

**Report:  
Workshop on becoming  
a UNESCO Learning Region  
26th January 2018**

**BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC) in their Strategic Growth Plan 2017-2032 (Community Plan) have identified through a co- design a common vision of:

“A thriving, prosperous and sustainable City and District with equality of opportunity for all” to be achieved by a focus on social, economic and environmental wellbeing and regeneration, and by addressing and targeting poverty, social exclusion and disadvantage.

This is to be implemented through three pillars of wellbeing namely Economic, Social and Environmental, to deliver 8 interconnected area based local community plans. It was recognised at an early stage in the Strategic Growth Plan (Community Plan) that success will only be achieved by putting in place policies and actions to target, challenge and address inequalities using the “mature” developed partnerships that exist alongside strong political and civic leadership in the City and District

Under the Economic pillar and the theme of Education and Skills, DCSDC have expressed their ambition to deliver the primary outcome that our young people and our workforce “are better skilled and educated”;

with sub-outcomes that:

- “- Our Young People have improved attainment levels
- We have a better skilled and educated workforce
- As the North West Learning Region we have increased training and learning opportunities”

This aligns directly with Programme for Government (PFG) outcome 5:

“We are an innovative creative society, where people can fulfil their potential”

The Education and Skills Delivery Partnership (ESDP) has been created to deliver on the Strategic Growth Plan (Community Plan) and take lead responsibility for the Education and Skills Actions and Outcomes (see Appendix 1: ESDP Terms of

Reference). The membership is representative of a wide range of education and skills interests in the Region including:

- Representatives from the business sector
- Department of Education
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS)
- Foyle Learning Community
- North West Regional College
- University of Ulster
- Invest NI
- Chamber of Commerce
- Department for Communities (DfC)
- Department for the Economy (DfE)
- Schools

The Strategic Growth Plan (Community Plan) has specifically identified the action:

“to work towards securing UNESCO Learning City and Region status, promote and accelerate the practice of life-long learning, develop an active and inclusive learning culture from early education in families, the workplace and communities.”

In line with this thinking and in partnership with its key Education and Skills partners, the possibility of submitting an application to become a member of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) is now being explored.

### **WHAT IS THE UNESCO GLOBAL NETWORK OF LEARNING CITIES (GNLC)?**

The UNESCO GNLC is an international policy-oriented network providing inspiration, know-how and the sharing of best practice. Learning Cities are a crucial driver in the achievement of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was approved in 2015 and includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a number of related targets to be met by 2030. The Network supports the achievement of all seventeen SDGs, in particular;

“SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, and:

“SDG 11: ‘Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”

Promoting lifelong learning for the sustainable development of cities is therefore fundamental to achieving all of the SDGs.

The UNESCO GNLC supports and improves the practice of lifelong learning in the world’s cities by promoting policy dialogue and peer learning among Member Cities; forging links; fostering partnerships; providing capacity development; and developing instruments to encourage and recognise progress made in building Learning Cities.

There are 200 Learning Cities from 40 countries including Cork, Limerick, Bristol and Swansea.

To take this strategic priority forward, five representatives from the Council's Strategic Growth Plan's Education & Skills Delivery Partnership attended the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities Conference in Cork from 18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> September 2017, previously hosted by Beijing and Mexico. The event clearly outlined the benefits of becoming a Learning City and the main challenges of establishing a governance structure and a shared vision to take the initiative forward. Following attendance at this conference it was agreed that a workshop should be hosted locally to enable key stakeholders from the City and District to gain a better understanding of what building a Learning City involves and to explore if this is an accolade to pursue.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Aideen McGinley introduced the workshop (see Appendix 2: Agenda, Learning Cities Workshop), as a means to explore with key stakeholders the possibility of applying for UNESCO Learning Cities designation. She invited the participants (see Appendix 3: Learning Cities Attendees), to introduce themselves and highlight their areas of interest. It was noted that there was a high level of interest and that a comprehensive group of Stakeholders were present representing people with authority, resources, expertise, information and need.



The ESDP, who are tasked with oversight and delivery of the Strategic Growth Plan (Community Plan), were represented. Furthermore, the Key Anchor groups identified in the Community Plan were present, including Ulster University (UU) at Magee, North West Regional College (NWRC), Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT), the Chamber of Commerce, key businesses and employers including Seagate and Allstate, the Education Authority, Invest NI, Catalyst-Inc and DCSDC.

All present highlighted their interest and commitment to the concept of a Learning City and a willingness to explore the opportunities and hear at first hand the experiences of other cities. The importance of building on what already existed, the strength of partnerships and the need to harness an integrated approach to employment and skills were common themes in the discussion.

