

Name of meeting: Cabinet

Date: 5th October 2021

Title of report: Learning Strategy - *Our Kirklees Futures*

Purpose of report: To present *Our Kirklees Futures* - the Kirklees Learning Strategy. To summarise its co-production and development and outline the future strategic approach to learning in Kirklees. The report requests approval for the Council to adopt the strategy and seeks delegated authority to progress with our key strategic partners the implementation and planned delivery of activity in line with proposed timelines and governance.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes If yes give the reason why More than two wards.
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – Yes Private Report/Private Appendix – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Jo-Ann Sanders on behalf of Mel Meggs DSC –24/09/21 Eamonn Croston – Service Director for Finance – 21/09/21 Karl Larrad on behalf of Julie Muscroft – Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning – 24/09/21
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr. Carole Pattison – Portfolio holder for Learning, Aspiration and Communities Cllr Viv Kendrick – Portfolio holder for Children's Services

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes – no individuals identified in the report

1. Summary

1.1. *Our Kirklees Futures* outlines the collective vision for the future of learning in Kirklees. It captures the key messages, priorities, and approaches to make that vision a reality and provides a roadmap for all children and young people in Kirklees to achieve their potential and realise their ambitions. The full strategy is attached in Appendix 1.

1.2 We are highly ambitious and aspirational for all our learners. Our collective efforts will mean that by 2030, Kirklees is a place where children and young people have the best start in life and are:

Safe

Children and young people in Kirklees are safe and feel safe from harm, benefitting from nationally recognised exceptional safeguarding practice.

Healthy

Children and young people live healthy lifestyles and maintain these into adulthood.

Achieving

All learners across Kirklees make outstanding progress, access a high performing education system, and achieve well in external examinations. They enjoy a curriculum offer that celebrates cultural, creative, sporting, and social pursuits that are amongst the best in the country.

Gaps in achievement for those deemed disadvantaged or with additional needs are significantly and consistently reduced, with inequalities addressed.

Happy

Children and young people report that they are happy and optimistic for and about their future.

Attending

Attendance across our education system is higher than national average, with all Kirklees learners able to access their local school, setting or college.

And that the system itself is:

Fully inclusive:

There is no need to use permanent exclusion in Kirklees because learners, families and schools are supported in a timely and effective way

Sustainable:

The education, learning and employment infrastructure will work towards being carbon free and actively promotes understanding of the science of climate change.

1.3 *Our Kirklees Futures* seeks to co-create an equitable, highly achieving education system. The firm ambition is that our innovative, system-led approach is unique to our district and will drive better outcomes for all children and young people.

2. Information required to take a decision

- 2.1.** *Our Kirklees Futures* is a system-led, collaborative approach to improving outcomes, inspiring learners, raising, and realising aspirations and ensuring that Kirklees is a centre of teaching and learning excellence across the lifelong learning journey.
- 2.2.** The responsibility for school improvement sits with the individual schools, colleges, settings, and academy trusts. However, collaboration across the wider Kirklees community will further strengthen provision and is linked to the findings of soundly reviewed research nationally and internationally.
- 2.3.** Co-produced with a huge variety of partners and system leaders and reflective of our shared values, *Our Kirklees Futures* will drive a long-term strategy to bring together the entire commonwealth of Kirklees to support all its learners and those that work with them.
- 2.4.** The full appended *Our Kirklees Futures* document sets out the priorities, values and 'obsessions' that will drive forward the learning system
- 2.5.** From engagement, three 'obsessions' emerged that would be our areas of relentless focus. Our agreed obsessions are designed to guide the approach and ensure that all learners are at the heart of *Our Kirklees Futures*.
- **Inclusion** – children, young people and all learners of all backgrounds learn and grow side by side, to the benefit of all
 - **Resilience** – a system where everyone has the ability and support to overcome adversity
 - **Equity** – everyone gets the support they need
- 2.6.** These obsessions represent the focus of system-wide activity over the next decade and will be used to guide and measure the impact of future commissioning and improvement activity.
- 2.7.** *Our Kirklees Futures* is not the end but rather the beginning of our journey. It sets out the direction of travel as to how we will achieve our ambition and the principles that underline the approach. It provides a starting point from which to continue to work collaboratively and to assess impact. It states where we want to be by 2030 and will drive the activity to get us there. We will plan, do, and review at every juncture to ensure our children and young people are receiving what they deserve – the very best our collective system can achieve. Recovery from Covid 19 sits within the document as a necessary beginning to our long term aims.

