

18th July 2019



WSOA Partnership Board Meeting

The West Somerset Opportunity Area Partnership Board met on the 18th July 2019. The purpose of this blog is to provide an update on the activity of the Partnership Board and its oversight of the Opportunity Area programme.

Participation:

Members: Dr Fiona McMillan (Partnership Chair), Peter Elliott (Bridgwater College Academy Trust), Alison Bell (SCC), Mel Roberts (SCC), Lisa Redston (Somerset West and Taunton Council), Tom Thayer (HPC), Cllr Frances Nicholson (SCC), Naomi Philp (Dunster First School), Andrew Hanson (Somerset Education Business Partnership), Cllr Chris Booth (Somerset West and Taunton Council), Jim Whittaker (Channel Training)

In attendance: Jan Downie (Head of Delivery, DfE), Julia Ridge (Programme Manager, SCC), Sarah Broomfield (project officer, SCC), Dawn Carter (project officer, SCC)

At this meeting, conflicts of interests were declared by Jim Whittaker, Naomi Philp and Peter Elliott, in relation to the funding proposals presented.

Partnership board members reviewed the performance report for the programme and the working group leads provided brief updates on the progress of each strand .

Highlights reported were:

Priority One—Every child has a great start in life:

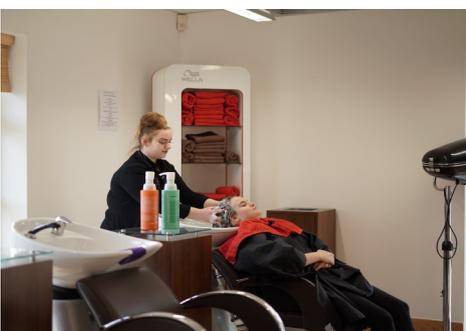
The Youth Sports Trust is undertaking some innovative work in West Somerset helping early years' practitioners and parents to incorporate physical development into early years' education and life outside school. Youth Sports Trust deliver a programme called Healthy Movers, which helps children develop their physical literacy, which in turn benefits wider learning. There is a strong link to speech and language development and helps children's readiness for school.



Priority Two—Excellence in the classroom:



The work programme is making good progress. Continuing professional development for teachers has included math mastery, phonics, special educational needs and professional additional qualifications for teachers. The attendance officer is helping schools to deliver consistent approaches and work positively with parents. The planned transition initiative is postponed, however, until the autumn term. The Mental Health and Well-being initiative has made a strong start. Thirteen schools have registered up to the health and wellbeing framework. Five people have signed up to the Tune into Teens programme.



Priority Three—Transition to adulthood:

Activities are focused on West Somerset College (WSC) and have embedded well. Sixth form vocational students have successfully completed their first year of an expanded offer, based at the vocational learning centre on the West Somerset College site. WSC will offer a new sixth

form offer this September in partnership with Bridgwater and Somerset College. Younger students are benefiting from a comprehensive programme of work-related experience, introduction to Higher Education and access to the National Citizen Service

Priority Four—Business and Skills:

The apprenticeship hub, Skill Up, is making good progress engaging with employers and individuals. Over 60 employers have engaged with the employer's forum. Some other aspects of the programme have not made as much progress as expected and revised work plan is in development.

A new approach to engaging young people in digital opportunities paid off with 13 Year 10 work experience students taking part in a week-long programme through our digital creativity strand, Studio Digital.

The group were tasked with creating three films about life in West Somerset as young people, supported by film and digital professionals. They learnt a huge amount, many are now considering digital careers or how they could grow their knowledge and the 3 films were terrific'.

40 people have applied for the mini bus driver training, which will create a pool of fully accredited drivers who can drive the mini-buses available to West Somerset Schools and youth organisations.



Board members reviewed two new proposals for funding:

A coaching and mentoring initiative aimed at senior leaders in schools to help them embed the initiatives that have been targeted at schools and develop longer term plans

A proposal to bring the West Somerset College farm back into use by introducing a social enterprise model rooted in outdoor learning, providing a community based facility for multiple user groups.

The Board agreed both proposals in principle subject to confirmation of further detail regarding delivery and procurement. The programme team will carry out this work.

The board also reviewed the partnership structure, of the Partnership Board and working groups. They agreed that this structure would continue for the 2019 to 2020 academic year, with the potential addition of a parental-engagement working group.



The next meeting of the partnership board is on the 25th September 2019.