

West Somerset Opportunity Area

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Cabinet Member: Frances Nicholson; Children's and Families

Division and Local Member: Cllr Mandy Chilcott – Minehead; Cllr Hugh Davies –

Watchet and Stogursey; Cllr Frances Nicholson - Dulverton and Exmoor and

Cllr Christine Lawrence - Dunster

1. Summary

- 1.1.** The Opportunity Area Programme is a key part of the Education Secretary's priority of tackling social mobility, and improving opportunities for young people across the country. Twelve areas with both poor social mobility and schools that face challenges, will receive a share of £72 million to boost opportunities for young people in these communities.
- 1.2.** The areas chosen were amongst the weakest in both the 2016 Social Mobility Commission's index, and the Department for Education's (DfE) data on school standards and capacity to improve. West Somerset was 324th out of 324 Council areas in the social mobility index in both 2016 and 2017.
- 1.3.** The plan published on the 9 of October 2017 by the DfE works across business, education and community to create and maintain more opportunity for our young people. It is important that this is a community wide initiative, supported by Early Years providers, Schools, Colleges, Businesses, The Voluntary Sector, Health, Council services, and most importantly young people and their families. The programme runs to March 2020.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1** Members are asked to consider and comment on the West Somerset Opportunity Area plan prepared by the DfE, and ensure that the funding is in line with the plan.
- 2.2** Members are asked consider and comment on the cross cutting themes the West Somerset Opportunity Area are addressing.
- 2.3** Members are asked to comment on the progress so far with the Opportunity Area targets.

3 Background

3.1 The DFE identified West Somerset from the social mobility data. The West Somerset Opportunity Area programme has four priorities.

Priority 1: Every child has a great start in life

The ambition for priority 1 is that children in West Somerset will begin school with a strong start, with the proportion achieving a good level of development rising to above the current national average. The key areas of work are supporting the early years workforce, improving home learning, improving assessment in early years and improving access to children's services.

The planned investment is £866,752.

The social mobility data from 2017 shows:

Stage	Metric	Performance	Rank
Early Years	% of nursery providers rated 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted	90.52	224
	% of children eligible for FSM achieving a 'good level of development' at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage	30.55	324

Our current progress is that all 16 West Somerset Nursery providers are good or outstanding. The Outstanding nursery providers are: Watery Lane Pre-School at St Micheal's School Minehead in 2016, Teddy Bear Nursery at Old Cleeve Washford in 2011, Dunster Pre-School in 2015 and Cheeky Cherubs Surestart in Minehead in 2018.

The target for 2020 is that 70% of all pupils reach a good level of development. The data below shows a significant improvement since 2015 for 50% to 65% in two years, but still a distance to travel between 2017 and 2020 data, where the target is in line with the County expectation.

Good levels of Development

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020
Somerset	67	70	71		
West Somerset	50	58	65		70

Priority 2: Educational excellence in the classroom

The ambition for priority 2 is that Every child in West Somerset will begin school with a strong start having achieved a good level of development at the end of the Early years Foundation Stage. The key areas of work are; Phonics & Talkboost, SEND, Transitions, Maths and Leadership & Governance.

The planned investment is £920,086.

KS1: % achieving at least the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths

	2015	2016	2017
West Somerset		56%	61%
Somerset		61%	65%
England		60%	64%

KS1: % achieving Level 2+ in Reading, Writing and Maths

	2015	2016	2017
West Somerset	86%		
Somerset	86%		
England	86%		

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): % of pupils eligible for FSM achieving a good level of development

	2015	2016	2017
West Somerset	32%	39%	52%
Somerset	46%	52%	56%
England	51%	54%	56%

The social mobility data from 2017 shows:

Stage	Metric	Performance	Rank
Schools	% of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted	95.70	22
	% of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted	73.05	170
	% of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	26.67	274
	Average attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM	34.70	273

The current progress is that all West Somerset Schools are good or outstanding, except for Danesfield School Williton, which required improvement in 2017. It is now making good progress under new leadership.

The Outstanding schools are; Old Cleeve in 2011 and Cutcombe in 2008.

The % of children eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2

KS2: % of pupils eligible for FSM achieving at least the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths

	2015	2016	2017
West Somerset		29%	36%
Somerset		29%	37%
England		35%	43%

KS2: % of pupils eligible for FSM achieving Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Maths

	2015	2016	2017
West Somerset	33%		
Somerset	56%		
England	66%		

The target for 2020 is that the proportion of children reaching the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths outcomes at Key stage 1 will put West Somerset in the top half of the Country, and the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils will be half what is was in September 2017.

The current progress is that

The target for 2020 is that the proportion of children reaching the expected outcomes at Key stage 2 will put West Somerset in the top half of the Country, and the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils will be half what is was in September 2017.

