

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 OCTOBER 2014

100% Participation Strategy

Context

1. The 100% Participation Strategy was originally drawn up following concerns about relatively high levels of young people who were NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and whose status was classified as Not Known in Oxfordshire in 2012.
2. Significant work has taken place across the County Council and with partners to improve this position. This has included:
 - Ensuring priority is given to meeting statutory requirements.
 - Improved alignment with Oxfordshire Skills Board including alignment to the European Structural Investment Fund Thematic Objectives and the Oxfordshire City Deal (Opportunities to Inspire).
 - Improved tracking arrangements so we know what young people are doing.
 - Improved links with schools and colleges and management of transitions.
 - Securing sufficient, responsive and flexible places.
 - Securing links with employers to increase employment & employment with learning.
 - Effective management of and engagement with non-participating young people.
3. The strategy was refreshed in April 2014 and is attached for information.

Outcomes

4. As a result outcomes for young people in Oxfordshire have improved significantly:
 - NEET figures in Oxfordshire are now below our 5% target and were at 4.7% in March 2014 and 4.5% in August 2014. Over the year significant progress has been made across Early Intervention Hubs, in particular in Witney, Banbury and East Oxford, where the NEET levels have been considerably reduced.
 - Over the year the focus on vulnerable groups has produced significant improvements in EET for these groups, particularly for young carers, looked after children/care leavers and homeless young people where targets are now consistently met and improvements sustained.
 - Our “Not Known” figures have reduced significantly over the past year and in Department for Education published figures were 18.8%. The March 2014 percentage was 11.8% and August 2014 was 6.1%. The concern that the decrease in the Not Known figures would increase our NEET level has not been borne out. However, the DfE considers that data showing a

“Not Known” figure above 10% questions the validity of the whole data set and means it is essential to keep the “Not Known” figure below 10%.

- The current “Participation in Learning” percentage is 93.5% for Year 12, with a further 0.2% working towards participation (93.7% meeting the statutory duty). A further 0.3% are taking a “temporary break” (either ill, pregnant or young carer).
- Our September Guarantee figure for 2013 showed a slight improvement from the previous year moving from 90.8% in September 2012 to 91.7% September 2013 and we intend to sustain this improvement for 2014.
- 33.1% of young people (Year 12) are in jobs without learning and this continues to be an issue.

Recommendations

5. The Education Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED:
 - (a) to note and approve the report; and
 - (b) that councillors promote this work in their local areas to ensure continued success of the strategy and improved outcomes for young people.

Tan Lea
Early Intervention Manager

September 2014

March 2013
Refresh April 2014



100% Participation Strategy for Young People in Oxfordshire 2013- 2015

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100% Participation Strategy for Young People in Oxfordshire 2013 to 2015

1. Vision

Creating opportunities for young people is at the heart of what we do.

We aim to ensure that all young people in Oxfordshire, and in particular our most vulnerable groups, are participating in education, training or employment with learning through the provision of a whole system approach to effective integrated, multi-agency and cross-directorate work.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 To achieve at least a 95% average towards our aspirational target of 100% for both Year 12 and Year 13 young people participating in learning.
- 2.2 To achieve 4% NEET (based on the average of November, December and January).
- 2.3 To reduce Not Known figures to less than 5% (based on the average of November, December, January figure) and zero tolerance for our most vulnerable groups.
- 2.4 To ensure targeted support results in our most vulnerable groups achieving EET outcomes that are at least above the national average reported for those groups.
- 2.5 To provide targeted input to young people in Year 13/14 who have been NEET for six months or more, enabling them to become EET.
- 2.6 To develop further a whole system approach , which ensures every young person aged 16-18 not participating in learning is identified and offered a suitable place in learning. To build this through links with schools and colleges, effective management of transitions at 16; sufficient, responsive and flexible learning places; links with employers that encourage employment with learning; effective management of and engagement with NEET young people; and robust tracking arrangements.
- 2.7 To align the Economy and Skills agenda within the Education Strategy by providing effective support to schools, colleges and other post 16 learning providers so that they can develop relevant and appropriate provision to meet the needs of young people 16+ and the local labour market, To align 100% Participation Strategy with the Skills Strategy, Oxfordshire City Deal and European Structural Investment Fund agendas
- 2.8 To ensure effective linkage with and referral to Youth Contract , Progress! and European Social Fund Phase 2 NEET provision to support NEET young people and ensure appropriate exit strategies are in place where necessary.
- 2.9 To learn from national best practice and place Oxfordshire's solutions within this category.