### **WHAT IS A LEARNING CITY?**

Paul Haslam, who has considerable experience of the concept, outlined the key principles and features of a Learning City and its value in terms of the renaissance of cities and districts:

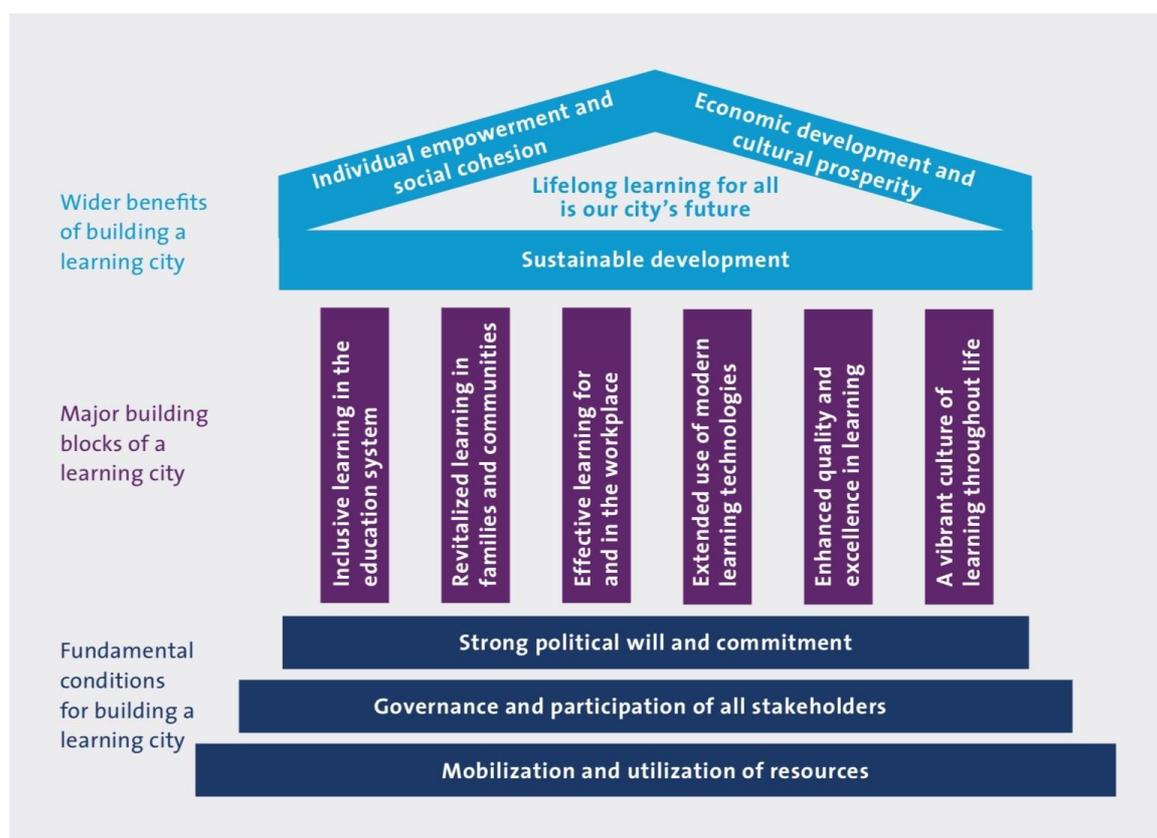
A Learning City is defined as a place which uses its resources to promote inclusive, lifelong learning in education, families, communities and the workplace. UNESCO defines a Learning City as a city that:

- effectively mobilises its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education;
- revitalises learning in families and communities;
- facilitates learning for and in the workplace;
- extends the use of modern learning technologies;
- enhances quality and excellence in learning; and
- fosters a culture of learning throughout life

These six key areas of focus, which reflect the major building blocks of a Learning City, are illustrated in Figure 1: The Framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities, on the following page.

Learning Cities aim to create social cohesion, economic and cultural prosperity and sustainable development. Empowering individuals is central to the approach which promotes resilience at both the physical and community level. Paul highlighted that cities which have embraced the concept of lifelong learning for all, have seen significant improvements in terms of public health and wellbeing, economic growth, reduction in crime, increases in democratic participation and overall enhancement of life chances.

Figure 1: The Framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities



Paul also stressed the value of joining UNESCO GNLC in terms of the guidance and support that is available. The opportunity to reflect and learn from the experience of others, to find new solutions to new problems and in particular the networking possibilities, were significant. He also highlighted the importance of the border location of Derry, Strabane and Donegal in the context of Brexit, as being unique to the network and affording the opportunity to think of the Island of Ireland as a *Learning Region* with Limerick, Cork and Belfast.

Paul then introduced the concept EcCoWell:

- Ec = Ecology & Economy
- Co = Community & Culture
- Well = Well-being & Lifelong Learning

“This is an integrated approach to deliver better quality of life to citizens in a sustainable way. It promotes integrating strategies to maximise the positive impacts on the health and educational opportunities of all citizens as well as developing the environmental and economic sustainability and resilience of the city, resulting in greater equality, social inclusion and ultimately quality of life.”

Benefits envisaged include:

- The initiative would be cost effective in building on and connecting action already taken across sectors such as health, environment, culture, and learning.
- There would be value-added outcomes through the synergies created and from enhanced community support.
- It would add to the profile and identity of Derry~Londonderry and of the Council area as a whole as an enterprising City and District that is a good place to live and work in and to visit.
- It would strengthen community action (civil society) in support of this vision and shared aspiration.

