

18 December 2017

Report of the Strategic Director of People
Services

Opportunity Areas

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Department for Education (DfE) announced the Opportunity Areas (OA) programme on 4 October 2016. Initially six areas were announced, namely: Derby, Scarborough, Blackpool, Norwich, West Somerset and Oldham.
- 1.2 The areas have been highlighted due to their relatively low levels of social mobility as described in the Social Mobility Index published in January 2016. Within this index, Derby is placed 22nd from the bottom out of 324 areas nationally
- 1.3 £2 million of funding will be made available in each area per year for three years. In total, Derby will receive £6 million of funding over three years.
- 1.4 The funding is over and above other funding streams such as the 'Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund' and other government programmes which are being tilted towards Opportunity Areas.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To support the work of the local Opportunity Area Board in improving outcomes for children and young people in the city and improving social mobility.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Opportunity Areas is a strategy that is targeted towards stakeholders and children and young people and which brings new money in to the city.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Opportunity Areas were announced by the Department for Education (DfE) in October 2016 with the initial six areas being identified as some of the most challenged when it comes to social mobility; a further six areas were announced in January 2017. The full list of twelve areas is: Blackpool, Derby, Norwich, Oldham, Scarborough, West Somerset (the first six), and Bradford, Doncaster, Fenland & East Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich and Stoke-on-Trent.
- 4.2 The areas were initially highlighted as being social mobility cold spots as defined in the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission’s Social Mobility Index published in January 2016; the chair of this commission is the Right Honourable Alan Milburn. Within this report, the social mobility index is defined as being,

‘The Social Mobility Index compares the chances that a child from a disadvantaged background will do well at school and get a good job across each of the 324 local authority district areas of England. It examines a range of measures of the educational outcomes achieved by young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and the local job and housing markets to shed light on which are the best and worst places in England in terms of the opportunities young people from poorer backgrounds have to succeed.’ (Page 5, Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission’s Social Mobility Index, January 2016).

Analysis of the summary data in Table 1 below from the ‘Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission’s Social Mobility Index (January 2016) report would suggest that an emphasis on early years is required.

Table 1: summary of rankings showing Derby ranking from the ‘Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission’s Social Mobility Index (January 2016) report.

Stage of life	Derby ranking out of 324 nationally
Overall	303 rd
Early years	322 nd
Schools	283 rd
Youth (age 15+)	126 th
Adulthood	81 st

4.3 A number of initial stakeholder meetings were held within the city and this was narrowed down to a local Opportunity Area Partnership Board ('OA Board') being formed in spring 2017. The Department for Education (DfE) approached Professor Kath Mitchell (Vice Chancellor of the University of Derby) to chair the local OA Board. The current membership of the OA Boards stands as:

- Richard Blackmore: Regional Director East Midlands, Confederation of British Industry
- Sue Bradley: Head, Kingsmead School
- Jane Calladine: Executive Head Parkview and Redwood Primaries
- Wendy Colebourne: Head, Harrington Nursery
- Natalie Cramp: Chief Operating Officer, Careers and Enterprise Company
- Kevin Gaiderman: Head, Chellaston Academy
- Pam Hallam: Children & Young People Network
- Kim Harper: Community Action Derby
- Mandie Stravino: Chief Executive, Derby College
- Nicola Swaney: Education Manager, Rolls-Royce
- Katrina Woodward: Local Enterprise Partnership for Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Meetings are attended by Department for Education officials including the Regional Schools Commissioner and two DfE officials from the Opportunity Area team. Iain Peel is the Local Programme Manager supporting the work of the Board.

4.4 The OA Board operates as an advisory board to the DfE. As part of this, Opportunity Areas are given prioritised access to a wider support package helping young people from nursery through to starting work. Some of this funding will be awarded directly by the Department for Education to providers who can support social mobility in the Opportunity Areas, but up to £6 million over three years (from April 2017) will be for the local Opportunity Area Board to make recommendations to the DfE on how this should be allocated. Derby City Council is holding this grant from the DfE on behalf of the local area and then to award it to providers in line with recommendations from the local Opportunity Area Board and DfE, and in line with public sector procurement rules. It is expected that all of the funding Derby City Council receives from DfE would be awarded to the Opportunity Area programme. In the current financial year, the City Council will receive a grant up to £1.5 million for the area and to be awarded this in line with the recommendations from the local Opportunity Area Board and DfE. Between April 2018 – March 2020, Derby City Council will receive additional funding as recommended by the local Opportunity Area Partnership Board and approved by the DfE up to a maximum of £6 million (over the three years) and for the City Council to award this in line with such recommendations.

By working together with the DfE, the local OA Board has identified four broad themes as being drivers for change and to improve social mobility within the city. The four themes are:

- early years and primary phase education, including the home learning environment;
- secondary phase education;
- post 16 phase of education;
- broader horizons.

