

# Shifts in Culture, Power and Finance

## A Way Forward for Education?

THIS ENCOURAGES SELF-RELIANCE,  
AN ALTERNATIVE VISION. DIVERSE PROBLEMS ARE ALLOWED TO FIND DIVERSE SOLUTIONS  
SERVICES MATTER TO US ALL. AT THE ROOT, THEY ARE ABOUT THE THINGS WE DO TOGETHER  
REALISING THIS VISION – CAPABLE, RESILIENT CITIZENS, MAKING CHOICES FOR OURSELVES  
PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE IN A GLOBAL ERA  
TO FIND AN ALTERNATIVE VISION. DIVERSE PROBLEMS  
COLLECTIVE CAPABILITIES, THIS ENCOURAGES  
PUBLIC SAFETY IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE IN A GLOBAL  
FROM AN AGEING POPULATION  
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## About the 2020 Public Services Trust

The 2020 Public Services Trust is a registered charity (no. 1124095), based at the RSA. It is not aligned with any political party and operates with independence and impartiality. The Trust exists to stimulate deeper understanding of the challenges facing public services in the medium term. Through research, inquiry and discourse, it aims to develop rigorous and practical solutions, capable of sustaining support across all political parties.

In December 2008, the Trust launched a major Commission on 2020 Public Services, chaired by Sir Andrew Foster, to recommend the characteristics of a new public services settlement appropriate for the future needs and aspirations of citizens, and the best practical arrangements for its implementation.

For more information on the Trust and its Commission, please visit [www.2020pst.org](http://www.2020pst.org)

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# Foreword

Future education and schooling must be more localised and more personalised. This is the way to boost the personal commitment of learners and the collective engagement of learners, parents and communities. Forms of accountability and governance should be designed with this objective in mind. The national public interest in education focuses on higher attainment and greater social justice and these objectives are also important locally. But these goals must be delivered as far as possible in ways which are simple, transparent and which empower local people to reconcile what is best for them and their children and what is best for the community as a whole.

These are the main messages from the citizen deliberation event held in Peterborough by the Commission on 2020 Public Services. They fit well – although not precisely – with the principles identified in the Commission's interim report. This isn't to say that acting on these principles would be easy, but the deliberative process itself suggested the need for new forms of locally-based dialogue. The quality of the input from the participants – representing the key stakeholders in education – and the enthusiasm they showed for the process indicates the value of developing a forum for regular discussions of this kind. Also, it was clear that a local focus – starting out from the concrete, and in many respects challenging, situation of education in Peterborough – helped make the conversation more constructive and realistic than is generally the case with national debate.

Indeed, reading through the notes from the Peterborough event it is hard not to be struck by how much fresher and more grounded it feels than the opinionated copy which seems to be endlessly churned out in national media outlets.

Everyone, it seems, has strong views on schooling. But for a number of reasons these views are problematic. There is, first, the tendency to blame schooling not just for the problems of young people but even for wider social ills. For example, it is schools that we hold responsible for continuing inequalities in attainment rather than wider social and economic policy.

Debate becomes polarised and politicians exaggerate the qualities (or ills) of the present system and the virtues (or dangers) of reform. Take the 'dumbing down' debate which happens about now every year with the publication of examination results. Isn't the obvious reality that standards have risen but not as fast as the improvement in qualifications? This has been as the result of deliberate strategy (supported by successive governments and only now being abandoned in the face of budget cuts) of increasing post-compulsory educational participation. Yet we still see attempts to polarise the debate, or to imply (without any evidence) that more young people doing well in exams dilutes the quality of the attainment amongst the most able.

Partly as a consequence of the complex relationship between what happens in schools and the social and cultural context, it is now clear that there is existing research available to support almost any view about how best to educate young people. A wide range of educational

impacts need to be measured over long time frames both in terms of the outcomes for individual learners and the capacity of any approach to maintain early successes and adapt as the world changes. But education initiatives tend to be evaluated narrowly over the short term leading to results being skewed by the enthusiasm of innovative leaders and early adopters. And, of course, the quality of school leadership and teaching is a massive confounding variable. As someone who places themselves on the progressive side of debates about teaching methods, I would much rather my own children were taught by a good traditionalist teacher than a sloppy progressive.