BACKGROUND

- 2.8.** Kirklees Futures Commission was established to create a long-term strategic plan for education, learning and skills for Kirklees. On Friday 12th March 2021, Kirklees Children's Ambition Board met to develop the brief and agreed several clear recommendations that were subsequently passed forward to the commission by the Director of Children's Services.
- 2.9.** Representatives from the early years, schools, post 16 provision, alternative and specialist provision as well as the wider partnership have been involved at every level of the development of the strategy, and a central element *Our Kirklees Futures* is a commitment for everyone to work together on long-term actions to meet our shared goals. This will inevitably have an impact on how we invest and focus work to meet key outcomes, with all elements of the lifelong learning system working together to address shared challenges.
- 2.10.** Future improvement and action plans for each strand will sit alongside the learning strategy and will be entirely in keeping with its vision, values, and obsessions, and will continue to inform work across the system for the next decade.

OPTIONS

- 2.11.** The appended *Our Kirklees Futures* strategy presents a range of recommendations for the broader system to adopt. The co-produced and collaborative approaches developed throughout the strategy will continue, providing a range of future options for the broader system as well as the Local Authority to assess.

COST BREAKDOWN

- 2.12.** There are no specific costs identified in the learning strategy, however adoption of its principles and goals may mean future investment, particularly in keeping with its commitment to up-stream investment in Early Years to improve outcomes later in the system. The commitment to collaboration within the strategy may also suggest a developing approach to joint commissioning in future. We will actively seek opportunities for external sources of funding wherever possible.

TIMESCALE

- 2.13.** '*Our Kirklees Futures*' sets out clear timescales for implementation and evaluation of the learning strategy. Its core phases are:
- Phase One - Autumn 2021
 - Medium Term - 2022- 2025
 - Long Term - 2025 – 2030
- 2.14.** Phase One involves maintenance and development of working groups and relationship building, as well as clear development of aligned plans and work streams.
- 2.15.** The medium-term phase focuses on system alignment and embedding of modern technologies, data sharing and methods of working. It also involves formalising a 'Kirklees Behaviour Charter' for adoption by all professionals to hold the system and each other to

account. It will place children and young people and their families at its heart with key values of collaboration, respect, and restorative approaches.

- 2.16.** The longer-term phase envisions a learning strategy that is firmly embedded, with co-commissioned activity, clear methods of evaluation and excellent system join-up, leading to larger strategic and ambitious projects – however these will not be known until the medium phase. However, it is important to recognise that the learning strategy is a long-term project with a clear 2030 destination.

EXPECTED IMPACT, BENEFITS and RISKS

- 2.17.** Adoption and development of the *Our Kirklees Futures* strategy will have a significant impact on education and the life chances of children and young people. Some performance indicators are measurable – for example we expect to see improved attainment and progress measures in all schools and settings, increasing attendance, and a declining number of exclusions in the medium and long term. Other measures are more qualitative and will be evaluated through various methods such as learner voice surveys, case studies and partner feedback.

- 2.18.** Given the scope and ambition of the strategy, *Our Kirklees Futures* will impact upon both direct and indirect outcomes. Improving a range of education outcomes is a primary goal. In addition, and possibly of even greater significance, we expect to see improvements in a range of secondary and contextual outcomes, including social, justice, health, and community outcomes and a range of economic indicators.

- 2.19.** The benefits of a long-term learning strategy for Kirklees are potentially great and numerous. Increased collaboration and a relentless focus on equity, inclusion and ambition will not only improve educational achievement for all groups and individuals but will provide social and economic benefits for years to come.