Four sub groups of the local OA Board have been formed to develop work in addressing social mobility and addressing three questions, namely:

Question A: How does the Opportunity Area identify children and young people who are within scope of the sub group?

Question B: How does the Opportunity Area meet the needs of children and young people who are within scope of the sub group?

Question C: How does the Opportunity Area improve outcomes for children and young people who are within scope of the sub group?

Each sub group reports back to the local OA Board and to date, two of the four sub groups have made recommendations to the local OA Board and the DfE to access financial resources to commission strategies to help deliver the aims. The initial priorities for the early years and primary phase education sub group include commissioning support to improve children's outcomes in phonics, reading,

4.4 cont comprehension, mathematics and helping schools meet the needs of children with English as an additional language. Medium to longer term priorities include supporting school leadership, speech and language acquisition for children in the early years, school and learning readiness, engagement with parents, supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children and a school workforce development strategy.

The initial priorities for the secondary phase education sub group include strategies to improve outcomes in English and mathematics and also school leadership development. Medium to longer term priorities include longer term support for school leadership, the key stage 3 curriculum, supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of children and a school workforce development strategy. Both of these sub groups have been able to access part of the first year's Opportunity Area grant which the council holds on behalf of the local Opportunity Area Board.

4.5 The broader horizons sub group is led by a city business leader and is comprised of representatives from business, sport and leisure, education providers and the voluntary sector. The group is examining the city wide offer of school to business links and also the cultural, sports, arts and leisure offer to young people in the city. To aid this aspect of work, the DfE has identified a city wide grant for the local Opportunity Area Board to consider. The grant is known as the essential life skills grant. This is intended that children and young people will be able to participate in extra-curricular activities such as sports, volunteering and social action projects. The funding has been calculated on the basis that it would pay for weekly participation in extra-curricular activities for up to 40,000 pupils in up to 12 per cent of schools in the Opportunity Areas.

In Derby, this amounts to a two year grant of up to £800,000 in 2017-18 and up to £1.6 million in 2018-19. Derby City Council is holding this DfE grant on behalf of the local area and then to award it to providers in line with recommendations from the local Opportunity Area Board and DfE, and in line with public sector procurement rules. It is expected that all of this money would be awarded to the Essential Life Skills programme.

4.6 The purpose of this targeted work, programmes and money is to fund a range of extra-curricular activities that develop non-cognitive abilities, collectively named 'essential life skills', including but not limited to:

- resilience, perseverance and persistence.
- Hard work, self-control, discipline, good time keeping.
- Self-confidence, leadership and team working.
- Honesty, integrity and engaged citizenship.
- Attitude, respect and empathy.
- Curiosity and problem solving.

- 4.7 The post 16 group is early in its development. So far, it has been looking at the purpose of post 16 education within the city and will move forward to identifying barriers for young people in engaging in learning or skills training.
- 4.8 In addition to the Opportunity Area and essential life skills grants, the DfE is also tilting other programmes towards Opportunity Areas. For example, the city has recently been successful in securing a grant in excess of £200,000 for a number of schools to work on improving reading. The DfE has also identified some national organisations to work with a small number of schools in Derby around science/technology/engineering and mathematics (known as STEM subjects), to work with a small number of primary schools on the teaching of phonics for children aged 6 years old, and has awarded a contract to a communications trust to undertake a city wide audit on children's speech, language and communications in the early years. Similarly, some schools also have access to other national programmes such as the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (university outreach programme) and the work of the Careers Enterprise Company which links students in Years 10 and 11 with employers.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None. Engagement in the Opportunity Areas enables more resources to come in to the city in supporting children and young people achieve better educational outcomes and hence improving social mobility.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Emily Feenan, Principal Lawyer Alison Parkin, Finance
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Iain Peel 01332 642665 iain.peel@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Opportunity Area local plan

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The City Council will be the accountable body for these funding streams and the use of the funding will be ring-fenced for this area of activity. The use of this funding will be subject to the Council's Procurement and Financial Procedure Rules.

The grant monies must be used in line with recommendations from the OA Board / DfE. If they are not, then the grant monies will be stopped by the DfE. To mitigate against this, the DfE and Opportunity Area Board will be receiving regular finance monitoring reports.

Legal

- 2.1 Legal Services will support the Council in the drafting and negotiation of the grant agreement with DfE and in the procurement and award of contracts to providers, in line with Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations.

Personnel

- 3.1 No comments

IT

- 4.1 No comments

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Equality considerations will be set out in the specifications used for any commissioning

Health and Safety

- 6.1 No comments

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 No comments

Property and Asset Management

8.1 No comments

Risk Management and Safeguarding

9.1 No comments

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

10.1 Achieving their learning potential.
Good quality services that meet local needs