3. Principles

3.1 Compliance with duties

- 3.1.1 Local authorities are required to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people aged 16-18 (inclusive) in their area (under sections 15ZA and 18A of the Education Act 1996 (as inserted by the ASCL Act 2009)) and to make available to young people age 19 and below support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training (Section 68, Education and Skills Act 2008).
- 3.1.2 The Education and Skills Act 2008 further requires local authorities to promote the effective participation of all 16 and 17 year old residents in learning and to make arrangements to identify young people resident in the authority who are not participating.
- 3.1.3 The Education Act 2011 requires school to secure access to independent careers guidance for pupils in years 9-11 and provide relevant information about pupils to local authority support services. New statutory guidance “Careers guidance and Inspiration in schools” and non-statutory departmental guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff (April 2014) produced to support the duty. The new duty broadens school responsibilities including requiring a school careers strategy, being aware of the need for young people to achieve grade C or better in English and Maths, particularly working in partnership with employers and linking to STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects, developing entrepreneurial skills and linkage to out of school opportunities to help deliver career aspirations.
- 3.1.4 Local authorities are expected to have arrangements in place to ensure that 16 and 17 year olds have received an offer of a suitable place in post-16 education or training, and that they are assisted to take up a place. (Statutory guidance 2012)
- 3.1.5 Under the latest Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, Participation of Young People (March 2013), responsibilities for young people with a Learning Disability Assessment are strengthened to include a statutory duty to ensure the identification, engagement and participation of these young people.
- 3.1.6 Local Authorities may shortly be required to provide the UCAS Progress database ensuring this is kept updated and accessible to all young people (Year 12 – 14)

3.2 Future workforce of Oxfordshire

We recognise the contribution that 100% participation of young people in education and training can make to ensuring Oxfordshire has a competent and effective workforce. It forms a key strand of our corporate plan for a thriving Oxfordshire and the local development of a world class economy.

3.3 Partnership working

The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) and the Oxfordshire Skills Board actively support this agenda. OxLEP has recently published its first Oxfordshire Skills Strategy.

3.3.1 Skills Strategy Priorities

The Skills Strategy identifies the five key priorities, with the following being relevant to the participation agenda:

SP1: To meet the needs of local employers through a more integrated and responsive approach to education and training: developed in partnership with our provider network, to encourage more training provision in priority sectors - both current and projected - to meet the needs of employers or to train future entrepreneurs, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

SP2: To create the 'skills continuum' to support young people through their learning journey: the ambition is to develop integrated, seamless services that support young people through school and on into training, further education, employment or business, where they understand the full breadth of career options, including local demand, and the training path to succeed in that career.

SP3: To up-skilling and improving the chances of young people and adults marginalised or disadvantaged from work, based on moving them closer to the labour market.

SP4: To increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities, particularly those offered by small to medium sized businesses.

3.3.2 European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) Thematic Objectives

Oxfordshire's emerging European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) plan sets out our proposals for the use of the c£20m European funds which have been earmarked for Oxfordshire for the 2014-2020 period. It is designed to boost our ability to innovate, support business growth and job creation, and provide opportunities for residents throughout the county to participate in our

high skill, high quality labour market, including measures specifically targeted at our rural areas.