Paul highlighted how the City and District already had expertise in terms of Learning Neighbourhoods, A Healthy Region and faced the challenges of an ageing population. He also proposed that any future workshops or fora could be called Agoras - the Greek for meetings.

## **CASE STUDIES**

In order to draw on the experiences and learning of other Learning Cities, Belfast City Council, who are applying to become a member of Learning Cities, and Cork County Council, a member since 2004, were invited to present their case studies. They were briefed to cover a series of questions including:

How do cities start in this process?’

- Who is the initiator?
- What are the challenges?
- What are the benefits?
- What resources are required?
- What is the timeframe for implementation?
- What are the governance arrangements?

## **CORK LEARNING CITY: Denis Barrett, Cork Learning City Coordinator**

Denis identified UNESCO’s selection of Cork as host of the Third International Conference on Learning Cities in 2017, previously held in Beijing and Mexico, as a significant milestone for the city. They held the first Lifelong Learning Festival in the city in 2004 which has grown extensively with over 600 free events in the city for the 2017 Festival. Another milestone for the city was the UNESCO Learning Cities Award in 2015, having started the journey in 2002, becoming one of the first 12 Cities in the world to be recognised in this way.

Denis outlined the challenges of maintaining momentum, silo working and complexity; in particular that no one organisation can do it alone and highlighted as a strength that there was no blueprint - with each city having to find its own unique

themes and ways of working together and with others. He explained how the Learning City was an integral part of the Cork City Development Plan 2016-2021 and beyond to 2030. Furthermore, they have mapped key initiatives, actions and future developments against the UNESCO framework of 6 building blocks. It also aligns with the local Economic and Community Plan, Healthy Cities, Smart Gateway and Age Friendly City plans and was based on the EcCoWell principles.

Denis introduced the 4 key partners as Cork City Council, University College Cork (UCC), Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), and Cork Education and Training Board; with the 2 strategic partners being the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Cork and the National Association Of Principals who have signed an MOU. There is also a working group -Growing Lifelong Learning in Cork (GLLIC) which represents all stakeholders.

He outlined the 4 elements of the programme as:

- Music Generation Cork City - which is creating new cultural opportunities through accessible music education for every child with the music school having an international reputation.
- Learning Neighbourhoods - where they are tackling disadvantage at community level focusing “on leaving nobody behind”.
- On the MOU - they are “working with the willing” to ensure delivery.
- Lifelong Learning Festival which has gone from strength to strength with 2017’s 600 events all hosted voluntarily, all free and engaging over 10,000 citizens.

Denis highly recommended the opportunity to have an Intercity Network to support and learn from each other. It was not always plain sailing - policy development and leadership were vital elements and the importance of focusing on a couple of key themes and connecting to people was key. He believed, from what he had heard, that Derry/Strabane had all the “ingredients” to be a Learning City Region, referring to the strong sense of people and place, the experience of UK City of Culture 2013 and the range and commitment of all the stakeholders in the room, especially the business dimension. He concluded by stating that he had a “huge sense of confidence of where you are going next” and offered Cork support to Derry/Strabane in their journey, seeing significant opportunities for a learning island approach to develop.

**BELFAST - A LEARNING CITY; Using Lifelong Learning to address inequalities in Belfast: Dolores Atkinson, Project Development Outreach Officer Belfast Health Development Unit and Michelle Markham, Chair, Belfast Festival of Learning**

Dolores outlined the development of the Belfast approach to establishing Belfast as a Learning City in the UNESCO Global Network under the Belfast Strategic Partnership

established in 2011 with key partners Belfast City Council, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Public Health Agency (PHA ). There are 40 other partners in the Lifelong Learning Thematic Group.

A key initiative was the strategy “Belfast - a Learning City “published in 2015 and the production of a “Learning Charter for Belfast” - “putting people at the heart of learning”. This outlined the shared vision that:

“Belfast is a city where learning is valued in all its forms and promoted as a force for improved personal, social, civic and economic change in the city. All citizens of Belfast have equal access to lifelong learning opportunities, creating conditions for a better quality of life for everyone in the city.” The strategy aligns with the “Belfast Agenda and Vision” to 2035 “and the PHA’s “Making Life Better Agenda” to 2023

The Learning Charter, which required significant negotiation, has been drawn up to ensure all organisations involved in Lifelong Learning can sign up to a common set of 4 guiding principles and related actions, outcomes and measures whilst aligning services and resources. These 4 guiding principles are:

- 1) Creating a learning culture for the city of Belfast that recognises and values all forms of learning.
- 2) Developing an inclusive, innovative, and strategic approach to Lifelong Learning through partnerships working, which maximises the reach and impact of all available resources.
- 3) Promoting collaborative working between key stakeholders that ensures equality of access to Lifelong Learning opportunities and informs excellence in the design and development of Lifelong Learning provision.
- 4) Realigning current and future Skills with NI economic needs.

The focus is on skills, accessibility, excellence and partnership working with the Belfast Works Initiative as a flagship project linking health and employability. The key messages to communicate are focused on learning through education, for and in work, to live together, and learning for life.

