

## **Report of the Strategic Director, Children's Services to the meeting of Full Council to be held on 13 December 2016.**

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**Subject:****P**

The Bradford Education Covenant

**Summary statement:**

Bradford District Plan sets out the aspirations that all partners share for our District. "We want to make Bradford District a great place for everyone - a place where all our children have a great start in life, where businesses are supported to create good jobs and workers have the skills to succeed, a place where people live longer and have healthier lives and all our neighbourhoods are good places to live with decent homes for everyone".

Children and young people are a key priority in making this happen - we want a "Great Start and Good Schools" for all our children. This is not something the Council can do alone - for children and young people in Bradford to achieve their full potential, everyone in the District has an important part to play. We do not yet have the educational outcomes for our children that we aspire to in our plan. The Education Covenant is designed to support this aspiration and to specifically support young people in poverty and who live in areas of deprivation within our District.

The Education Covenant is an exciting partnership development that sets out this aspiration and asks for the help of all partners to deliver the sustained improvement we need in educational outcomes for Bradford children and young people. The Bradford Education Covenant outlines a set of pledges from the Council as well as a set of 'asks' of key stakeholder including - young people, parents, schools, businesses, the community and central government. The Covenant makes clear that children and young people are educated through the experiences they encounter in their young lives both inside and outside the school. It begins at birth and continues for life. The Covenant reinforces the view that for children and young people to get the very best from their education and to fully achieve their potential it has to be a united effort from us all. The Covenant is one element in a wide range of improvement activities which are included in the school improvement action plan. This report provides an update of activity to date together with details of the Education Covenant Conference planned for early 2017.

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Michael Jameson  
Strategic Director

**Portfolio:**

Education, Employment and Skills

Report Contact:  
Judith Kirk – Deputy Director  
Phone: (01274) 431078  
E-mail: [judith.kirk@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:judith.kirk@bradford.gov.uk)

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

Children's Services

## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Bradford District Plan sets out the aspirations that all partners share for our District. “We want to make Bradford District a great place for everyone - a place where all our children have a great start in life, where businesses are supported to create good jobs and workers have the skills to succeed, a place where people live longer and have healthier lives and all our neighbourhoods are good places to live with decent homes for everyone”.
- 1.2 Children and young people are a key priority in making this happen - we want a “Great Start and Good Schools” for all our children. This is not something the Council can do alone - for children and young people in Bradford to achieve their full potential, everyone in the District has an important part to play. We do not yet have the educational outcomes for our children that we aspire to in our plan. The Education Covenant is designed to support this aspiration and to specifically support young people in poverty and who live in areas of deprivation within our District.
- 1.3 The Education Covenant is an exciting partnership development that sets out this aspiration and asks for the help of all partners to deliver the sustained improvement we need in educational outcomes for Bradford children and young people. The Bradford Education Covenant outlines a set of pledges from the Council as well as a set of ‘asks’ of key stakeholder including - young people, parents, schools, businesses, the community and central government. The Covenant makes clear that children and young people are educated through the experiences they encounter in their young lives both inside and outside the school. It begins at birth and continues for life. The Covenant reinforces the view that for children and young people to get the very best from their education and to fully achieve their potential it has to be a united effort from us all.
- 1.4 The Covenant is one element in a wide range of improvement activities which are included in the school improvement action plan. This report provides an update of activity to date together with details of the Education Covenant Conference planned for early 2017.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Following the educational review conducted by Professor David Woods in September 2014, Bradford Council with its strategic educational partners has developed and implemented an education improvement strategy which promotes a school-led system where the local authority, schools (academies and maintained) and the teaching school alliances take on a shared responsibility and accountability for the improvements to educational outcomes that Bradford requires. The Ofsted inspection of Bradford’s school improvement arrangements in June 2015 highlighted the poor educational outcomes achieved and recognised, and supported, the optimism around the school-led improvement strategy. The Ofsted report stated “there is a new direction in the local authority and a cause for optimism. Headteachers, governors and partners speak convincingly about a ‘step-change’ in the authority’s approach and a new rigour and challenge to schools and partnerships.”