- 2.20.** Numerous national and international commentators have identified a range of potential significant negative impacts following the covid-19 pandemic which has a disproportionate effect on the most vulnerable groups and those facing multiple barriers. The primary risks are therefore significant, should no action be taken to address this in the short, medium, and long term. The collaborative and systematic approach of *Our Kirklees Futures* represents an excellent opportunity to tackle these emerging challenges.

EVALUATION

- 2.21.** *Our Kirklees Futures* sets out several methods and structures for evaluation. Primarily, the Education and Learning Partnership Board will evaluate the initial implementation of the strategy. The Education and Learning Partnership Board is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Learning, Aspiration and Communities and membership includes school leaders, Governors, Council officers, and education system representatives, including Trade Unions. Future governance and accountability structures will be developed towards the medium term, with a full evaluation of all activity and impact and on the direction and priorities of the strategy in 2024.

SUSTAINABILITY

- 2.22. The strategy will be sustained through the commitment of all partners to collaboration. Improved outcomes and a happier and healthier cohort of learners will support a more sustainable future and reflects the LA's commitment to a clean and green future.

SERVICES and AGENCIES INVOLVED

- 2.23. Co-production of the strategy has involved the work of numerous services and agencies, such as social care, Public Health, and external partners. Adoption of the recommendations in the report and a commitment to the overall vision and goals of the strategy will require continued collaboration with a range of Local Authority and external services and agencies.

3. Implications for the Council

Working with People

- 3.1. *Our Kirklees Futures* builds on the council's collaborative and restorative approach and reflects its shared outcomes. It captures the council's pride in Kirklees and its ambition for the future.
- 3.2. As a local authority we are ambitious for the place and the people who live and work within our district. We understand that working with and alongside our families and strengthening and supporting communities is crucial. This strategy outlines a unified, rather than a uniform approach. We understand that only by working together can the ambitions within this document be realised. As a result, the work of the strategy aligns with the forthcoming SEND Transformation Plan, Families Together and the Children's Social Care Plan.
- 3.3. *Our Kirklees Futures* has been built through collaboration with stakeholders from a range of schools, settings, organisations, and council services who place children and young people at the centre of their work.
- 3.4. The title *Our Kirklees Futures* also captures our approach to stakeholder engagement, building relationships and making a difference for the future generations.

Working with Partners

- 3.5. From its inception, *Our Kirklees Futures* has been co-produced and developed through collaboration and support across the system.
- 3.6. The strategy has been developed through two key groups. **The first:** a senior 'Commissioning Group' chaired by an independent representative of Leeds Learning Alliance and consisting of representatives from senior leadership at the LA, NHS trusts, Huddersfield University, trade unions, schools, and youth services. **The second:** an 'Expert Strategy Group' consisting of experts and system leaders from a range of schools, Colleges, settings, and the local authority. Two interim reports were also produced throughout the process to reflect and re-focus the co-production.

- 3.7. Each group worked together numerous times, exploring key challenges, and recommending workable solutions to the emerging issues within education over the next decade. The obsessions, actions and recommendations in the strategy are the culmination of this work and are drawn from recurring and significant themes within these discussions. Inevitably, not every idea or focus can be present in the strategy and much of the co-production centred upon narrowing and grouping priorities into actionable and most impactful areas.
- 3.8. Across the Local Authority, the learning strategy has been developed to compliment other key long-term strategies, such as the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, Kirklees Children and Young People's Partnership Plan, SEND Transformation Plan, and Kirklees Employment and Skills Strategy. These plans and strategies have either informed the development of the strategy and been specifically referenced through partner engagement, and/or are in sight when developing future actions. The aim is for the learning strategy to seamlessly complement existing strategies and plans.

