issue of concern.

9.2 Indicative statistics for A level and other level 3 qualifications achieved in summer 2021 showed a further increase in both average point score per student and attainment of grade A\*. The OSG urged some caution in interpreting these statistics as they do not distinguish between the state sector (which is the common set of figures used in judging performance) and the independent sector, which is comparatively large in London.

9.3 Please also see the paper for item 6 (Performance Report) on the agenda for the meeting.

## **10 Other Work**

10.1 The team at London Councils contributed to consultations on the National Funding Formula, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, FE Funding and Accountability, National Skills Fund and School Improvement reforms.

10.2 We continue to work with colleagues in the Local Government Association in briefing members of both Houses of Parliament on the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill. This had some success in the Lords, particularly on amendments to the Bill's measures on the role of local authorities in the preparation and approval of Local Skills Improvement Plans and in securing the future of applied general qualifications, but these amendments were reversed in the Commons. The Bill is continuing to make progress through the Commons before it returns to the Lords for consideration of the changes made by MPs.

## **11 Future Work**

11.1 In addition to continuing momentum of the work already started this year, we will be taking forward the following in conjunction with the OSG and other partners and stakeholders:

- we will undertake an analysis and interpretation of the main performance statistics covering participation, achievement, and progression when they are published
- we have raised with the DWP the issue of the increase in 16- and 17-year-olds claiming Universal Credit during the pandemic and are taking this forward as a data-sharing issue
- a review of sub-regional bodies and the GLA's work on Green Skills will take place in March.
- we will be connecting with colleagues in London Councils on youth homelessness, a new issue we were asked to examine in the Annual Plan.
- we will be discussing special educational needs and disabilities, including language and speech difficulties, in the summer.

## **12 Recommendation**

12.1 The Board is asked to discuss the points raised in the paper and suggest further actions.

## **Appendix: Curriculum Offer at Key Stage 5 in London**

This is a summary of the discussion at the OSG meeting held on 20 January 2022.

- It was confirmed that more 16 to 18 year-olds were now staying in sixth-forms and studying A levels, aiming to progress to university. Schools were perceived by young people and their families as providing a 'safe' and 'nurturing' environment in the present circumstances. Young people who may have sought employment in previous years have found this option is not available to them, especially if they had not achieved good results at key stage 4. A new sixth form in Hackney is opening without the agreement of the council. Although retention was not a great concern at present, it was suggested that this should be monitored closely.
- Fewer 16 to 18 year-olds were in colleges (including sixth-form colleges). It was reported that the Association of Colleges estimated a 3 per cent reduction on last year. Although staff shortages had affected the ability of colleges to offer a January intake, this was inconsistent across London.
- Apprenticeships continued to be affected by labour market uncertainty. In some areas young people preferred employment without training to Apprenticeships (which would affect local areas' compliance with participation to age 18); whereas, in contrast, local authority Apprenticeship recruitment was reported to include a significant amount of applications from people who have dropped out of HE or are unemployed graduates.
- The level of participation needed to be viewed in the context of a lower cohort size this year. Though this is the case overall in London – and some boroughs had a much lower cohort than last year – this was not the case in all boroughs, where some growth had occurred.
- BTECs – either on their own or in combination with A levels – remained popular. T levels had started to make an impact and were expected to grow, though several schools across London that had previously expressed interest in delivering T levels had lost interest, mainly because of the requirements for work placements.



- Where schools had a culture of delivering high quality work experience and careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG), these elements of the curriculum had been maintained and moved to online delivery; but in other schools they had been displaced by ‘catch up’ provision. Careers Hubs had started to work with schools and are promoting the GLA virtual work experience package.
- Work readiness remained a focus for educational settings, especially for students who were not looking to go to university. This was particularly the case for students with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities.
- There is a mixed picture of students following Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) and Arts courses.
- Many young people who had not participated in learning for some time, not necessarily because they had been excluded, were now seeking to return to local provision (that is, provision to which public transport may not be required)
- The trends in participation and exclusion that existed pre-pandemic had continued, and specific drives were reported to increase participation from White young people from low income families and to reduce exclusions of young people with Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) backgrounds and Black males. An increase in exclusions of females had also occurred in some areas. Across London there was a consistently strong correlation between young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and mental health issues.
- Where schools and colleges had been offering three-year level 3 courses before the pandemic, these were being maintained.
- Participation in Alternative Provision had increased and while some European Social Fund provision to support continuing participation and re-engagement existed, it is believed that the loss of this provision will inevitably lead to an increase in NEET.