Finally, the debate is compromised because, while most people (including middle class parents) recognise the importance of fairness as a long term goal for the school system, parents do all they can to advantage their own children in the existing system.

As well as getting behind the headlines of an often polarised debate, we hoped that the Peterborough deliberative forum would help us explore how well the 2020 principles applied to a specific public service in a particular place. As the report shows, the participants reinforced the Commission's championing of social productivity and localism. There were also important differences of emphasis between the local perspective and our own framework.

In particular, the Peterborough citizens seemed more enthusiastic about devolving power to professionals (heads and teachers) than to parents. This finding is open to a variety of interpretations. It may reflect that trust between professionals and service users is greater

when the focus is local. It could be seen as further evidence that most parents feel neither the confidence nor the inclination to get involved in running schools or be taken to show how important it is to change parental expectations. But it does suggest that the goal of greater parental involvement (both in their children's education and in the life of the school) might be better pursued through forms of engagement as well as direct governance.

The Peterborough process led us to another, unexpected, conclusion. The value of a deliberation like this is not only in the snapshot of informed opinions that it provides. If power over education, and schooling in particular, is to be devolved we will need to find local ways of reconciling the needs of different individuals and institutions within a system which is efficient, effective and fair. Events like the Peterborough citizens deliberation are important not simply to helping us think through the future shape of the more devolved and diverse local education system. They might also be vital to the ongoing task of generating the awareness, insight and collective commitment necessary to make such a system work for every learner and the whole community.



**Matthew Taylor**

## Executive Summary

The Education Working Group was asked to consider the potential for applying the principles of the Commission on 2020 Public Services (the Commission) to education. Given the Commission's commitment to localism and citizen engagement, the Group decided to take a deliberative approach to the research, testing the Commission's principles with a group of citizens in Peterborough.

On the whole, participants at the deliberative event responded positively to the policies derived from the Commission's principles, although with some interesting interpretations and caveats.

In terms of shifting the culture to one of social productivity, participants recognised the need for increased pupil and parental involvement in the learning process to raise levels of attainment. However, they also identified obstacles to this occurring, including problems engaging parents and the perception that the National Curriculum was too prescriptive to allow for radically innovative student-led learning plans. It seems clear that in order for this shift to occur, other changes will need to be made in the system, for example in terms of how schools and teachers are held accountable for students' results.

Shifting power from the centre to the level of the teacher was seen to be highly desirable. Most participants, and not only teachers, thought teachers should have some freedom about what they taught and substantial freedom over how they taught. However, in contrast

to the parental engagement the choice agenda is thought to encourage, many participants, while acknowledging the desirability of parental involvement in education, questioned the extent to which parents should be the primary decision-makers about their children's learning. To reconcile the need to engage parents with the idea that the teacher can most competently make decisions about education may require a reconsideration of how parents are expected to be involved in their children's education.

There was more disagreement about the shift in finance than the other two shifts. Participants tended to focus on the fairness of the distribution of resources in education. This is in line with the Commission's vision that the financing of services should further their purpose, which in the case of education means giving every child the skills and confidence to make choices about their lives. However, participants often disagreed about the ways to achieve fairness. Some participants thought the pupil premium would reduce inequalities while others thought it would stigmatise. Similarly, many participants like the idea of learning accounts, but some thought that children would be unfairly penalised if their parents did not have the time or skills to contribute.

In general, the deliberative research suggests that the Commission's principles provide a good framework for guiding education policy, but that in many cases the specific policies will still need to be tested as not all are likely to appeal to the public.

# Introduction

Education and health are generally considered to be two of the most important public services in the eyes of citizens, and this is reflected in the amount of public spending on them. In the June 2010 budget, the government announced spending of £89 billion on education; this sum is surpassed only by the budgets allocated to social protection and health.<sup>1</sup> Given its importance, both in terms of the amount of public spending education consumes and the impact of education on the life chances of children and young people, the Commission undertook to examine this policy area in more detail. This is one of four strands of research the Commission has conducted to test its principles; the other areas examined were health, welfare and public safety.