Dolores highlighted that a number of years were spent talking and undertaking mapping through research and evaluation. Leadership and governance were highlighted as key to success as was the importance of government commitment and a deep rootedness in the community. She recommended taking the initiative and getting on with it on something that would enable the city to do what it wanted to do. She stated that - “Learning is not new and in every culture it is about survival and supporting a sustainable society”. She stressed that working up the proposals was not a risk as it was often not about resources but a different way of doing things. Offering

support, she too highlighted that she saw considerable potential in Derry/Strabane in going forward as the right stakeholders were already involved and that the benefits of UNESCO designation provide credibility, encourage buy-in, showcases best practice and breaks down silos.

The Belfast Festival of Learning started in 2016 as a key driver in developing a Lifelong Learning approach. The second festival in 2017 had over 100 free events across the city. Michelle Markan, who chairs the Festival Committee, outlined how it was a means of breaking down barriers, promoting learning and empowering, by offering a platform for groups to showcase formal and informal learning on the ground, citywide, whilst encouraging resilience and good citizenship. In particular, the Festival is the Charter in action. It is tangible; involves all elements of education, fun, enjoyment, is accessible and free- fostering connectivity and a sense of the 'bigger picture'.

In summary, both cities have focused on different themes: in the case of Belfast there is a strong health and wellbeing dimension, while in Cork a cultural and neighbourhood development strand. They have therefore adapted the concept to suit what is relevant and unique to them whilst highlighting common experiences and learning, including the Festival of Learning approach as a means to showcase and celebrate learning locally. They have both offered their support to Derry /Strabane and have illustrated how designation:

- Opens up significant opportunities due to global recognition providing an opportunity to showcase excellence, improve reputation, promote awareness of your city and to celebrate.
- This in turn attracts inward investment, encourages entrepreneurship and innovation, and develops business and tourism opportunities internationally.
- Promotes equity and brings communities together under a shared commitment to learning both formal and informal.
- Encourages collaboration amongst a range of organisations working creatively together across social, economic and environmental boundaries to add value to outcomes.
- Encourages greater ambition and a sense of achievement in individuals and organisations.
- Enables a whole systems approach across economic, social and environmental agendas at local national and international level, building on existing best practice with learning as the integrating factor

Some of the challenges of becoming a Learning City are identified as:

- Every Learning City is different and unique and develops its own strategy.
- Evidence from other cities suggests strong governance is a defining feature of success.
- The fragmented and complex nature of the landscape for learning and skills.

- The dilemma of creating a shared vision and delivering it with multiple stakeholders.

## **THE LEARNING POINTS**

The participants, working in small groups, discussed the learning points from the case studies and a number of key common themes emerged, including:

Build on what is already there -

*'Celebrate. What's already happening'*

There was common recognition of the need to acknowledge the existing good practice and positive relationships that already exist in the City and District; to realise their potential and to build, enhance and grow. The opportunity to link with and streamline, rather than duplicate provision, was highlighted, as was the possibility of looking back on initiatives such as Unlocking Creativity with Sir Ken Robinson and use creative non educational shared interests to stimulate collaboration.

Possibilities for partnership-working were identified across sustainable goals such as health and wellbeing, formal, informal, community and workplace learning for those in employment, with significant opportunities for social innovation. There was a strong sense that we have the capacity to deliver based on the past experience of UK City of Culture and Year of Youth 2019.

Research, Evaluation and Mapping -

*'Our learning year'*

A significant number of people had identified the importance of a scoping and mapping exercise to highlight what already exists, the strengths and weaknesses and to create a baseline by pulling together all activity under the banner of Learning City and Region. This would avoid duplication and identify the gaps as a starting point in establishing the definition and measurement of learning to be more than accreditation or participation. Furthermore, the need to identify the intended outcomes of the Learning City and how they would be measured, monitored and evaluated, on an ongoing basis, was essential from the outset. The leading role of the University was recognised as vital in this work, building on existing strengths in research globally e.g. Post-Conflict Studies.

Learning for All -

*'No one left behind'*

The theme of inclusivity and of "no one being left behind" resonated strongly in terms of addressing issues of disadvantage and equality, of being accessible and reaching

out, through learning, to a wider community, young people ,older people and those disengaged and harder to reach as well as those in the workplace.

Identify Key Partners and getting “Buy-in” -  
*‘More impactful together’*

In a context of multiple stakeholders the need and opportunity to engage with the private sector in creative ways and getting them meaningfully involved, emerged as a priority. There was a recognition that initiatives were often left to the public sector but there was a need for a new focus and emphasis on actively involving other partners.

Recognising both the corporate and communal benefits, the business sector are well placed to identify current and future skills needs for employers, create a skills pipeline and develop skills resilience. The need to get multiple buy-in was classified as essential. This would minimise issues such as silo working, achieve sustainable joined up programming, identify how the strategy can interlink and overlap with all the other strategic initiatives covered by EcCoWell, while connecting to the community.

Leadership and Governance -  
*‘potential, partnership, passion and persistence’*

Shared leadership and good governance were identified as the main building blocks for success in developing and delivering on *“a vision that resonates with all of the community”*. UU and the private sector were highlighted in particular, to play leading roles alongside the need for all stakeholders to be committed to participate and play their part. The role of a Learning Charter in helping to embed shared values and buy in, was recognised based on trust, integrity, being selective and taking risks.