Place Based Working

- 3.9. Where Kirklees' citizens live and learn shapes their experiences and outcomes and has an impact on their personal economic and social circumstances. Schools and settings, alongside places and neighbourhoods, are important and influential to both everyday experience and to longer-term outcomes for individuals including their health, economic footprint, and employability.
- 3.10. Analysis of data, alongside local intelligence, has informed the discussions that shape *Our Kirklees Futures*. Transparent sharing of data will continue to enable all partners to be responsive to the changing demographics and their changing needs within Kirklees, and our internal place-based analysis will shape future interventions. Evidencing unequal outcomes between areas or groups and recommending the need for further deployment of resources are key to the strategy. Our commitment to equity and to the key goals of health and happiness also means that activities to encourage and develop cultural capital will be central.
- 3.11. Equitable access to a superb broad, rich, and deep curriculum will further involve a variety of experiences accessible to all, regardless of where they live or their socio-economic background.
- 3.12. Our understanding of Place will continue to influence the way we work with partners, providing the aspiration and challenge to local people, appropriate to their needs.

Climate Change and Air Quality

- 3.13. The recommendations contained within this cabinet report and the appended learning strategy do not directly impact on the climate and air quality. However, many of the key values and goals contribute towards a cleaner and greener future for the people of Kirklees.
- 3.14. In particular, the drive towards our vision for 2030 means that the environment and the climate are key concerns. For learners to be **safe, healthy, and happy**, their learning environments and the routes to and from those environments must reflect the greatest commitment to clean and green space. For learners to **achieve**, they must have access to exceptional schools, Colleges and family and adult learning centres within walkable or publicly commutable distances. Further, a commitment to Kirklees being a place in which

exclusionary practices are no longer necessary and our focus on equity and inclusion will mean fewer learners travelling out of area to access suitable provision and lower rates of excess travel. The collaborative approach that has been central to the development of the strategy will continue to facilitate increased join-up between services.

Improving outcomes for children

3.15. ‘*Our Kirklees Futures*’ places improved outcomes for all children and young people at the heart of its criteria for success. Statutory attainment and progress measures, regulatory judgements on the quality of education along with benchmarked data on attendance and inclusion are key metrics – but not the only ones. Positive destinations and the voice of the learner are also central to our definition of improved outcomes. The strategy places equity at the heart of its approach and will focus on embedded improvement for all learners – regardless of background or circumstance.

Other (e.g., Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

3.16. Though the *Our Kirklees Futures* learning strategy does not set immediate specific spending commitments, it will form the basis for commissioning and evaluating future activity against its key goals and values. We expect that following phase one, a costed investment plan will be brought forward as part of budget making processes for the Council, as well as seeking funding opportunities elsewhere.

3.17. The inclusive and system-led nature of the strategy will have implications for future co-commissioning and investment opportunities beyond the LA itself.

3.18. There are no direct legal implications in adoption of the strategy. As a co-produced and system-led approach, *Our Kirklees Futures* is not a tool for the LA to use but a commitment from equal partners across Kirklees to collaborative working and shared values. However, the strategy is consistent with SEN legislation and the Council’s statutory duty under section 13A of the Education Act 1996 which applies to all schools and Academies, to promote high standards, ensure fair access to opportunity for education/training and promote fulfilment of learning potential.

3.19. The Council in carrying out its functions must comply with the Public Sector Equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, namely it must have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not and foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

3.20. We envision that the Learning Strategy will be the yardstick by which future LA, system-wide or co-commissioned investment is implemented and evaluated. Its long-term nature may involve greater commitment to up-stream investment in Early Years, especially in terms of meeting the aspirations of a place in which exclusion is no longer necessary.

Integrated Impact Assessment

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken. This demonstrated very positive impacts for Kirklees residents in terms of equalities indicating that a whole system approach based on high ambition and system wide working will benefit our communities.