This report first situates the work of the Commission within the context of reforms in education in England and current education policy debates. The Commission's vision of public services is one that enables citizens to be in control of their own lives; this is compatible with the trend in reforms in education that allow parents and pupils more school choice. However, the Commission's three principles of encouraging more social productivity amongst citizens, more local control of public services and better use of financial and non-monetary resources are not well-reflected in the education system as it is currently configured. For example, there is still a highly prescriptive National Curriculum, and the way resources are distributed to schools is not absolutely reflective of the numbers of pupils enrolled nor of the

## Box 1: The Commission's Principles

In 'Beyond Beveridge', the Commission proposed three mutually reinforcing systemic shifts in public services:

- A shift in culture: from social security to social productivity
- A shift in power: from the centre to citizens
- A shift in finance: reconnecting financing with purposes of public services.

The main elements of each of these shifts are summarised here:<sup>3</sup>

Shift in culture	Shift in power	Shift in finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Citizens define priorities for public services.</li><li>• Citizens define the solutions to their particular problems/needs.</li><li>• Public services focus on creating value through the relationship between the service and service users.</li><li>• Public services encourage citizen to citizen collaboration.</li><li>• Public services help citizens build capabilities and become more resilient.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The political system is rebalanced – local government takes on more responsibility while the centre is smaller and more strategic.</li><li>• Commissioning is democratised.</li><li>• Individuals often control the resources allocated to meet their needs.</li><li>• Professionals are encouraged to innovate in the way they deliver services.</li><li>• Public services are designed around citizens and communities, not functions and departments.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The financing of public services is transparent.</li><li>• Citizens' contributions to public services are linked to use or entitlement.</li><li>• Citizens are aware of what they contribute to public services and how they benefit from them now and over time.</li><li>• Citizens have more control over what is spent on them and are better able to plan for the future.</li><li>• All types of resources are valued, including non-monetary contributions.</li></ul>

changes in the composition of pupils (that is, the numbers of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) or with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or English language difficulties).<sup>2</sup>

The discrepancy between the Commission's principles for public services in general and both the education reforms to date and more recently proposed changes pose an interesting puzzle. Wishing to understand whether or not its ideas for public services generally could be applied to the education sphere, and true to the Commission's commitment to citizen engagement and local approaches, the Education Working Group adopted a deliberative methodology to test the applicability of the Commission's principles to education in the city of Peterborough.

The findings from this research give an indication of the types of policies that could be considered for further testing with the public. Moreover, many of the policies stakeholders in Peterborough favoured have political currency, as they are not antithetical to some of those proposed by the coalition government.

# 1

## The current education policy context

Since 1988, a major trend in education policy in England and Wales has been that of creating a quasi-market in education. One key element of the 1988 Education Reform Act was that the size of a school's budget would be directly linked to the number of pupils the school attracted, giving schools a clear incentive to cater to the desires of parents in terms of their children's education in order to increase schools' budgets. Much has been written about problems in the way the English education quasi-market functions, with one significant issue being the lack of spare capacity in the system. This means that popular schools become oversubscribed while less popular schools are still able to fill their enrolment lists, defeating the policy of promoting an expanding or shrinking budget based on popularity.<sup>4</sup>

This imperfect quasi-market has now been in operation for over 20 years. It relies on students across the country sitting national key stage tests, GCSEs and A-levels, the results of which are published in league tables, ranking the schools. In addition, Ofsted, the regulatory body, performs inspections, the results of which are intended to help parents assess quality and choose schools for their children. Parents can

apply for any school, regardless of its location, but children may not be accepted if the school is oversubscribed. Many schools use proximity as a tie-breaker, maintaining the (inequitable) link between access to schools and the housing market.<sup>5</sup>

The recent formation of a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government is not likely to change the direction of policy trends of the last 20 or so years.