Marketing and Communication -  
*A “Rebranding of Learning “*

A number of communication challenges were identified including the need for more visibility for all that was happening to date, the need to define the City/District at an early stage and on a cross border/all-island basis, the opportunity of rebranding and refining the meaning of ‘learning’ and developing an exercise to celebrate it in all its guises. An early marketing task such as Festival of Learning could help to reframe the messages, challenge assumptions, introduce new and alternative suggestions and celebrate with some quick wins.

## **WHY A LEARNING CITY AND WHY NOW?**

*“Get On with it”. “We are ready NOW”.*

After reflection of the learning points there was a strong sense of commitment from all present with a unanimous vote to proceed immediately to securing UNESCO Learning City status. There was a keen sense that the City/District could deliver on this based on past experience, the strong sense of ownership that was evident and the excellence of the model of collaborative partnership working in the North West. All of this would enable the City to identify what it was good at, what is unique, build on the partnering links in schools, colleges, UU and the wider learning community and join up all levels of learning from early years to U3A, ensuring that learning is accessible to all.

## **THE HOW**

*“making it happen - learn as you go”*

Two key questions were posed: Who needs to be involved?

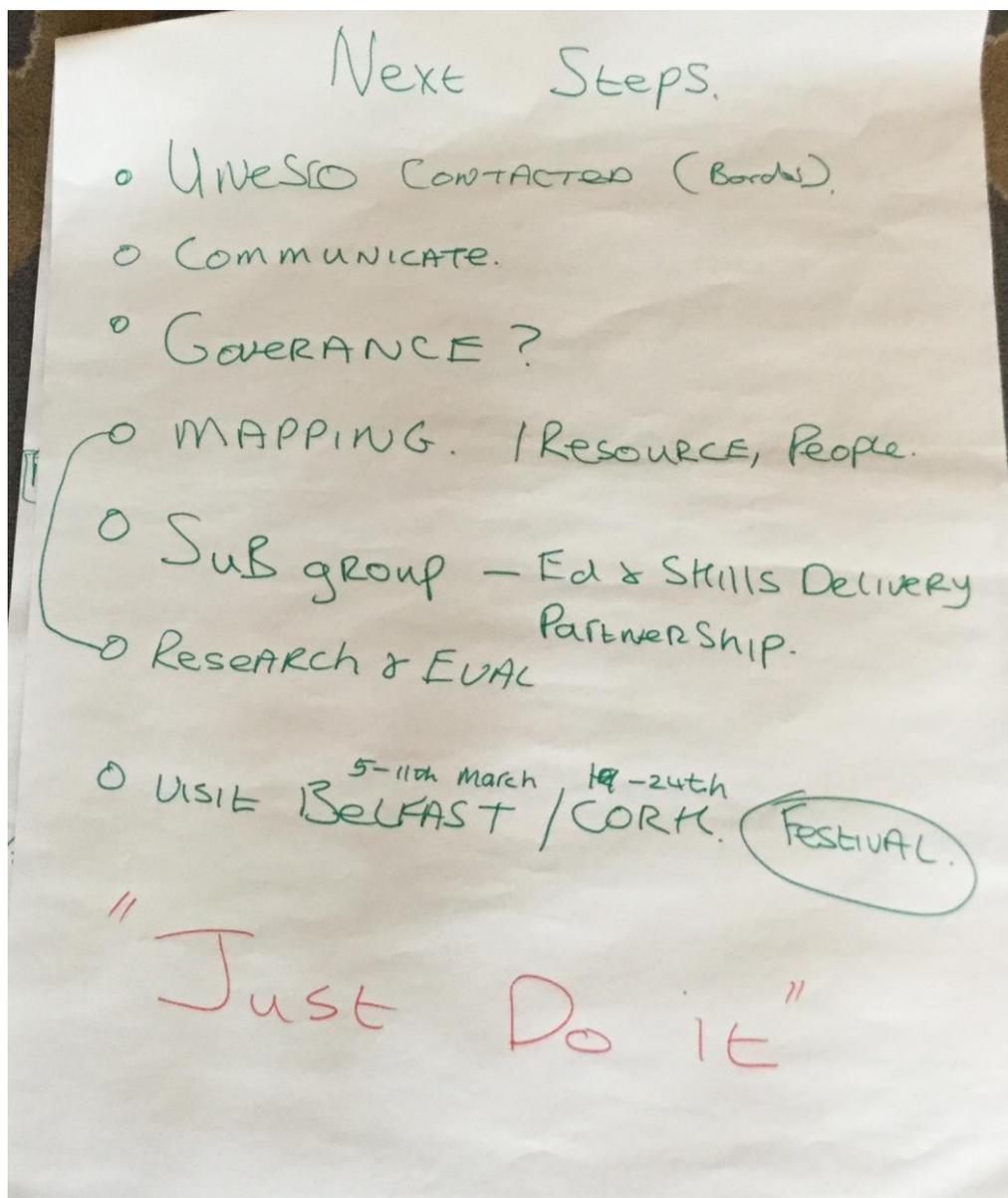
What resources would be required to proceed?