The current progress is that

Key stage 2 All Pupil/Pupil Premium gap

	2016	2017	2018	2020
Somerset	-11	-11		
West Somerset	-6	-11		-5

Key stage 4 % achieving 5+ GCSE standard passes inc. English and Maths (grade 4+)

		2016	2017		2020 target
All pupils	Somerset	56	60		
	West Somerset	50	62		
Pupil Premium gap	Somerset	-24	-23		
	West Somerset	-12	-22		-11

The West Somerset College, which was previously identified by OFSTED as requiring “Special measures”; was taken over by the Bridgwater College Trust. In 2016 OFSTED confirmed that the West Somerset College was a “Good” school. The significant improvement for all pupils at Key Stage 4 from 50% to 62% meant that West Somerset was the third most successful school in 2017. At secondary level, pupils achieve GCSE results which were above the Somerset and the national averages. This shows significant improvement at the district’s single upper secondary school and this much stronger foundation will help the school to achieve more with young people.

Priority 3: Transition to adulthood

The ambition for priority 3 is that Every young person in West Somerset will be inspired to achieve the best possible education outcomes after the age of sixteen. We will prioritise the access of disadvantaged young people into higher education

and high level technical routes at the same rate as in the top half of England. The key areas of work are; Transitions to post 16 education and employment, Increasing the vocational offer at the West Somerset College, Broadening Horizons, Work of Work and progress and development. The planned investment is £822,000.

The social mobility data from 2017 shows:

Stage	Metric	Performance	Rank
Youth	% of young people eligible for FSM that are in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	88.00	96
	Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualifications	26.58	256
	% of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving 2 or more A-levels or equivalent qualifications by the age of 19	30.10	164
	% of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 entering higher education by the age of 19	12.33	269
	% of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 entering higher education at a selective university (most selective third by UCAS tariff scores) by the age of 19	3.33	97

Young people have access to an Ofsted rated good sixth form at West Somerset College in Minehead and two outstanding colleges outside of the district and some distance from the area.

The targets for 2020/21 are that we will increase the % of young people achieving level three qualification, such as A Levels, at age 19 and close the gap between West Somerset and Somerset both in academic and vocational qualification. By 2020/21 we want achievement in West Somerset to equal strong results already achieved in the best performing parts of Somerset.

KS5: Average Points Score per Entry

	2015	2016			2017		
		A Level	Applied General	Tech Level	A Level	Applied General	Tech Level
West Somerset College	208.5	29.21	27.67	35.38	21.50	24.17	31.33
Somerset	216.6	30.32	35.51	31.09	30.71	37.65	32.42
England	213.0	30.44	34.66	30.76	31.13	35.69	32.25

Destinations of KS5 students: % recorded in a sustained Higher Education Institution

	2014/15	2015/16
West Somerset College	26%	42%
Somerset	39%	41%
England	48%	51%

Sources: SCC/FFT Aspire/DfE Performance Tables

Also for 2020/21 we expect that all young people leaving West Somerset College will go into further education, employment or training.

The current progress is that in 2015 92.6% of West Somerset pupils were participating in education, employment or training and in 2017 it was 95.1%. The participation rate for the County for 2017 is 95.5%

Priority 4: Skills for employment and business

The ambition for priority 4 is that Every young person in West Somerset should be equipped to succeed in the world of work, which is why we will ensure that every school pupil in West Somerset gets four excellent experiences of work and will invest in adult skills.

The key areas of activity are: Women's Opportunities, SME and Business investment Skills, Skills and Apprenticeships and Young Peoples Skills.

The planned investment is £784,000.

Where are we?

Stage	Metric	Performance	Rank
Adulthood	Median weekly salary (£) of employees who live in the local area, all employees (FT and PT)	311.80	324
	Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	8.48	215
	% of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations (SOC 1 and 2)	23.10	279
	% of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	41.35	324
	% of families with children who own their home	51.59	283

Many employers, including many small enterprises, are providing valuable support: EDF Energy, one of the country's big six energy firms delivers educational programmes in the area to support West Somerset's young people. They have pledged to support children and young people to improve their skills and access to high quality work experiences. Employer engagement will involve the many well established businesses that are important to West Somerset in a strong and well-networked community.

Employment Hubs are already providing opportunities for people to benefit from jobs in the area, including support with job applications and interview preparation. This is complemented by 'Positive People', a programme that is helping adults to overcome different forms of challenges including debt management and health problems.

Funding has been secured for a Hospitality and Tourism Academy, West Coast 360, that will nurture talent and skills in the workforce working with primary age children through to adults already in the workforce.

EDF Energy, one of the 'big six' energy companies, has pledged support to children and young people in West Somerset. £1.6 million has been invested in West Somerset Community College in the Hinkley Ready and Enterprise projects enabling local people to fully benefit from the opportunities that

The target for 2020 is that the proportion of young people progressing to higher education, will put West Somerset in the top half of the country.

