



Buckinghamshire County Council

Report School Organisation Committee

Agenda Item: 5

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Title Post 16 Provision – Local Learning and Skills Council

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Electoral Divisions Affected

Summary

The report sets out in outline possible implications in respect of school organisation stemming from the establishment of the Local Learning and Skills Council.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

Background

- 1 Committee Members' attention is drawn to Section 6:10:10 Post-16 provision in the Draft School Organisation Plan of May 2001 which sets out some of the general background relating to the establishment of the Learning and Skills Council and its responsibilities.
- 2 Members of the Committee may also be interested to know that a national consultation on schools sixth form funding is currently being carried out; arrangements for Post-16 inspection including a framework for supported self-evaluation, post-16 are being put in place and links are being developed with the Local Learning and Skills Council which covers the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (MOB) area.
- 3 The establishment of the Local Learning and Skills Council is a very significant occurrence and one which will have a major impact and influence on the development of post-16 (and in time, probably Post-14 Education).
- 4 The role of the Local Learning and Skills Council (LLSC) includes the following:
 - Planning and funding all Post-16 provision excluding higher education in the MOB area
 - The Local Workforce Development Plan

- Contracts for improving education business links and information advice and guidance for Adults
 - Agreeing the Adult Learning Plan
 - Using the Local Initiatives Fund to remove barriers to learning
 - Ensuring equality of opportunity for all across all activities
 - Co-financing European Social Fund activity
- 5 For 2000/2001 the total budget available to the MOB Local Learning and Skills Council is approximately £80M.
- 6 As far as 16-19 provision is concerned, the LLSC is the statutory organisation responsible for planning and funding all such provision. While there will be no single blueprint for the organisation of 16-19 provision, the LLSC will be informed by a number of broad principles which will include a rigorous examination of quality, ensuring that equality permeates all provision and taking action to raise standards. As far as the overall funding is concerned, there will be a move over the course of the next two to three years to bring funding in school sixth forms, sixth form colleges and the FE sector into line (convergence).
- 7 The LLSC will have responsibility for the range in coherence of the paths of progression into, through and from Post-16 provision and will also need to be assured of the cost effectiveness and quality of such provision. Accordingly the effectiveness of school sixth forms will come under the scrutiny of the MOB LLSC and determine the action proposed by the LLSC.
- 8 Currently local education authorities have a statutory duty to promote high standards and in the Education Development Plan there are included Post-16 performance targets and actions. Alongside this must now be set the LLSC responsibility for planning and funding Post-16 provision and, in this respect, the School Organisation Plan will assist the LLSC in planning its overall requirements for 16-19 provision.
- 9 The Learning and Skills Act brings in a number of changes as far as the organisation of Post-16 provision:
- The Act restores the LEA power to establish 16-19 schools either on the LEA's own initiative or in response to area inspections
 - The Act gives the LLSC the power to propose the closure for sixth form or an LEA 16-19 school if two consecutive adverse inspection reports of the 16-19 provision occur. Any such proposal will be dealt with through the School Organisation Committee
 - The LLSC can propose the establishment and closure of FE (including sixth form) corporations

Copies may be obtained from the Contact Officer