Acknowledging that those present represented the private sector, UU, NWRC, Education Authority, schools, local and central government and voluntary groups; it was felt that there was a strong element of collaborative support for going forward together. The discussion therefore focused on what voices needed to be heard as there was a pragmatism regarding the process. It was agreed that community organisations including Holywell Trust, Inner City Trust, Neighbourhood Renewal and others, are all important stakeholders; in particular the voices of young people and older people had to be heard in the design of any proposal - the proposed Youth Council and Every Youth Counts initiative were identified as important opportunities to engage.

Other voices and issues highlighted included health and wellbeing, community, arts and culture, more business, diaspora, Strabane, Donegal, Brexit, disability and ethnic minorities. The emphasis was on people and then place and the feeling was that resources would be necessary.

The importance of getting outcome working groups involved in mapping out proposals and the opportunity to be innovative in integrating measures, including creating “learning pathways, an ecosystem for wellness and wellbeing”, “educational tourism” and “from couch to 5k”, were all identified along with an emphasis on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Workplace Learning (WPL). This illustrates a strong, creative and innovative approach to what is possible; underpinned by getting people to have ownership of their learning and appreciate “the value of learning in

their lives “ by bringing all spheres together, be it social, economic or environmental, with learning as the integrating factor.



#### NEXT STEPS

*"Take a leap of faith - all the pieces of the jigsaw are here"*

The final discussion in the workshop, taking all factors into account, was what the next steps should be. It was noted that to progress any plan for becoming a Learning City it would be essential it was integrated with relevant local and national plans; in this case with Derry City and Strabane District Council's Strategic Growth Plan 2017-2032 (Community Plan) and PfG.

Furthermore, reflecting on the fundamental elements for success identified by UNESCO in Fig 1 (pg. 5) the conditions are ripe for development. The political will and commitment is evident, the development of good governance and the involvement of multiple stakeholders is underway and the mobilisation of resources to secure sustainable funding needs to be prioritised as an early action. Therefore, to progress the initiative further a number of immediate actions emerge:

#### - LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

As evidence has shown, it is necessary to identify from the outset the leadership model going forward. Consulting with key partners and multiple stakeholders, the aim would be to develop a Governance Model of Best Practice in collaborative partnership. The obvious vehicle for this would be the Education and Skills Delivery Partnership who have the responsibility and ability under their terms of reference (see Appendix 1: ESDP Terms of Reference) to focus on addressing specific detailed actions in the Community Plan; of particular relevance is their ability:

“To delegate specific tasks, to short life working groups who have clear terms of reference, relating to a specified task, timescale for completion, progress reporting mechanism and disbandment on completion.”

This working group should comprise a nominated representative from the main interested parties who would need to be supported in the task set for them to align with the specific action in the Community Plan.

‘to work towards securing UNESCO Learning City and Region status, promote and accelerate the practice of life-long learning, develop an active and inclusive learning culture from early education in families, the workplace and communities’.

The ESDP should also consider, on setting up the working group, how they would resource the initiative in the short term to enable the working group to develop and report back to them at an early stage, on the main actions and themes that have emerged from the workshop. Meetings of the two groups should be planned to align with the working group being encouraged to meet as required to commence the task to proceed to designation. In particular, consideration of a Learning Charter as in Belfast’s and the MOU arrangements in both Belfast and Cork and in other Learning Cities, would assist in creating the template for the governance arrangements.

#### - WORKING GROUP REMIT

In the short term, the six main tasks that have been identified for the working group to progress and report back to ESDP are:

1 - To investigate further what would be required to secure designation, tap into the expertise available through the network and informally express an interest to UNESCO GNLC and the EcCoWell principles.

2 - To undertake a scoping exercise to map existing provision in the City and District, establish a baseline and identify the research and evaluation necessary to develop agreed outcomes. UU were identified to play a leading role in this action

3 - To Research and Develop further with multiple stakeholders the themes most suited to the unique strengths and needs of the City and Region. Particular consensus was found across all themes to ensure “No one left behind“. Emergent themes include;

- Unlocking Creativity and Culture
- Entrepreneurship and Skills
- Education Tourism.

4 - To investigate the importance of celebratory events such as Festivals Of Learning in raising awareness and as an early win.

5 - To develop a Communications Plan that will look at rebranding and refreshing the learning message, celebrate what has been achieved to date and develop messaging around the emergent themes.

6 - To develop further and build upon the links with Cork Learning City and Belfast City Council, who have expressed support to Derry and Strabane in the bid process; and to pursue initial learning opportunities at the Belfast Learning Festival on 5-11th March 2018 and the Cork Learning Festival on 19-24th March 2018.

There is a significant body of work to be taken forward under the six tasks in the short term in order to ensure a successful Designation, maximise its potential and in particular to enable the use of A Learning Region as an integrating programme of action across the Strategic Growth Plan (Community Plan). Building in the EcCoWell concept overarches the three pillars of the Community Plan namely social, economic and environment and can be a unifying approach .