“The Government believes that we need to... give greater powers to parents and pupils to choose a good school.”<sup>6</sup>

It is likely the new government will continue to try to improve the functioning of the education quasi-market. The Coalition Agreement puts forward several policies that appear to have this objective in mind, including:

- “Giv[ing] parents, teachers, charities and local communities the chance to set up new schools, as part of... plans to allow new providers to enter the state school system in response to parental demand”;
- “Publish[ing] performance data on educational providers, as well as past exam papers”; and
- “Reform[ing] league tables so that schools are able to focus on, and demonstrate, the progress of children of all abilities.”<sup>7</sup>

However, these market-type policies do not necessarily reflect citizens’ desires for education. Research demonstrates that sometimes citizens’ desires are contradictory<sup>8</sup> (and in the case of education, children’s and parent’s wishes may differ, adding a further layer of complication), and it is true that often citizens’ expectations for what public services can deliver are unrealistically high. Nevertheless, the Commission felt it was important to engage with citizens to return to questions about the purposes of education, in order to re-examine policies to determine if they were likely to achieve these purposes.

Moreover, existing and proposed education policies are not all reflective of the three shifts in public services proposed by the Commission. It was therefore important to test the relevance of the Commission’s principles to the education sphere.

The Education Working Group thus had three questions:

1. What do citizens believe to be the purposes of education?
2. Which policies do they believe can achieve these purposes?
3. Are the Commission’s principles useful in evaluating the policies that will achieve the purposes of education that are important to citizens?

In order to begin to answer these questions, the Commission adopted a deliberative methodology, engaging a sample of citizens from Peterborough in a three-hour discussion about education policy. The findings from this research comprise the remainder of this report.

# 2

## Peterborough as a case study

Peterborough was selected because it reflects broader changes in the population, as its inhabitants are becoming increasingly diverse and elderly, and because one of the Commission's partners, the RSA, already had links to the city.<sup>9</sup> In the last decade, Peterborough has welcomed a large population of Eastern European economic migrants, and over the next ten years to 2021 Peterborough faces the challenge of rapid growth in the number of people aged 65 or over of about 57%.<sup>10</sup> This makes the city an interesting place to test the Commission's principles, which will need to be appropriate in the face of these types of changes.

Thirty participants from Peterborough were recruited to attend a three-hour deliberative workshop. The participants fell into four main categories: teaching professionals from all levels, including early years, primary, secondary and support schools; parents; students; and other stakeholders, including school nurses, employers and those working in youth justice.<sup>11</sup> The aim was to involve all the relevant stakeholders in education and those who work in sectors that are likely to be impacted by the outcomes of education.

One cannot draw any generalisations from deliberative research conducted in one city, but the value of such deliberation is in the quality of the discussions. Deliberative research allows members

of the public time to grasp complex ideas, discuss them with fellow participants, take into account other peoples' perspectives, change their minds, convince fellow participants, and come to well-considered conclusions. Quantitative research cannot investigate the level of detail that qualitative research can provide; other forms of qualitative research, such as ethnography, depth interviews or focus groups, do not involve this level of discussion and collaborative thinking among participants whose opinions differ. Researchers can sometimes learn more about why participants have formed certain opinions or attitudes from the explaining and convincing that occurs among participants in the course of deliberative research.

During the course of the workshop, participants were asked to reflect on three questions: the purpose(s) of education; the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to education in Peterborough; and four scenarios illustrating possible futures for education in the city.

# 3

## Introducing Peterborough

Peterborough is located in the east of England. It covers an area of about 343 km<sup>2</sup> and includes the city centre as well as the more rural areas surrounding it.<sup>12</sup>

The estimated population of Peterborough in mid-2007 was 168,800,<sup>13</sup> and researchers predict that the population will grow by 21% between 2007 and 2021 to a total of 204,000.<sup>14</sup>

There was a period of rapid growth from 2001 to 2007, in which the population increased by 11,400 (7.2%). About 44% of this increase was due to natural causes; that is, there was a higher birth than death rate.<sup>15</sup> International migration may have added about 6,000 migrant workers to the population of Peterborough between 2001 and 2006, depending on how many are assumed to have returned home.<sup>16</sup> Migrant workers coming to Peterborough are mostly Eastern European, specifically from Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. “This rapid increase in the number of economic migrants has put significant additional demands on public services, something the government has recently recognised through the allocation of additional funding through the Migration Impacts Fund.”<sup>17</sup> There may be smaller inflows of Eastern European migrants in the future as their home countries’ economies grow and unemployment rates fall.