The ESIF steering group has developed the strategy and proposed funding allocations across ten thematic objectives (TO). Thematic objectives 8, 9 & 10 are relevant to supporting the 100% participation strategy:

TO8 - Employment / Labour mobility: Access to employment

- Literacy and numeracy for young people
- Gender in-balance in technology sectors
- Enhancing pathways for long term unemployed
- Support for job creation through promotion of tourism, recreation and leisure
- Support for job creation in small scale renewables projects

TO9 - Social inclusion: active inclusion

- Early intervention to avoid young people becoming not in education, employment or training, including work with families
- Programme to develop opportunities and support employers to take on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

TO10 - Education, skills & lifelong learning (50%)

- Programme to develop skills and deliver qualifications and apprenticeships at lower levels in employment growth sectors, targeted on un- and under employed and marginalised groups
- Accessible apprenticeships and traineeships in priority sectors

3.3.3 Our recently agreed Oxfordshire City Deal provides the framework against which government are investing c£55.5m locally to support Oxfordshire's 'Innovation led growth' ambition. Skills featured significantly with partners able to secure £1.5m funding to support an increase in the number of 16-23 year old apprentices by 525 up to March 2017 with an emphasis on identified growth sectors including advanced engineering and manufacturing; space technology and biosciences. This will be achieved through delivery of an Oxfordshire Apprenticeship action plan agreed by the Skills Funding Agency.

3.3.4. Economy and Skills Team Priorities

The Economy and Skills team will provide up-to-date Oxfordshire-centric careers advice and guidance based on local labour market information about growth sectors, and will raise awareness amongst young people of science, technology, engineering and maths career choices. It will also broker more strategic links between business and the education sector to encourage more business involvement in schools and colleges, and greater uptake of training such as traineeships and Apprenticeships, in line with the Government's objectives.

4. Data Analysis and Trends

There have been significant improvements in participation performance over the first year the strategy was implemented.

- NEET figures in Oxfordshire are now below our 5% target, at 4.7% in March 2014. Over the year significant progress has been made across Early Intervention Hubs in particular in Witney, Banbury and East Oxford where the NEET levels are now below the targets set.
- Over the year the focus on vulnerable groups has produced significant improvements in EET for these groups particularly for young carers, looked after children/care leavers and homeless young people where targets are now consistently met and improvements sustained.
- Our Not Known figures have reduced significantly over the past year and in Department for Education published figures (average November 2013, December 2013 and January 2014) were 18.8%. The March 2014 percentage is 11.8%. The concern that the decrease in the Not Known figures would increase our NEET level has not been borne out. However, the DfE considers that data showing a Not Known figure above 10% questions the validity of the whole data set means it is essential to keep the Not Known figure below 10% going forward.
- The number of young people 'Participating' is a new statistic replacing the in learning data however the two figures are not comparable. The current Participation percentage is 91.2% for Year 12, with a further 0.5% either working towards participation or taking a temporary break (either ill, pregnant or young carer).
- Our September Guarantee figure for 2013 showed a slight improvement from the previous year moving from 90.8% in September 2012 to 91.7% September 2013 and we intend to sustain this improvement for 2014.
- 33.1% of young people (Year 12) are in jobs without learning and this continues to be an issue.

5. Analysis of Strategic Themes for Oxfordshire

We believe that the whole system, cross agency approach implemented in 2013 continues to be required to provide a seamless and needs led approach at every stage along the participation pathway.

Five key strategic themes for Oxfordshire in achieving this continue to be:

- Robust tracking arrangements;
- Links with schools and colleges and effective management of transitions at 16;

- Securing sufficient, responsive and flexible places
- Securing links with employers to increase employment and employment with learning;
- Effective management of and engagement with non-participating young people.