#### - RESOURCES

A dedicated resource/officer would be required to deliver a number of short term tasks working alongside the working group over the next 6 months. This could be a paid resource or secondment leading in the longer term, with successful designation to a more permanent arrangement.

The key role would be

- To support and service the working group to deliver on the six tasks identified.
- To liaise on the technical requirements of securing the designation.
- To promote awareness and understanding of the Learning City Concept with multiple stakeholders.
- To consult widely on the emergent themes to develop the programme going forward.
- To identify and mobilise resources both financial and in kind.
- To report on progress to the working group and through then to ESDP.

The expertise and support of all partners will be key, for example UU would be well placed, as suggested, to lead on the research and evaluation requirements, the business, cultural and educational partners on the development of the emergent themes and DCSDC on the alignment with the Strategic Growth Plan (Community Plan) and securing the political commitment. A further workshop within 3-6 months with the wider group of stakeholders to test the themes and progress being made on the research and communication strands would maintain the momentum and energy evident at the workshop and keep the task on track.

To conclude, with the words of those present and committed to the concept: we need to ensure that people recognise as an overarching ambition, *"The value of learning in their lives"*. Proceeding with securing UNESCO Learning City and Region status would deliver this.

Aideen Mc Ginley. 31/1 /2018

## **Appendix 1: Education and Skills Delivery Partnership (ESDP); Terms of Reference**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Launched in 2011, Derry's One Plan was developed through a lengthy participative process involving hundreds of individuals and groups from across the public, private, community and voluntary and political sectors, as well as individual residents from across the City and Region.

With a mission statement that placed equality at the very heart of regeneration, the final One Plan featured a range of interdependent catalyst programmes for economic, social and physical regeneration that were targeted at addressing needs and inequalities.

The One Plan aims to deliver a step change in terms of job creation targets for the City, with 12,900 jobs forecast until 2020 with particular focus on those in disadvantaged areas, those most in need, and the hardest to reach as per the mission statement in the One Plan. It also sets a number of targets under the Education and Skills theme particularly in relation to expanding further and higher education provision in the City to 9,400 FTEs and improving the skills base of the resident population, therefore helping people to get into work, stay in work and progress in work.

There is a need to reinvigorate and strengthen the coalition around the One Plan action for Education and Skills. It is proposed that this will be achieved by joining the Higher Education Working Group and the Skills Directorate for Derry~Londonderry to create the Education and Skills Implementation Group.

Further and higher education expansion must incorporate a holistic and balanced subject offering that supports the aspirations of the One Plan primarily focusing on the development of economically relevant skills related to the STEAM agenda, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics in supporting the economic growth of Derry~Londonderry and its wider contribution and economic impact to the North West generally. The development of relevant subjects in Humanities to grow skills in those areas is also crucial to achieving economic goals. Addressing the skills needs of Derry~Londonderry in the short, medium and longer-term is inextricably linked to further and higher education expanded provision to meet these needs. Addressing the skills needs is also necessary as a means of targeting economic inequalities in the City and Region, as outlined in the One Plan. Strengthened symbiosis and the development of progression routes between wider FE and HE partnerships in the North West region will be critical to meet labour market needs. It will focus on education provision from primary and post primary through to further and higher whilst also developing opportunities for upskilling the existing workforce. Options to enhance

initiatives such as Step-Up will be increased including alignment with training offered in the community sector especially in STEAM subjects. This is particularly pertinent given DCAL's announcement about Cultural Hubs.

## **ROLE**

The role of the Education and Skills Implementation Group will be to oversee the implementation of the Further and Higher Education Expansion and Strategy for Skills Escalation and Employment catalyst programmes. This will ensure that FE/HE expanded provision supports economic growth and directly addresses the city's identified skills needs of new and growing businesses in the city-region whilst also helping to attract new inward investment.

It will have a number of functions particularly: -

- Continue to progress the implementation of the Skill action plan through four areas.
- Tackling Worklessness;
- Developing Workforce Capacity;
- Developing Management and Leadership Capacity;
- Planning Future Skills.
- Ensuring the One Plan ambitions for university growth and skills development are connected to the Executive's Programme for Government post 2015;
- Co-ordinating and facilitating the development and delivery of local, national and EU funded programmes across the City to address skills and education needs;
- Enhancing regional collaboration around educational innovation;
- Encouraging wider participation in FE, HE and skills development, particularly for disadvantaged and vocational students who might otherwise be excluded from Higher Education;
- Amalgamating the work of the current Skills Directorate and FE/HE working group to ensure FE/HE expanded provision supports economic growth and directly addresses skills needs of the City, and targets social and economic inequalities as outlined in the One Plan.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Education and Skills Implementation Group will comprise representatives from the following organisations (all of whom are currently represented on the existing FE/HE Working Group, Skills Directorate or both):

One Plan team

North West Workforce Development Forum

Representative from Business Leaders Forum

Representative from Regeneration Forum

Department of Employment and Learning

Department of Education

Foyle Learning Community  
Derry City Council  
NWRC  
University of Ulster  
Invest NI  
Derry 2020  
People 1<sup>st</sup> Sector Solution (Tourism)  
U4D  
Chamber of Commerce  
WELB  
Primary School Cluster

Given the importance of the education and skills agenda to the development and growth of our City and the role played by Government Departments and the NI Executive in setting policy, resources and programme and project development and implementation, as well as Government Departmental representation each political party represented on the Strategy Board is invited to nominate one observer to attend meetings of the Group and to promptly receive minutes of meetings of the Education and Skills Implementation Group. The political observer will have the same rights as other members.