- 2.2 In response to the LA's Ofsted inspection a detailed action plan was implemented to help provide the impetus for continued rapid improvement. The action plan replaced a number of previous operational plans.
- 2.3 As part of the strategy the Bradford Education Covenant recognised that all educators and stakeholders have a responsibility to our young people and how they can contribute to our children's overall education. The Covenant is about everyone recognising their role in supporting outcomes for all young people and is an integral part of the Council Plan specifically relating to 'A Great start and good schools for all our children'. A specific focus for the Covenant is on outcomes for vulnerable young people, young people in poverty and young people in areas of deprivation.
- 2.4 The Covenant is in two parts. Part 1 lists 'What the Council will offer' and is broken down into eight pledges. Part 2 includes 'Bradford Council's Education Ask' and seeks to enlist the commitment of key stakeholder groups.
- 2.5 The Council meeting of 20 December 2015 considered the future development of the Covenant at a time when the Covenant was beginning to be shaped by consultation with partners. Extensive consultation took place, including online consultation on the [www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk) website, together with a range of high profile events where the Covenant has been publicised and responses, suggestions and comments sought. These have included many stakeholders listed below, each pledging their support to become actively involved.

Discussion, briefings, and meetings took place with:

School Staff and Pupils  
The Children's Trust Board  
The Chamber of Commerce  
Bradford Breakthrough  
Individual Business Leaders  
Voluntary and Community Organisations  
Senior Magistrates  
Bradford Matters  
CBI  
The National Literacy Trust  
Bulls Foundation  
Bradford University  
Local Colleges  
Parents  
Headteachers  
Governors

- 2.7 Since December 2015 a number of developments have taken place to promote and further develop the Covenant. This includes:-
- a) A Public Forum for Education (PFE) event specifically focussed on the Education Covenant in June 2016. The event was attended by many adults and 58 young people. This gave young people the opportunity to explore how they could contribute to the Covenant. Young people wanted to really understand the Covenant and they welcomed discussions about doing things differently, being

part of the solutions and the opportunity to speak to decision makers. As a result of constructive feedback from both adults and young people programmes such as the Volunteer Reading Programme and improving the pupil voice across the District have been further developed. For example 15 Carlton Bolling College 6<sup>th</sup> Form students have been recruited and trained to take on the role of volunteer readers in the primary schools in Bradford East and the National Literacy Hub has been focussing on parental engagement in primary schools.

Following on from the PFE a further session with 54 young people took place in the school summer holidays. This session saw young people meeting directly with elected members to have further dialogue about the changing face of education, their experiences and ideas going forward. There was a strong desire to see increased opportunities for wider support in educational settings reaching beyond academic studies. They were keen to see support for study beyond 19 for those who may have had disrupted educational experiences and increased opportunities to undertake work experience placements as part of transitions to adulthood. One outcome of this was the promotion of the Takeover Challenge in November 2016.

A number of initiatives have demonstrated the Education Covenant principles where partners have supported educational attainment in the District. These have included:

- b) The opportunity for young people to have experiences in the workplace were elements of the recent Takeover Challenge where 82 young people took on professional roles in a variety of settings including within the local authority, health, private sector, voluntary and community organisations. 17 schools registered their interest in the Takeover Challenge and this saw hundreds of younger aged children taking on roles within school settings. It was not only the young people who benefitted from this opportunity but also the workplaces and staff within them, the learning for all was extremely beneficial.
- c) The 'Let's Get Bradford Reading' campaign where a reading pledge has been piloted with two clusters of schools – Shipley and Bradford East (Appendix 2) - is being well received and will help to promote reading, an area for development in our primary schools. It is anticipated that during 2017 the campaign will be rolled out across the District.
- d) Book exchanges are to be piloted in Council buildings, the first will commence in January 2017 in Margaret McMillan Tower. Members of the public visiting the building will be encouraged to participate.
- e) The "Springwood Summer Camp"; is an excellent example of activity that fits within the Covenant. This was an initiative led by a Ward Councillor to respond to the fact that young people in the local area were finding the potential transition into secondary impacting on their attainment levels. The initiative which targeted Year 6 and 7 children on Free School Meals took place during the summer holidays in 2016. The 4 week programme took place in BD10 (Bradford East) and focussed on 40+ children from the 9 primary schools which supply Hanson. The programme

is being assessed in respect of sustainability and the on-going impact for the children involved but demonstrates the positive impact when everyone gets involved.

f) The National Literacy Trust Hub has focussed on 5 projects which fully support the Covenant:-

- Engaging Dads/parental engagement strategies for primary schools.
- Words for Work – an employability and skills programme in Secondary schools. This is a programme in which some of the District's biggest employers have visited secondary schools to explain the importance of skills like communication and team work in their future careers programme.
- Our Stories: a creative writing and performance poetry programme.
- Great poetry through time – supporting and enabling teachers in Bradford. This programme for Year 9 pupils blends contemporary music with traditional poetry and contemporary rap to engage students with the work of Chaucer and Shakespeare.
- Reading packs on the neonatal wards at Bradford Royal Infirmary – wider community literacy approaches linked to health.