5.1 Robust Tracking Arrangements

a) Context

In order to support transitions and ensure appropriate services are in place we need good tracking information about where learners are, so that we can identify those who need more support. A range of arrangements are in place to track young people through Years 12 – 14, this map needs to be maintained and further developed. The additional resource to work with schools and colleges has significantly improved the accuracy and breadth of data from schools and colleges. More work is needed to achieve accurate information from learning providers showing destination of their leavers. In 2013 UCAS data was withdrawn nationally making tracking of Year 14 young people more resource intensive. Work is underway nationally to reverse this decision in the meantime it is crucial that schools and colleges provide accurate destination data at Year 14.

b) What is being done already

- Data sharing has been confirmed with robust processes in place and Year 11 privacy notices supplied to schools.
- Reporting and data systems are in place to support targeting of areas where information sharing needs to improve.
- Tracking Of NEET young people is managed through the Early Intervention Hubs tracking every 45 days whilst a young person is NEET
- Tracking of those on employment is managed through Early Intervention Youth Engagement and opportunities team

c) Priorities for further work.

- Ensure current activities are maintained and information sharing between schools/colleges and the local authority provides 100% returns and data can be cross-referenced and resources targeted effectively.
- Ensure improved data sharing between learning providers and the local authority so timely destination information is provided.
- Lobby nationally with colleagues for a return of the UCAS data to show destinations of Year 14 young people moving to University.

5.2 Links with Schools and Colleges and effective management of transitions at 16

a) Context

Improving and supporting the transition of learners between key stages is crucial to ensuring that young people continue to be engaged in education and can progress successfully. Preparing for transition needs to start in primary schools with increased focus and support up to the transitions from Key stage 4 to 5.

The changing responsibility for schools and colleges in relation to supporting the management of transitions and effective data sharing is a key issue and one that must be maintained to ensure the good work already undertaken is sustained and built upon. Contributing to this will be collaborative working between the Skills for Business (Providers) post and existing Schools/colleges tracking Officer (CEIAG)

b) What is being done already?

- Considerable work is being undertaken with schools and colleges to ensure that impartial Information, Advice and Guidance to all young people including young people in special schools is provided and that there is good liaison and sharing of information with the local authority.
- Work is being undertaken to support schools/colleges in broadening the CEIAG curriculum and encouraging a cross-curricula approach.
- A well-used universal offer is available using web based and electronic opportunities. This is supported by Information, Advice and Guidance in schools through the Early Intervention Service.
- Location of NEET engagement work in the Early Intervention Service where support from both local authority and voluntary sector providers is located, assists with the coordination of this work. This includes key links to external contractors e.g. Youth Contract, Porgress! and Specialist NEET provision for vulnerable groups.
- Data sharing is in place through a Year 11 privacy notice and this is now working effectively.
- Annual Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) information identifying young people in years 8 – 11 who are most at risk of NEET is in place and work carried out to support schools in using this information to find the most appropriate support for young people.
- Identification of our most vulnerable young people is in place enabling particular attention to be paid to these young people

c) Priorities for further work

- Focus with schools and colleges to work in partnership to improve transition experience for learners from Key Stage 4 to 5 and age 17.

- Working with schools/colleges on the relevance of their post 16 offer to enable young people to undertake learning at Level 2 and 3 providing best fit with the local economy.
- Working with schools and colleges to provide intensive support for most vulnerable young people
- Provision of access to comprehensive information about availability of learning in schools and colleges post 16 through UCAS Progress.
- Development of education business links as part of Oxfordshire City Deal to ensure young people are better informed about the world of work and local employment opportunities.
- Development of local labour market (LMI) reports to include statistics on local vacancies, the skills/ qualifications that employers are asking for and any major developments in the planning pipeline which will generate significant employment opportunities in the future.

5.3 Securing sufficient, responsive and flexible places

a) Context

Working closely with our schools, colleges and providers we need to ensure that the range of provision can meet the needs of all our learners. This involves a clear identification of where the gaps are and responding to learners' needs and demands. We also need to consider the changing landscape of our local economy and work with young people and providers to understand the needs.

b) What is being done already?