The Education and Skills Implementation Group can agree to add members to the Group who have expressed an interest in participating and who have experience in the education and skills sector. Each request for members is to be considered and agreed by the Group themselves.

The Education and Skills Implementation Group will be chaired by an independent chair agreed by the group.

## **FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

The Education and Skills Implementation Group will meet every two months. A minimum of 7 members of the Group must be in attendance for the meeting to be deemed quorate. Members may send substitutes. Officials of other organisations may be asked to attend to assist it with its discussions on any particular matter, as and when required.

Further meetings may be convened to discuss particular issues on which they may require advice and guidance. The Education and Skills Implementation Group can establish working groups to bring forward actions and activities highlighted within the One Plan.

## **REPORTING**

The minutes of meetings will be circulated to all members in advance of meetings. Reports of progress against actions will also be circulated. It is the responsibility of each member to update their respective organisations on a regular basis on the progress of the work of the Education and Skills Implementation Group.

As is the case with all Catalyst Programmes, the Group will report to and be scrutinised by the Strategy Board, providing regular updates on progress. The Strategy Board will have the right to hold the Group to account and will monitor whether the Group is working towards the targets and goals of the One Plan.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Risk management will be a consideration at all meetings.

### **SECRETARIAT ARRANGEMENTS**

The One Plan team will provide the secretariat function to the Implementation Group. Minutes will be taken and circulated by a representative from the secretariat. Support will also be available to the group, if and when required, e.g. socio-economic research; programme/project development etc.

### **REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT**

The Implementation Group will periodically review its own terms of reference to ensure it is achieving the required objectives. Proposed changes will be endorsed by the Strategy Board.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Given the commercial sensitivity of some of the business being discussed by the Group it is essential that all members agree to treat all business with strictest confidence. Any PR or Communications from the group will go through a formal protocol in line with the One Plan communications template.

### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Conflict of Interests will be a standing item on the group's agenda and all members will be asked to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest

## **Appendix 2: Agenda – Learning Cities Workshop**



### **Workshop on Becoming a UNESCO Learning Region**

#### **AGENDA**

- 10:00 am      Introductions:
- What is a Learning City?
  - The role of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning cities
  - How do you build a learning City?
- 10:30 am      The Journey of:
- Cork City Council – Presentation by Denis Barrett, Cork Learning City Coordinator;
  - Belfast City Council /Belfast Strategic Partnership - Presentation by Dolores Atkinson, Project Development Outreach Officer, Belfast Health Development Unit
- 11:00 am      What lessons have we learned?
- Working in small groups draw out the top five learning points and report out.
- 11:30 am      Why a Learning City & Region for Derry/Londonderry and Strabane?
- Why now?
- 11:45 am      How - who needs to be involved?
- What resources are required?
- 12:00 pm      Next steps
- 12:30 pm      Finish
- Tea/Coffee, Soup, Sandwiches & Hot Bites.



### **Appendix 3: Learning Cities Attendees.**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>ROLE</b>
Aideen McGinley	Facilitator	
Bronagh Fikri	North West Regional College	Business and Development Manager
Claire Lundy	Seagate	Internal Communications/Community Engagement
Claire McCafferty	Catalyst Inc.	Project Manager (NW CAM)
Denis Barrett	Cork City Council	Learning City Co-Ordinator
Dolores Atkinson	Belfast Strategic Partnership	Project Development Outreach Officer
Dr Malachy O'Neill	Ulster University	Head of School of Irish Language & Literature
Edel Griffin	Ulster University	Lecturer in International Business
Eileen McGrinder	Derry City & Strabane District Council	Mentoring & Employment Officer
Gavin Killeen	Nuprint Technologies Ltd.	Managing Director
Jennifer McKeever	Airporter	Director
Dr Joanne Stuart OBE	Catalyst Inc	Director of Development
John Peto	Nerve Centre	Founder/CEO
June Neill	Education Authority	Education Officer
Kevin O'Connor	Derry City & Strabane District Council	Head of Business
Lisa Bradley	Ulster University	Senior Lecturer in Finance
Marie Lindsay	Foyle Learning Community	School Principal, St. Mary's College
Michele Marken	Belfast Strategic Partnership, Lifelong Learning Thematic Group	Chair, Belfast Festival of Learning
Nicky Gilleece	DCSDC	Mentoring & Employment Officer
Noelle McAlinden	Education Authority	Assistant Advisory Officer
Paul Haslam		
Rachael Craig	Derry City & Strabane District Council	Business Support & Change Manager
Rosalind Young	Derry City & Strabane District Council	Inward Investment Manager
Stephen Gillespie	Derry City & Strabane District Council	Director, Business & Culture
Tara Herron	Invest NI	Client Executive
Tina Gillespie	Derry City & Strabane District Council	Skills Manager