



Subject:	Addressing Educational Inequality – update on pilot project
Date:	7 March 2018
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Sinead O'Regan, Economic Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Advise Members of a successful funding application made by Right to Succeed – a UK-based charity set up to address educational inequality – for delivery of a three- year pilot initiative that supports young people at risk of exclusion from school in North Belfast schools. An allocation of up to £500,000 will be made available towards delivery of the work in North Belfast, over a three-year period.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the success of the recent Lottery funding application by Right to Succeed. This will include a three-year support package for up to 100 young people from North Belfast who are at risk of becoming excluded from school. Delivery will commence from September 2018, and Council Officers will work with Right To Succeed to support the project.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Belfast Agenda, along with the supporting Employability and Skills Framework for the City, sets ambitious targets around improvements in employment rates and skills levels for Belfast residents. There are significant correlations between deprivation, educational attainment and economic inactivity. Currently, around 30% of school leavers do not attain 5 GCSEs, A* - C (including Maths and English). For those in receipt of free school meals, the figure is 53%. Given that these are generally the basic building blocks for any future employment or to support people moving into further education and training, it is essential to consider how this figure can be reduced. As part of the commitment to inclusive growth set out in the Belfast Agenda, one of the key population indicators is the proportion of school leavers entering employment, education or training. This is part of the commitment to ensure that everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential.</p>
3.2	<p>As part of our intelligence gathering into providers of support to address educational attainment issues and educational inequality, the Council became aware of the Big Lottery funding application being made by the charity Right to Succeed. Right to Succeed is a charity that works across a number of UK cities to develop, pilot and scale solutions to address educational inequality. The Council asked the organisation to consider Belfast as one of the three locations for programme delivery. The funding request was made by the organisation to the Big Lottery under its Preventing Exclusions Programme and was successful.</p>
3.3	<p>Right to Succeed have secured £1.4million to work with 30 primary and post-primary schools across three locations: Blackpool, Doncaster and North Belfast. The funding will be split evenly across the three locations, meaning that there will be an allocation of up to £500,000 for the project in north Belfast. The Project will be delivered on a pilot and scale basis, focusing on North Belfast as the area of greatest need in terms of educational attainment. It is hoped that the learning from this pilot can then be applied to other schools across the City.</p>
3.4	

<p>3.5</p>	<p>PEP aims to protect young people from being excluded from schools. It will focus on supporting schools that have high rates of exclusions to forensically identify the needs of the pupils most at risk of exclusion. It will work with the schools and relevant local partners to embed targeted interventions and strategies that have been demonstrated to be effective in supporting this group.</p> <p>A smaller pilot in Blackpool was extremely successful with 97% of young people staying on in education, as opposed to 50% without the intervention. Outcomes from this programme will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in the number of pupils at risk of exclusion across target schools - Improvements in literacy and numeracy - Improvement in well-being and social emotional development - Increase in decision making, self-regulation and resilience - Better supported transitions, signposting and referrals experience - Better overall school quality of experience.
<p>3.6</p>	<p>Right to Succeed identified the opportunity to focus on North Belfast for a number of reasons. The area is among those with the most significant educational and socioeconomic challenges. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational attainment (for numbers achieving at least 5 GCSEs or equivalent) within North Belfast is the lowest for school leavers in Northern Ireland (out of all 18 constituencies in Northern Ireland) - Almost half of the 22 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland are in North Belfast. Deprivation in this part of the city is extremely high with over 36% of children living in low income households, compared with an NI average of 23% - Free School Meals – there are 10 post-primary mainstream schools (7 of these are non-selective) and all have Free School Meal Entitlement (FSME) of at least 50%. Within the Primary sector there are over 22 Primary Schools and a substantial majority have Free School Meals Entitlement of over 50%.
<p>3.7</p>	<p>The area has an engaged and proactive Area Learning Community – the partnership of schools in the area working together on key challenges with the aim of improving educational outcomes for young people. These close linkages will support effective programme delivery and maximise impacts. The project takes an evidence-led approach, and all interventions and approaches will also provide intelligence that will support scalability and expansion of interventions citywide and beyond. This intervention will also provide the opportunity to work with statutory agencies demonstrating value for money and providing details on savings to the</p>

public purse from interventions. This is an approach that has worked effectively to date on other Council-led Employability and Skills initiatives. Given the Council's engagement with the schools and the charity, there is an opportunity to consider how this learning and the targeted approach might be expanded beyond the original pilot area in North Belfast.

3.8

To date, 13 primary and post-primary schools (plus one Alternative Education Provider) have signed up to take part in the programme. They are:

Name of School	Primary / Post-Primary
Currie Primary School	Primary
Seaview Primary School	Primary
St Vincent de Paul Primary School	Primary
Sacred Heart Boys' Primary School	Primary
Carr's Glen Primary School	Primary
Holy Family Primary School	Primary
Blessed Trinity College	Post-Primary
Belfast Royal Academy	Post-Primary
Hazelwood Integrated College	Post-Primary
Belfast Boys' Model School	Post-Primary
Belfast Model School for Girls	Post-Primary
Mercy College	Post-Primary
Loughshore Resource Centre	Alternative Education Provider

3.9

Right to Succeed will engage with schools before the Easter break to confirm whether they all still wish to participate in the programme. If they do, delivery will commence in September 2018. For all participating schools, the support will include:

- Needs assessment to help staff to assess and analyse the needs of their pupils in terms of learning, social and emotional wellbeing
- Professional development support for teachers and teaching assistants in a range of approaches to social and emotional development, communications, and literacy
- Intervention design/delivery – teachers will work with children and families to design an appropriate pathway for each child. This will involve close engagement with parents. Progress will be monitored using a digital tracker developed by Right To Succeed. As part of this approach, there will be a focus on peer learning across all participating schools in the three locations (and the potential to extend the learning to other locations)
- Monitoring progress – there will be reporting against a series of agreed metrics on a six-weekly basis. Impact will be measured annually against baseline data
- Embedding learning – the project will establish local learning groups to share

<p>3.10</p> <p>3.11</p> <p>3.12</p>	<p>knowledge and ensure ongoing review to improve delivery and outcomes. There will be opportunities for the Council to engage in order to inform future interventions and support knowledge dissemination, in line with the emerging approaches to area working across the Council.</p> <p>Given the Council's commitment to exploring area-based planning and delivery, there is an opportunity to work with colleagues from other parts of the Council including Community Services, Community Safety and Regeneration in order to explore how public services can be better aligned around this key challenge.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>No specific Equality or Good Relations considerations.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>No specific Financial or Resource Implications at this point. The project is being funded by The Big Lottery Fund at a total cost of £1.4million. Schools will be expected to commit staff resources to support programme implementation.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None</p>