4. Consultees and their opinions

- 4.1. The *Our Kirklees Futures* commission was established to create a long-term strategic plan for Kirklees. It is led by two key groups: a multi-agency, cross-sector, high level Commissioning Group and an Expert Strategy Group comprised of system and organisation leaders from Schools, Colleges, learning settings, partners, and stakeholders within the borough. As education impacts every aspect of life within Kirklees, broader consultation has taken place involving LA services such as Business and Skills, Communities Teams, Social Care and Public Health.
- 4.2. This has taken the form of forum discussions with both the commissioning and strategic groups, feedback to draft versions, formal meetings of the Ambitions board, Education and Learning Partnership Board and associated committees such as Kirklees Learning Progression Board. Early Years involvement has been integral with the reference group providing additional input.
- 4.3. Consultees have been varied and significant, including Schools and Learning Settings, NHS foundation trust, union representatives, Conscious Youth, School Governors, Kirklees LA Business and Skills and Economic Resilience Teams, Cllr Viv Kendrick, Cllr Carole Patterson, Leadership Management Team Learning and the Education and Learning Partnership Board and associated committees, Kirklees Learning Progression Board, Children’s Leadership Team, Leeds Learning Alliance, and Children’s Scrutiny Board. Ongoing review will be key to shaping the implantation phases.

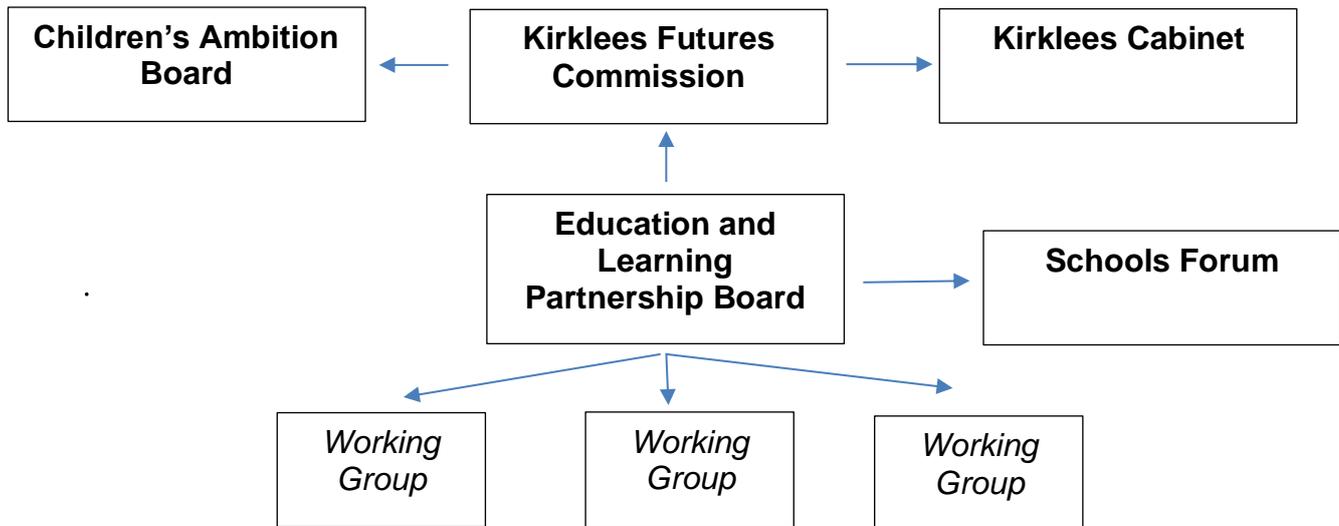
5. Next steps and timelines

- 5.1. The commission recommend the adoption of a phased plan led by the Education and Learning Partnership Board and linked to the ongoing work of the Equalities Commission and with skills and employment work streams. Throughout all phases, we make an explicit commitment to joined up working, linking in opportunities to collaborate across the whole system.

Phase 1	Medium Term	Long Term
Autumn 2021	2022 - 2024	2025 - 2030
Communication Launch Initiate new work Develop detailed plans Identify finance & resources Implement DfE Covid recovery	Drive cultural change develop and implement detailed action plans Secure wider range of financial investment	Review progress and refresh plans and priorities