Black and minority ethnic residents make up 12.8% of the population (this figure is quite high compared to comparable areas), with Asians or British Asians making up the largest proportion of this group.<sup>18</sup> It is estimated that the proportion of the population of Peterborough born abroad increased from 10% in 2001 to 13% in 2006.<sup>19</sup>

Peterborough has a high percentage of children and young people when compared to other areas across the UK; as of mid-2007 there were approximately 44,400 young people ages 0-19 living in Peterborough (just over 26% of the population). Growth in the number of school-age children is forecast to be 28.3%, with the numbers of 0-4 year olds increasing by 12.6%.<sup>20</sup>

By contrast, there were 24,620 people age 65 or over (just under 15% of the population).<sup>21</sup> However, forecasts indicate that there will be very large growth (57%) in this cohort to 2021,<sup>22</sup> including an 81.2% increase in the number of people aged 85 and over.<sup>23</sup>

Peterborough has higher than average levels of poverty.<sup>24</sup> Eighteen point five percent of people are income-deprived.<sup>25</sup> Residents of Peterborough earn slightly more today than in 2001, but the increase has been slower than that for England. If current trends continue, Peterborough residents will earn on average one-third less than the national average by 2021.<sup>26</sup>

Most of the jobs in Peterborough are in the distribution and service sectors. Forecasts anticipate greatest growth in employment in the ‘business activities sector’, which includes technical services, legal, accountancy, R&D and computer services, tempered by a loss

in manufacturing and agricultural jobs.<sup>27</sup> Slightly less than one in ten people in Peterborough are employment-deprived.<sup>28</sup>

Peterborough's education system will likely have a complex relationship with this challenging context. On the one hand, the education system will face challenges such as how to manage the recent immigration to Peterborough and how to educate children coming from deprived backgrounds. On the other hand, education will be expected to be a driving factor in ameliorating this context by facilitating the integration of new immigrants, raising young people's aspirations and giving children and young people the skills and knowledge they need to live the lives they choose.

## 4

### A preliminary picture of education in Peterborough

#### Children and young people in Peterborough

In preparation for the deliberative event in Peterborough, desk-based research was conducted about some of the issues children and young people in Peterborough face that may have an impact on their education, the findings of which are reported here.

In terms of health, the picture is quite varied. The emotional health of children in Peterborough is rated at 57%, an average figure, but this is deteriorating.<sup>29</sup> There is a very high teenage pregnancy rate, which continues to increase. However, substance abuse by young people is estimated to be 8%, in the best third compared to other unitary authorities, and is improving.<sup>30</sup> Peterborough's rate of childhood obesity is higher than the national average. In 2008, 12.6% of children in the reception class of primary schools were obese, compared to 10% for comparable local authorities. Similarly, 19.1% of children in Year 6 were obese, which is also higher than comparable areas.<sup>31</sup> Schools are playing a role in promoting the health of young people, with 96% part of the *Healthy Schools* initiative and 72% achieving *Healthy School* status (well above the national average

of 47%). In addition, there has been an increase in the number of children taking part in two or more hours of physical education each week at school.<sup>32</sup>

In terms of crime, only 4% of children aged 10-17 are cautioned or convicted during the year, which is in the best 20% compared to other unitary authorities. However, there were 1,910 first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17, which puts Peterborough in the bottom 25% of unitary authorities, and this is deteriorating.<sup>33</sup>

Peterborough's Children and Young People's plan 2009-2012 states that "children and young people appear to have low aspirations in Peterborough. When asked about their aspirations after leaving school, the results indicate that Peterborough's young people are less inclined to study to gain a place at university (48% compared to 54% nationally)."<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Peterborough has higher rates of youth unemployment (16 to 18 year olds) than similar areas or nationally, which may be due in part to fewer numbers going on to further or higher education. This number is increasing in contrast to other unitary authorities.<sup>35</sup>

## Education in Peterborough

Secondary research about Peterborough's education system, conducted so that moderators would be able to challenge participants' views about education, presented a mixed picture in terms of quality at different levels of education and overall outcomes for children and young people.