- Through our skills and learning service we have commissioned niche, flexible provision aimed at engaging those who are NEET. These providers deliver study programmes and Traineeships.
- Through the Oxfordshire Apprenticeship brand a series of events and projects have been delivered to increase the take up and availability of apprenticeships including: delivery of 'making sense of apprenticeships' events aimed at employers, delivery of drop in 'apprenticeships' aimed at parents and young people, and working with schools to ensure young people are aware of apprenticeships as a post 16 route.
- Beginning the development of support and encouragement for employers to understand the role of traineeships providing a continuum of support from NEET through traineeships to apprenticeships.
- Inclusion of young people in the Oxfordshire City Deal, Skills Strategy and ESIF developments to enable additional financial support for this area of work and targeting of most vulnerable groups of NEET young people..

c) Priorities for further work

- Further work needs to be undertaken to provide more EFA funded engagement programmes.
- Promotion of Traineeships to employers to encourage more take up of these programmes as a 'pre-apprenticeship' route
- Distance learning provision offer made available to support young people in Jobs without Learning needs to support the high number of young people taking on jobs in the current buoyant market where there is no formal learning, which can limit opportunities for progression.
- Working to establish creative pathways for learning end employment for vulnerable groups
- Use the UCAS progress database to ensure that all learning provision is held accessibly and is accurate, reliable and current.

5.4 Securing links with employers to increase employment and employment with learning

5.5

Context

Working closely with employers and the business community we need to encourage employers to think about the range of young people and consider work options for our most vulnerable groups. We need to support employers in understanding the Raising the Participation Age agenda and encourage employers across the county to up-skill the workforce by providing training alongside employment

What is being done already

- An employer event is being planned for October 2014 aimed at large employers to raise awareness about the support available and the potential benefits of employing young people with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- Increasing education and business links activities with schools and other providers will raise employers awareness of RPA as well and setting the strategic case for employers to invest in young people, alongside exploring potential delivery routes including ESIF.

Priorities for further work

- More employer links will be made through the delivery of the 'creating the continuum' priority within the Economy and Skills team which will aim to increase the number of employers working with schools.

- Target employers with young people who are not participating in learning to encourage take up of distance learning provision.
- Provide an employer's pack containing information about employing young people, responsibilities under RPA , how to access support/information about converting existing roles into apprenticeships and traineeships
- Produce on-going access to information for employers about RPA

5.4 Effective management of and engagement with non-participating young people

a) Context

To ensure that all 16 and 17 year olds can participate requires a specific focus on those who are most vulnerable. National evidence suggests that early identification and support is crucial to ensuring that these young people can go on to achieve and participate. This support needs to be well co-ordinated across a range of partners and services.

b) What is being done already?

- Targeted work with our most vulnerable groups is led and supported through our Early Intervention Service Hubs and systems are in place to ensure all NEET young people are identified and can be supported by local Early Intervention staff and co-located voluntary sector providers (Youth Contract, Progress!, ESF Phase 2 NEET provision and Specialist NEET Service). This work is supplemented by NEET drop-ins, job clubs and tailor-made engagement projects.
- Quarterly cross agency Youth Employment and Participation Networks are held in each of the Early Intervention Service areas to coordinate support, share good practice and also work intensively with those young people in the patch who remain NEET or Not Known
- Monitoring data showing effectiveness and impact of approaches produced to support young people from Vulnerable groups produced monthly
- Links are in place with colleagues in the YOS, and those working with homeless young people, young people with LDD, teenage parents, young carers, LAC/Care leavers.

c) Priorities for further work

- Continue to work in partnership with providers and partners to implement creative strategies to improve the outcomes for vulnerable learners.
- Improve systematic referrals to integrated support services e.g. Prospects, Youth Contract, Progress! and Phase 2.

- Continue to identify additional strategies to support the participation of young people with Learning Disabilities and Difficulties in accordance with the March 2013 statutory guidance and SEND reforms and to develop provision that will offer holistic and progressive experiences that support the development of skills for independent living and prepare learners for employment.
- Ensure data links across LAC/Leaving Care and targets are consistent and stretching
- Ensure all work targeting the most vulnerable young people aligns effectively with the Skills Strategy and ESIF agendas.
- Utilise funding opportunities including ESIF to increase participation.