- 5.2. Phase 1 September 2021 - December 2021:** We will develop a detailed and sequenced plan of that will be specific and measurable with key milestones and identify the resources we will need.
- 5.3.** Because the recommendations require leaders to work beyond their own organisations and allocate both time and resources into achievement across Kirklees this will require a cultural shift.
- 5.4.** It will be essential therefore to make sure that at every level (political, governance, professional leadership, and practitioner) there is:
- a clear, shared understanding of our current position, agreement on the variation of the current system, despite the strengths of individual organisations and people
 - agreement on the need for change
 - harness the passion and will to make a collective effort to develop a local culture of collaboration
- 5.5. Plan Phase 2 - Medium term January 2022 - December 2024:** This will see the detailed plans put into place with an emphasis on driving and developing a culture of collaboration. Towards the end of 2024 a detailed evaluation should be undertaken to inform the refresh for phase 3.
- 5.6. Phase 3 - Long term January 2025 - August 2030:** Consideration of this phase is essential in initial thoughts because the recommendations of the commission are about a deep cultural shift and a transformation which will take time.
- 5.7.** Council will be asked to endorse and support *Our Kirklees Futures* as a strategy to direct and evaluate activity over the next decade.
- 5.8.** The implementation of the phases will be monitored by the Education and Learning Partnership Board, with specific priorities being the delegated responsibility of identified partners.
- 5.9.** The Education and Learning Partnership Board will review key indicators and outcomes as a regular part of its work, and formally as part of an annual review. The Commissioning Group will provide additional oversight, receiving reports on the work to address new priorities and the impact on children's outcomes.
- 5.10.** It is anticipated that *Our Kirklees Futures* will result in changes to delivery as this is an explicit intention and to identify where we can improve children's outcomes by responding collectively in a new agreed way. The ways in which this happens will also be shared with partners and reported through governance arrangements.

5.11. A graphic to illustrate Governance and reporting arrangements is included here:



6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That cabinet note the report and formally adopt *Our Kirklees Futures* as our strategy for learning.

That Cabinet delegate authority to the Director for Children's Services and the Service Director for Learning and Early Support, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Learning, Aspiration and Communities and the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services to take forward for the Council phase one in collaboration with partners in line with proposed governance arrangements, namely The Education and Learning Partnership Board

That impact is monitored, and progress evaluated through annual monitoring to both the Education and Learning Partnership Board and the Corporate Performance Report to Cabinet and provide an annual report to the Commission Group

As *Our Kirklees Futures* is a system-wide strategy, some of the next steps of key significance for the council include:

- 6.1. Everyone across Kirklees recognises the importance of an equitable, inclusive, and high-performing education system to Kirklees and will prioritise education recovery within their strategies and plans.
- 6.2. Early Support and Help, Early Years and Adult and Community Learning are appropriately prioritised and supported.
- 6.3. Key performance indicators will be developed and agreed that measure progress towards achieving the Kirklees Futures Vision and it's agreed outcomes. They will clearly set out the work to be undertaken and what difference is has made to changing lives.

- 6.4. Inclusive education is a priority for Kirklees. A clear, agreed strategy will be developed that includes high levels of both support and accountability and aligns with the inclusive ambitions of the SEND Transformation Plan.
- 6.5. The factors affecting progression and achievement for children and young people will be considered via data and intelligence. Commissioning and leading on research will be key to this.
- 6.6. Kirklees as a place is to be recognised locally, regionally, and nationally for its exceptional approach to learning and education.

7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Our Kirklees Futures is a highly ambitious plan for our District. It commits all key stakeholders across our system to collaborate to achieve an exceptional, high achieving and equitable future for our children and young people. In recommending this strategy, it is clear that the ambitions contained within it, along with the strategic approaches outlined, will place our children and communities at the very centre of strategic decision making into the future.

At the heart of all this work sit the children and young people of Kirklees. As portfolio holder, I am clear that they and their communities deserve the very best and I am determined that this is what they will receive. This aspirational strategy, with its ambitious scope and strategic approach, has the capacity to truly make a difference to the lives of learners in our District and to the communities we have the privilege to serve.

8. Contact officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

First Interim Commission Report (May 2021)
Second Interim Commission Report (June 2021)

10. Service Director responsible

Jo-Anne Sanders– Service Director for Learning and Early Support