An evaluation of each of the projects has been undertaken by independent evaluators resulting in confirmation of many positive outcomes. For example in one school working on the 'Our stories' project, 17% of the students were achieving the expected level for writing for their age. After the programme this figure had increased to 54%, including 14% of students now exceeding expected levels. Another of the projects 'Words for Work' has been very favourably received by young people. Feedback clearly shows an increase in their confidence for example talking with different people and asking questions. The 'Engaging Dads/parental engagement strategies for primary schools' project across 8 target schools along with their linked Children's Centres resulted in an 8.6% increase in pupils achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with boys increasing by 12%.

- g) The innovative Industrial Centres of Excellence (ICE) programme involves 14 schools, 3 Further Education Colleges, the University of Bradford and 25 lead business partners. At present there are 4 ICE across the District each covering a different economic sector, linking schools to employers' needs. ICE provide an innovative way in which young people can gain skills and qualifications that are planned around the requirements of local businesses with each ICE offering quality learning experiences for students aged 14-19, with clear pathways into work, training and further and higher education. Working closely with the business community, the University and colleges, the Council will provide real opportunities for skill development and jobs when young people leave school, supporting businesses to get the right young person, with the right skills through our Apprenticeships Hub.
- h) Meetings have taken place with Bradford Matters, Bradford Chamber of Commerce and Bradford Breakthrough to develop the Covenant with businesses across the District. This work is ongoing and discussions are taking place to areas where businesses can really support young people through for example work experience.

One of the outcomes so far has been through the recruitment of additional governors through the police.

- i) The Music and Arts Service provide opportunities for young musicians to perform with professionals raising aspirations through cultural opportunities. Working with players from the Southbank Sinfonia Orchestra and Hammond's Saltaire Brass Band members of the Bradford Youth Orchestra and the Bradford Youth Band have had the opportunity to sit side by side with these adults and gain valuable experience.#

In 2016 Factory Street Studios supported by Bradford Music Education Hub set up a week long 'Sound of Bradford' Project giving students a real insight into the music industry. By linking the young people with the Council's events team they could see work on developing and running the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the Bradford Festival 2017. Young people had real hands on experience of working alongside the sound engineers, lighting crews and performance opportunities.

Working with a professional company, students from across the district were given the opportunity to develop Bradford's very own musical. The work included 14 students developing the script, writing songs and one music student worked alongside a professional composer to write and arrange the band arrangements.

Work from the school improvement team has also supported the Covenant. Examples include:

- j) Project work has been undertaken to support secondary schools and Bradford District PRU to improve their strategy around attendance through tighter strategic management of the area. The improvements are now being recognised in reports by Ofsted. So far improvements in overall attendance for Year 7 to Year 11 and in 6<sup>th</sup> forms have been between 1% and 3.6%. The reduction in persistent absence (PA) based on the new measure of 90% has been between 0.8% and 14.4%.
- k) School improvement and raising standards across the District is a key area within the Covenant. This is undertaken in many different ways and with partners such as the Regional Schools Commissioner, the Department for Education and Ofsted. A highly targeted approach is taken with schools and settings which has resulted in many positive outcomes across the District, however there is considerable work still to do. Some examples of outcomes include Bradford having one of the largest increases in the proportion of good schools in Yorkshire and the North East in the past 12 months, rising by 9% to 76%. Our results in 2016 show that Bradford schools' ranking nationally is improving at all key stages. In the early years for example, the increase in a Good Level of Development (GLD) increased to 66%, a rise of 4% from 2015 closing the gap on the national figure by 1%.

These are just a few of the many strands of work which are supporting the development of the Education Covenant.

- 2.8 The Education Covenant Conference is being planned for early 2017. This will bring together partners such as schools, businesses and the voluntary sector to further develop the 'offer' and 'ask'. It is anticipated that this will be a highly successful event,

the outcome being greater participation of partners in the 'offer' and 'asks' of the Education Covenant.

