



Bristol Learning City Partnership

Strategic Ambition

2016 – 2018

Learning transforms lives, organisations and communities in the City

Introduction

Bristol is a vibrant city with an international reputation; for many it is a good place to live and do business. There is a thriving arts scene; two successful universities; and a highly educated and skilled workforce. The population of 449,300 is diverse: people are from 180 countries of birth; speaking 91 languages and practising 45 religions; currently 22% are non-white British; one in five is under 16.

The city contributes £12.6 billion to the UK economy, however the city's economic success and prosperity belies the lack of affordability and poverty for many citizens: there are concentrations of significant deprivation, with 42 areas amongst the most deprived in the UK and more than 23% of children living in poverty compared with 19% nationally. The rise in average house prices is 13% higher than nationally over the same period, with an increasing shortage of affordable homes. In some parts of the city more than 50% of residents do not have the minimum qualifications required by employers, resulting in a lack of skill to meet business need. There are also significant challenges for the city in terms of health, education and employment – life expectancy is ten years shorter for men in some parts of the city; only 56% of children have the chance of attending a good school compared with 99% in others; and the percentage young people not in education, employment or training varies from 2% to 13.5%.

The contribution learning can make to addressing these longstanding systemic challenges is being delivered by the Learning City Partnership; a Partnership Board established in 2015, consists of 24 partners and is chaired by the elected Mayor. The Board is made up of city leaders from across the public, private and education sectors, supported by three Challenge Groups and a number of task groups delivering specific pieces of work. This structure has provided a cross-partnership approach to meet the identified challenges, as part of a developing city governance framework.

The impact of the Partnership over the first year has recently been reviewed; as partners we identified a commitment to deliver change and greater coherence in the learning sector. Business partners noted increased understanding about the challenges facing formal learning, and the impact a partnership approach can have on successful outcomes for business and the city. As partners we are taking collective responsibility for city issues, evidenced by the partnership contribution to the development of city-wide strategies such as the West of England

In our first year the Partnership has:

- Grown to more than 70 organisations, 200 individuals
- Created a model for an education business hub and young people's portfolio
- Agreed city strategies for:
 - Excellence in schools
 - Targeted support for those not accessing employment
 - An integrated approach to capital development
- Appointed 130 community Learning Ambassadors
- Supported ten university graduate interns
- Promoted Bristol as a great place to teach
- Developed intergenerational activities focused on isolated older people, through the charity Bristol Ageing Better
- Launched a newly created Learning City brand
- Gained a growing social media presence with more than 3,500 followers in the promotion of learning opportunities

Skills Strategy and Health and Wellbeing.

Strategic Ambition

Following the review, the Partnership Board agreed to refresh the Learning City vision setting out our ambition as a Learning City and our collective priorities for action during 2016-2018. There is recognition that the good practice taking place in the city makes a significant contribution to achieving the ambition and the collective action delivered can add value and drive change.

A Vision and Aims for the future

We continue to have an **ambitious vision** for Bristol as a Learning City, where:

- All **individuals and communities** are proud to learn throughout their lives
- Every **organisation** has a committed, skilled and diverse workforce
- The **City's** success is shared by all

To realise this vision, **our aim** is to ensure:

- Greater **awareness** about the **value** of learning
- Increased **participation** in learning for all ages
- Improved **achievement** and **life chances** for everyone

We plan to achieve these **priorities** and drive long term change in our city and develop **indicators** such as:

1. Awareness and Value

Increased attendance from targeted groups and communities in all phases of formal learning
Increased numbers attending vocational programmes to meet skills demand

2. Participation

Increased participation in formal learning from targeted wards and groups
Increased number of good/outstanding learning providers

3. Achievement and Life Chances

Improved outcomes for all learners
Increased number of local people in work
Increase in jobs created in the City

Working together

Bristol Learning City champions learning as a way to transform lives, communities, organisations and the City; we want everyone to be proud to learn throughout their lives. Being a Learning City brings us together, as partners, to realise our shared vision, deliver change and make a greater impact in the City.

We are taking responsibility for learning across the City, to tackle the systemic challenges that lead to inequality, by sharing our expertise, targeting our resources and taking collective action to add value to the work we do individually. Bristol Learning City provides a governance structure, which includes:

1. **A Partnership Board** - influential city leaders representing all aspects of learning, who act as ambassadors for Bristol by:
 - **Celebrating** the benefits of learning as a way to transform lives
 - **Championing** learning for all ages and all communities
 - **Commissioning** activity to increase participation and achievement
 - **Connecting** planning, decision making and resources
2. **Learning Challenge Groups** – local partners delivering activity to tackle identified priorities through three themed groups:
 - Learning in Education – Raising the attainment of all students through formal learning in Bristol schools, colleges and universities
 - Learning for Work - Supporting citizens into work and ensuring the local workforce is skilled and diverse
 - Learning in Communities – Encouraging a culture in communities where learning is valued by everyone

These groups will include relevant partners to deliver the plan and so representatives are likely to change. All groups will report to the Board and liaise with each other to prevent duplication.

3. **Learning Ambassadors** – citizens who are passionate about learning, inspiring others and demonstrating that learning is for everyone:
 - Work with others to help change attitudes and behaviours

- Promote learning to engage others
- Participate in learning to lead by example

In our work together we will:

- Act on evidence of need to address inequality
- Learn together to develop new ways of working
- Share responsibility to achieve change in the city

Communicating with others

Many partners in the city deliver learning opportunities, which contribute to Bristol being a successful Learning City. The recently formed Learning City Communications Group aims to change perceptions about learning and promote activities that will increase awareness, participation and achievement.

The group will champion Bristol as a Learning City by:

- Using a range of media, including social media; printed press; websites
- Developing city campaigns and organising key events
- Sharing good news stories to celebrate the success of individuals and organisations

Making an impact

Learning is being delivered and evaluated by a range of organisations; bringing some of this information together provides the opportunity to gain greater insight about learning in the city.

The Learning City Evaluation Group aims to evaluate the attitude, experience and impact of learning on individuals, organisations and the city, by collating evidence from partners, including:

- Bristol Learning City activities
- Some existing data sets and surveys
- Individual learning stories

- Citizen Engagement.

The evidence will:

- Indicate aspects of the changing learning culture
- Determine future priorities for action
- Influence the development of learning regionally, nationally, globally.

The group will bench mark and provide advice to the Board on the specific measures to evidence the long term indicators set out above; they will also offer scrutiny to ensure the plans will deliver the required change.