6. Outcomes

1. To achieve at least a 95% average towards our aspirational target of 100% for 16-17 year old (Year 12/13) young people to be in learning and 83% of 17-18 year old (Year 13) young people (based on the average November 14, December 14 and January 2015 figures) published March/April 2015
2. To achieve less than 4% NEET (based on the average of November 2014, December 2014 and January 2015 figures) published March/April 2015.
3. To reduce Not Known figures to less than 5% (based on the average of November, December, January figure) and zero tolerance for our most vulnerable groups by March 2015.
4. Timely returns from schools/colleges including special schools – intended destinations by May 2014 and actual destination by October 2014.
5. Effective CEIAG in schools including special schools.
6. Vulnerable group statistics meet targets for NEET, EET and Participation.
7. September Guarantee results improved to 95% for years 2012 and 2013.
8. OCC EFA funded programmes to fill gaps and remove barriers for vulnerable learners, developing more EFA recognised Engagement programmes.
9. Distance learning programme in place by September 2014.
10. To reduce to 20% the number of young people under 18 in Jobs without learning by March 2015.
11. To ensure an upward trend in the numbers of young people using Opportunities Facebook, numbers viewing Opportunities posts and numbers receiving Hot Jobs mailing.

7. Communication

To ensure the aspiration of this strategy is shared comprehensively across Oxfordshire County Council and with wider partners it is important to put in place a comprehensive communication strategy including:

- a) Links to the wider education community through joint briefing and planning workshops to include Economy and Skills , Early Intervention Service, Deputy

Director for Education and Early Intervention, School Leaders, Schools and Learning Manager

- b) Increased links to employers
- c) Links to IAG leads in schools and school leadership teams
- d) Information to young people and parents/carers through www.Oxme.info, www.oxfordshire.gov.uk and www.oxfordshireapprenticeships.co.uk.

8. Governance and Review

The 100% Participation Strategy is a key work strand for both the Early Intervention Service and the Economy and Skills team. This is overseen by cross-directorate 100% Participation Progress meetings led jointly by Economy and Skills and Early Intervention and including Oxfordshire Skills and Learning Service. Meetings are held every two months to assess progress. This is supported by specific NEET sub-groups (Early Intervention Service, Children in Need Thematic Group - NEET and Communities and Learning Thematic group - IAG), with operational responsibility through multi-agency Youth Employment and Participation Networks.

As a result of changes in the Environment and Economy Directorate the interim lead for this work is the Early Intervention Manager (Youth Lead) in Children, Education and Families supported by operational managers in both directorates, pending a review of the governance arrangements (see appendix 1). The lead for the RPA duty remains with Economy and Skills.