### Box 2: Quick facts about schools in Peterborough

#### Early years education

- Approximately 120 early years settings
- 4,755 free early education places taken up

#### Primary education

- 57 primary schools
- 750 teachers
- 17,218 places
- 21% have SEN; 2% have statements
- Average class size 26.6

#### Secondary education

- 10 secondary schools
- 890 teachers
- 12,191 places
- 22% of pupils have SEN; 3% have statements
- Average class size 20.3
- 2 academies

#### Special schools

- 10 specialist schools and pupil referral units
- Maintained special schools educate 1.3% of students

#### Further education

- 2 sixth form centres, 1 Further Education college and 1 special college for young people aged 16+

#### Higher education

- Newly-acquired “university centre” via collaboration between Anglia Ruskin University and Peterborough Regional College
- 680 full-time entrants and 45 part-time entrants to higher education in 2008-2009

Per pupil funding for children aged 3-19 stood at £4,470 in 2005/2006, higher than the English average (£3,120).

In terms of children’s overall experience of school, 11% say they enjoy school and 27% say they always learn a lot at school; both of these figures are 4% higher than the national average.<sup>36</sup>

With regards to safety, the percentage of children who have experienced bullying is 30% (average, compared to national figures) and improving.<sup>37</sup> TellUs 3 Survey results indicate that 61% of respondents feel very safe at school, compared to the national average of 55%. Schools appear to deal well with bullying, with 20% of children and young people in Peterborough reporting their school dealt ‘very well’ with bullying, compared to the national average of 14%.<sup>38</sup>

Peterborough schools have very diverse student bodies. There has been a steady rise in the numbers of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) from 14.7% in 2003 to 19.4% in 2007. Eighty-three separate languages are spoken as first languages by students within Peterborough schools (not including separate dialects).<sup>39</sup>

#### *Early years*

As the latest Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) of the city shows, “children in Peterborough get off to a good start in nursery schools.”<sup>40</sup> The percentage of children who achieved a ‘good’ level across the Early Years Foundation Stage in 2008 was 42.3%, a 9% increase on 2006.<sup>41</sup> The proportion of childcare settings and nursery education classes receiving a good grading in inspections has risen by 4% and 23% respectively.<sup>42</sup>

However concerns about Early Years education in Peterborough remain. Peterborough has performed only average in the national indicator measuring the decrease in the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest. In addition, only 48% of children achieved at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage, which puts Peterborough in the lowest third of unitary authorities, although this is improving.<sup>43</sup>

#### *Primary*

An above average proportion of primary schools are good, or better, when compared with similar areas and nationally. However, children

in Peterborough do not get as good test and examination results as children in similar places.

At 11, fewer children in Peterborough achieve comparable test results with children in similar areas or nationally. Results for 2005, 2007 and 2008 were worse than the average for similar areas, and Peterborough is not improving its position in relation to similar areas. However, local data for 2009 shows some improvement for children aged 11 years.<sup>44</sup>

More detailed analysis of Peterborough's priority indicators can illuminate the problems in levels of achievement in Peterborough. The percentage of pupils progressing by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is 80.4% (in the lowest 20%, compared to other unitary authorities<sup>45</sup>) but this is improving. For maths this figure is 76.7%, which is average and improving. The percentage of pupils achieving at level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 is 69% (in the lowest 20%) and unchanging. More positively, levels of achievement for disadvantaged groups such as pupils eligible for free school meals and pupils with SEN are average.<sup>46</sup>

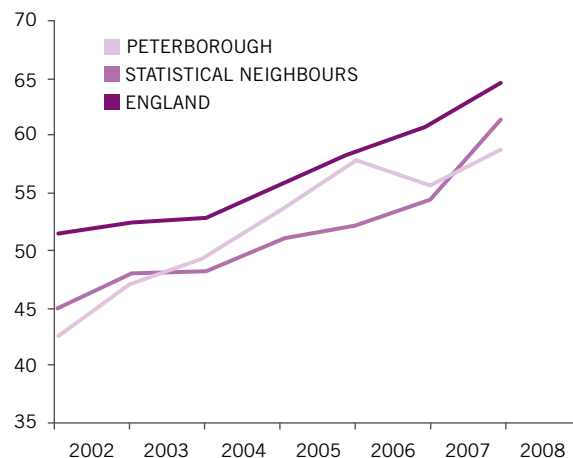
### Secondary

Only four of the ten secondary schools in Peterborough are judged to be good.<sup>47</sup> This is below similar areas and national figures. Two schools are judged as requiring special measures, putting Peterborough in the bottom third for this indicator. Moreover, only 60% of secondary schools are judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour, which is in the lowest 25% but improving. However,

persistent absence rates at secondary schools continue to decrease and are better than the national average at only 4.8%.<sup>48</sup>