## 2.9 Next steps

- a) To develop an Education Covenant project plan and project group to lead the full implementation of the Covenant.
- b) Key actions within the plan will include the production of a Covenant document in line with the District and Council plan branding and deliver a promotional campaign to key decision makers and influencers across the system including schools, businesses, political and faith leaders and representative groups.
- c) The development of an "Education Covenant challenge" to go to individual s and organisations across the District asking "What can you do for education in Bradford?"
- d) To agree a process of gathering pledges of support and linking these to schools where they relate to practical activity.
- e) To develop a stream of work targeting specific groups within the Covenant, young people, parents, businesses voluntary sector and communities.
- f) To identify Strategic Boards and individuals to lead on each of these strands.
- g) To have three times a year a community forum for education taking place at various venues across the District to focus on the Education Covenant.
- h) Consideration of a range of approaches to encouraging Bradford young people to aspire for example a "Bradford people have..." campaign to highlight Bradford achievers linked to the "people can" approach.
- i) To produce a map of the extensive activity being undertaken to develop the Covenant, providing evaluations and impact of the work.

## 3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 It has become clear that there is now a need to coordinate the "offer" and "ask" activities centrally. This will make it easier for schools to take up offers of support, as well as establishing a clear framework for partners to offer specific commitment. The Education Covenant Conference will provide the opportunity for pledges to be matched to specific schools using a more structured approach.
- 3.2 Many stakeholders in education in Bradford have expressed a wish to openly pledge their commitment for the Covenant and have already agreed to engage with schools in order to make a contribution to school activities. The Education Covenant Conference will therefore enhance the links between schools, communities, businesses and all other stakeholders.

#### **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

There are no direct financial implications at this stage.

#### **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

There are no significant risks arising out of the implications of the recommendations in this report.

#### **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

There are no legal issues.

#### **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

The Bradford Education Covenant as described in this report and the recommendations provided will support an equality of expectations for the educational outcomes of all of Bradford's children and young people.

#### **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

#### **9. OPTIONS**

See the recommendations below.

#### **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 That the report be received as a summary of the actions taken to involve stakeholders in further developing the Education Covenant.
- 10.2 The appointment of a 'Covenant Champion' to drive forward this innovative and exciting project to become a flagship development for the District.
- 10.3 That the Council invites all stakeholders in Education in Bradford to actively pledge their commitment to the Covenant at the Education Covenant Conference.

#### **11. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - The Bradford Education Covenant.  
Appendix 2 – National Literacy Trust – Bradford Literacy Campaign: Schools Reading Pledge, 2016

#### **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.



## **Appendix 1**

### **The Bradford Education Covenant**

We believe that every child in the Bradford District should have the chance to realise their full potential and that working together with determination, purpose and ambition we can achieve this.

Improving educational achievement and making sure all children can go to a good school are among the biggest and most important challenges we all face in the Bradford District. Providing young people with the right skills and knowledge within an excellent school system is crucial to their future success and wellbeing and that of the district.

In the past, improvement in education hasn't gone far enough, fast enough. We know we've got to do better, there are no excuses. We need urgent and sustained action to drive up education results.

Things have to change and together we all have to take responsibility to improve educational achievement in our district and give all our children a great start in life. The changes we need can't happen unless we all, public services, schools, parents, business and communities, work together.

We have to make sure that children are ready for school and ready to learn, to accelerate the rate of improvement in achievement and to ensure that young people leave school ready for work and life.

Achieving those outcomes is a joint responsibility with everyone involved having their part to play.

So we are setting out what the Council can offer but we are also asking families, schools, business and employers, the Government and young people themselves to work together with us to do all they can to create the best chance of success for all our children and young people.

The proposed Bradford Education Covenant will outline the action the Council will take along with what it is asking of others to ensure our young people get the best possible start in life.

### **The Bradford Education Covenant**

#### **What the Council will offer**

##### **Keeping schools and education as a top priority**

Improving schools and educational attainment, so that all our children are able to achieve their potential, will stay at the top of our priorities. We will support all Councillors to be effective champions of children, parents and learning and work with schools and parents to develop a vision for education as we pursue our ambition of making all our schools good by 2018.

### **Driving school improvement**

The Council will work to put schools themselves at the heart of driving improvement. We will challenge schools and governing bodies and hold them to account for their performance, taking rapid and robust action where there are issues that may be preventing a school from making progress, whatever type of school it may be.

### **Promoting learning from the very best**

We already have some outstanding school leaders and teachers. We will work even harder with schools to identify, celebrate, promote and share best practice and support them to assist each other to accelerate improvement.

### **Attracting, retaining and developing the best school leaders and teachers**

We will invest resources in attracting, retaining and developing the best school leaders, teachers and classroom assistants. We've already set aside £660,000 to do this. Part of this commitment will involve promoting Bradford District as an attractive career choice for the best teachers and school leaders. Government policy is to increase the numbers of Academies so we will be proactive in seeking out high quality academy sponsors to attract to the district.