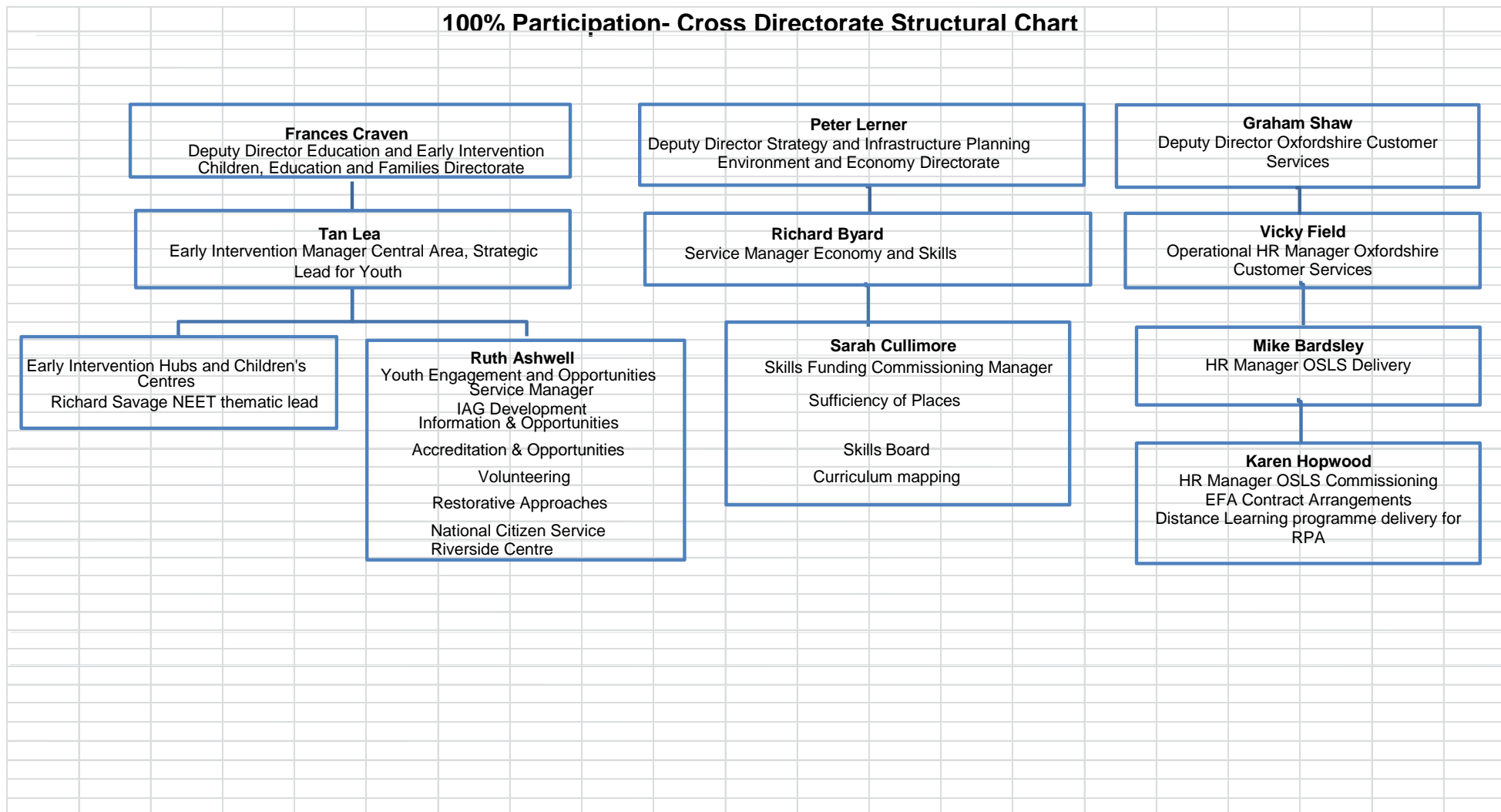
An evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy will be undertaken in relation to improved outcomes and completion of the action plan.

9. Conclusion

Oxfordshire Children's Services are determined to build on good practice already embedded, learn from other areas, create opportunities and improve the participation rates for young people in the county and in particular for our most vulnerable groups.

Additional resources would be required to achieve the ambition in this strategy and are outlined in Appendix 2 and an Action Plan is outlined in Appendix 3.

Appendix 1: 100% Participation- Cross Directorate Structural Chart



Appendix 2

Aspirational Additional Resource

Tracking resource £35,000 p.a.
(current budgets are
insufficient to undertake
the rigorous tracking
needed to meet the
aspirations of this
strategy)

European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) Thematic Objectives

Oxfordshire's emerging European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) plan sets out proposals for the use of the c£20m European funds which have been earmarked for Oxfordshire for the 2014-2020 period. The ESIF steering group has developed the strategy and proposed funding allocations across ten thematic objectives of which 3 are directly applicable to this agenda (see 3.3.2) ESIF funds will be allocated by competitive tendering processes.