

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Plymouth Challenge Update

Committee: Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 6 February 2019

Cabinet Member: Councillor McDonald (Cabinet Member of Children and Young People)
Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation)

CMT Member: Alison Botham (Director of Children's Services)

Author: David Bowles (Head of Education)

Contact details Tel: 01752 307149
email: david.bowles@plymouth.gov.uk

Ref:

Key Decision: No

Part: I

Purpose of the report:

The following report has been prepared at the request of the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide members with an update on the Plymouth Challenge.

Corporate Plan

'A Caring Plymouth – 'Improved schools where pupils achieve better outcomes'.

Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land

Four council employees are involved to varying degrees in helping to co-ordinate and deliver the aims of the Challenge. This commitment is likely to increase as the Challenge embeds across the city.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:

None for the purpose of this briefing report.

Equality and Diversity

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

For the Education and Children’s Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive the report for consideration.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

This is a briefing report only.

Published work / information:

None for the purpose of this report.

Background papers:

None for the purpose of this report.

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating SMT Member <u>Judith Harwood</u>													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes													

Update on the Plymouth Challenge.

In February 2018 a Plymouth Challenge concept developed by the RSC office and the LA was presented to schools. It was well received and detailed action plans are now being formulated with many activities already in implementation along the themes of raising standards, leadership and aspiration. The work isn't directly funded.

Following the first year of planning, the Challenge continues to develop with its three key work streams: raising standards, improving leadership and raising aspirations.

The Raising Aspirations strand:

This strand of work is led by the Local Authority and is essentially, in four parts:

- Improving careers education, advice and guidance
- Developing contact between schools and a number of stakeholders so that a city wide 'conversation' on education becomes a regular feature of the discourse. This includes a communication strand aimed at residents in order to engage them in the conversation and present positive stories about education as well as the challenges
- Increasing the opportunities for employers and partners to support young people
- Reaching into communities to support engagement and opportunities for family learning

A steering group for the raising aspirations strand has been established and is being led by the LA. Terms of Reference have been written and agreed and an action plan is being produced. The communication and careers work started in October 2018.

Regarding the careers element, it has been decided by the steering group that the Raising Aspirations Strand will concentrate on promoting the use of the 'Gatsby Benchmarks' in schools (these are features defining world class career guidance.) A workshop for senior leaders in schools to support the delivery of world class careers education is being organised together with increasing the involvement of employers in the development of the school curriculum. An Enterprise Co-ordinator is in place who will help schools develop their careers offer to pupils and students.

One school is systematically exploring how to raise aspirations amongst disadvantaged pupils and will bring their findings back to the group to help inform the future actions of the group. The steering group is also reaching out to colleagues in other Career Hubs to share their experiences of developing careers education in their schools and academies. It has been agreed that looking beyond the city for good practice is critical.

The communications team in the Council have prepared an offer of training to communication officers in schools as a means of improving the flow of information from schools to the wider community. Advice has already been sent to all schools concerning the effective use of social media and in addition, there is an opportunity for schools to share good news stories as well as useful information with pupils, parents and the wider community through the Council's Facebook page. A calendar of key events have been identified and this will be used to give out and receive information and messages concerning developments and key events e.g. British Science Week, mock exam dates and the dates when school results are published during the summer.

This is work in development and the office of the RSC have dedicated resource to support the coordination of all three strands of the Challenge. This is critical to ensure that resources are used as well as possible and the impact can be measured. The Head Teachers, through the Plymouth Learning Trust, plan to bring forward a costed action plan at the next Plymouth Education Board Meeting (late February) to facilitate the continuing work of the Challenge.