There is also a target that there will be an increase in the number apprenticeship starts so start rates are as high, or better than, the rest of Somerset and so completion rates are better than, the rest of Somerset.

In 2015 3% of West Somerset students went into apprenticeships and in 2017 it was 4.4%. The number of students moving on to apprenticeships in the rest of the County for 2017 was 7%.

3.2 Funding

Somerset County Council has received in 2017/18 a grant allocation of £700,000, and is expecting a grant of £2.9m in 2018/19 based on the plans submitted for each of the priorities and agreed by the Department for Education.

In addition to the Opportunity area funding West Somerset is now a priority for other central government initiatives including:

- Working with local 'cornerstone' employers to provide young people with experience of the world of work.
- A new Essential Life Skills programme, to help disadvantaged young people have access to the same opportunities as those in the top-performing schools.
- The Education Endowment Foundation will also support schools.
- The National Citizen Service (NCS) is working to help young people benefit from a programme of personal development and volunteering.

The programme board is currently investigating whether to invest in four additional cross cutting areas of expenditure;

3.3 Mental Health

School staff and other professionals working in West Somerset have highlighted mental health as an issue that they are concerned about. The area covered will be;

- Maternal mental health – intervention – parenting support (PEEP training) and Horizon groups through Health Visiting service – will be launched summer 2018
- Behaviour management and SEND support –whole school approach to mental health and well-being including behaviour management policies
- Improve resilience and support for children & young people in West Somerset through delivery of comprehensive PSHE and targeted additional support
- Adults working with children well-being supported

3.4 Extra-curricular activities

Too many children and young people who live in West Somerset have limited opportunities to access the 'outside world' whether that be leaving Somerset itself and experiencing a city or further afield, for example, the opportunity to travel abroad and experience a new culture, language and way of life.

We have heard anecdotal evidence from a number of stakeholders (primarily schools) that this is particularly a problem for low income families whose children are eligible for free school meals or families who may not fall into this category but would be classified as 'just about managing'. This is compounded by the rurality of living in West Somerset which means that it is harder access a new environment due to distance and poor transport links.

- Special Educational Needs
- Access to Services including Child care, transport and digital connectivity.

3.4 Childcare and childminder places

Transport to early years provision:

The Local Authority does not provide free travel assistance for children below Statutory School Age to any pre-school or nursery.

Transport for employment and training – Post 16: Public bus routes exist but are limited by main roads and frequency.

3.5 Case study:

A young person living in Watchet, who would like an apprenticeship at his neighbours business based in the neighboring town of Wellington, would need to catch the bus at 0633am to get to work at 8.55am. Having left work at 5.00pm they will catch the 5.44pm bus returning to Watchet at 19.19 pm. The potential day would be nearly 13 hours, (7 hours travelling for 8 hours work). The private car journey is 45 minutes from Watchet to Wellington.

The current [minimum wage rate](#) for an apprentice is £3.70 per hour (£136.90 per week based on 37 hours per week contract). This rate applies to apprentices under 19 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. West Somerset has a low number of Apprenticeships.

For students continuing with education there is a bus ticket for some routes at an annual cost of £695 with some colleges able to support the cost with a bursary.

Transport for extra-curricular activities - For school children under statutory school leaving age, the costs of travel home from extra-curricular activities or to and from work experience placements are not met by the School Transport budget. Any journeys outside normal home to school/college travel times, are met by the school's delegated resources, or parents'. There are no public transport buses from Minehead to Dulverton after 17.33 pm.

4 Consultations Undertaken

4.1 The DFE & Somerset County Council have worked with West Somerset District Council, early year's providers, schools, colleges, employers, the voluntary sector, and the LEP to draw together plans for the West Somerset

Opportunity Area.

4.2 The DFE have committed to making sure that young people are at the heart of the work. The DFE will be consulting with young people building on research already commissioned from the Somerset Rural Youth Project which will examines the experiences and expectations of young people living in rural parts of West Somerset along with on line pulse surveys.

4.3 There are a number of surveys including one to understand the barriers facing women returning to work in West Somerset. There are also surveys for pupils and staff to monitor the impact of the work undertaken as part of the West Somerset Opportunity Area.

5 Implications

5.1 The activities within the plan will be funded by the DFE through a grant to Somerset County Council. The grant will be held by Somerset County Council and subject to Somerset County Council procurement rules. Somerset County Council will report to the DFE.

5.2 Each priority has a number of targets which the opportunity area has to achieve to improve outcomes for all learners.

6 Background Papers

6.1 The West Somerset Opportunity plan can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/650231/Social_Mobility_Delivery_Plan_West_Somerset.pdf

6.2 Data References

Here is the social mobility data for Somerset

<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/social-mobility.html>

6.3 Data on all areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-index>

6.4 Digital inclusion data for Somerset

<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/digital-inclusion/>

6.5 West Somerset Opportunity Area Newsletter May 2018



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6.6 Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author