### **Providing school places by working together with government**

The Council will work with the Government to ensure the district gets the money it needs to provide enough school places and keep schools well equipped. We've invested £700,000 to match the Government's money for extra school places but we need more money and more places.

### **Helping to make sure children are ready for school**

Support will be there for families and children through the 'early years' helping to make sure children are ready for school and can do their very best at school from day one.

### **Supporting children and young people to be ready for work and life**

Working closely with the business community, the University and colleges, the Council will provide real opportunities for skill development and jobs when young people leave school. We'll continue, in partnership, to deliver the innovative Industrial Centres of Excellence, each covering a different economic sector, linking schools to employers' needs and we'll support business to get the right young person, with the right skills through our Apprenticeships Hub.

### **Raising aspirations through cultural opportunities**

Providing chances for students to benefit from enriched cultural learning by maximising the District's unique local learning opportunities and facilities - for example, with the National Media Museum and City of Film. This will provide inspiration to our young people and stimulate creativity.

## **Bradford Council's Education Ask**

### **Parents**

- Access a nursery place – 15 hours a week is free and it can make a big difference to your child's development
- Involve yourself in your child's education, encourage and celebrate their learning

- Make learning fun at home, read, count and play every day with your young child
- Make sure your child is at school on time, attends regularly and doesn't take unauthorised absence
- Support your child to get their homework in on time
- Support your child to get involved in out of school activities

Parents need to do this because their involvement in children's education from an early age has a significant effect on educational achievement, and continues to do so into adolescence and adulthood.

### **Children and young people**

- Make the most of opportunities for learning at school and at home
- Take responsibility for your own education, build your skills, ask questions, take notes in class and get your work in on time, discover your talents – it's your life, your future, your choice

Children and young people need to do this because motivated and responsible pupils have a better chance of achieving success.

### **Schools**

- Put yourselves at the heart of driving school improvement, working together in partnership, recognising that all types of school are part of a wider education system and need to share solutions and ideas to raise education attainment
- Be active in the district's networks of schools, assist each other each other to challenge and address failure and support the lowest performing schools to learn from the highest performers
- Share resources and expertise to invest in teaching, learning and facilities
- Take timely and robust action to deal with performance, governance, attendance and any other issues in your school to provide the very best education experience and outcomes for your pupils
- Support students to identify future careers opportunities

All our schools need to do this to help us achieve our shared ambition of making sure every school is 'Good' by 2018.

### **Business and employers**

- Support and become involved with an Industrial Centre of Excellence or Bradford Pathways
- Encourage your employees to volunteer for the reading in schools project and to offer mentoring for young people at school
- Provide meaningful work placements to your local schools and be an active partner in educating young people about potential careers
- Provide apprenticeships for local young people

Businesses need to do this because good education and good skills mean greater growth. In engineering alone the UK needs 1.82 million workers with relevant skills by 2022.

## **Communities**

- Everyone in every community and neighbourhood to play their part in making a positive contribution to the growth, development and wellbeing of young people
- Get involved, for example as a volunteer reader

We need our communities to do this because everyone shares in the social and economic benefits of improving education and everyone can play a part in helping to achieve it.

## **Government**

- Provide the funding for the district to have enough places for all our children
- Provide funding and support to help increase education achievement in the district, for example invest in a local programme to drive rapid and sustainable improvements
- Support us to attract outstanding teachers, leaders and, in line with Government policy, Academy chains to the district
- Trust local education partners and devolve more powers to local authorities to tackle failing schools and hold academies to account

We need the government to do this because we have one of the fastest growing populations of young people in the country and will need extra places equivalent to two new secondary schools by 2018.



## Bradford Literacy Campaign: Schools Reading Pledge, 2016

**All schools in Bradford are invited to sign the BRADFORD Reading Pledge and undertake these ten actions to put reading at the heart of school strategy, community engagement and the classroom.**

### Strategic

1. Complete an Annual Review of school reading provision, using the tools on the National Literacy Trust Network
2. Complete the National Literacy Trust's annual Children and Young People Reading Attitudes Survey
3. Use the National Literacy Trust Network to inform school strategy and practice

Signed: (Headteacher)

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.....

Name of School:

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### Community

4. Once per term send information to all parents asking them to read to and alongside their children
5. Have a dedicated page on the school website to encourage reading activities
6. Make reading materials available in public waiting areas in the school

### In-school

7. Promote the Summer Reading Challenge and library membership to all eligible pupils
8. Run the Bradford sponsored read
9. Create a school Book Club and invite parents and carers to join
10. Identify a school governor to have special responsibility for reading