By 16, the gap between levels of achievement by young people in Peterborough and those in similar areas has widened significantly.<sup>49</sup> Only 40.6% of pupils achieve 5 or more A\*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths, putting Peterborough in the lowest 20%, although this is improving.<sup>50</sup>

Figure 1: Percent of pupils achieving 5 A\*-C grades GCSE



Source: Peterborough's Children and Young People Plan 2009–2012: 17.

For children from Black and minority ethnic groups, results are worse than those of white children.<sup>51</sup> However, the difference in performance of children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and their peers is decreasing: this group achieves better outcomes when compared to similar councils.<sup>52</sup> For example, the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stage 4 is 21.9% (in the best 20%) and improving, and the Special Education Needs (SEN)/non-SEN gap for achieving 5 A\*-C GCSEs including English and Maths is 37% (in the best 20%) and improving.

### *Further education*

Further education appears to be a particularly problematic part of the education system in Peterborough. Good sixth-form and college provision is not as readily available as in other areas.<sup>53</sup> Slightly more than 9% of 16 to 18 year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET), a figure that puts Peterborough in the bottom 25%, and this continues to deteriorate. Only 70% of young people achieve a level 2 qualification and 43% a level 3 qualification by age 19, but this is improving.<sup>54</sup> Post-16 participation in physics and maths is average and improving, but for chemistry, Peterborough ranks in the bottom third and the trend is deteriorating.<sup>55</sup> Again, however, Peterborough appears to score well with regards to vulnerable young people, with 65.4% of care leavers in education, employment or training, an average figure that is improving.<sup>56</sup>

The percentage of working age people in Peterborough who possess at least a level 2 qualification is 62.3%, which is in the bottom 20% but improving, and this drops to 20.1% for those qualified to at least level 4, again in the bottom 20% but deteriorating.<sup>57</sup> There will need to be a concerted effort to bring Peterborough in line with national trends.<sup>58</sup> In order to close the gap between Peterborough and the rest of the country, young people and adults alike will need to upgrade their qualifications, which means employers will need to see the benefit of promoting adult education to their employees.<sup>59</sup>

### *Higher education*

In 2008/09 there were 680 full-time entrants to higher education, an improvement on 1999/2000, and 45 part-time entrants, also an improvement. The percentage of young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education is 19% (in the best third) but deteriorating.<sup>60</sup>

A new 'university centre' opened in late 2009 via collaboration between Anglia Ruskin University and Peterborough Regional College, a big step forward for higher education in Peterborough.<sup>61</sup>

# 5

## Deliberation about the future of education in Peterborough

As previously described, the purpose of the deliberative research was to explore three issues: the purpose(s) of education; the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to education in Peterborough; and four scenarios illustrating possible futures for education in the city.

The deliberative event lasted three hours. Participants spent most of the time in small groups of between five and seven involved in moderator-led discussions. The findings of the deliberative research are presented here.<sup>62</sup>

What are the purposes of education?

Participants largely agreed that the primary purpose of education should be *to give children and young people the skills and confidence to write their own life story*. The other five purposes mentioned appeared to support this one main objective.

Most participants saw education in a primarily instrumental light – as a path to a better future. This was especially the case among the students and those working outside of education, such as employers and youth justice workers.

“The purpose of education is to get a good job, and careers so you can go further in life.”

Student

Participants felt that education should give children and young people choices about their lives; that is, education should play a role in opening doors for the future. Moreover, education was thought to play an important role in making children independent and economically secure; participants spoke about education as a route to a good job, and as a force that could “eradicate poverty”. Related to this, participants thought education should prepare children for working life by helping them become accustomed to routine and discipline, giving them confidence and encouraging resilience and responsibility. These were referred to as “life skills”. In addition to life skills, “social skills” were also thought to be developed primarily at school. Participants saw getting along with other people, learning about diversity and learning about acceptable behaviour and societal norms as critical social skills for children and young people to develop. Finally, many participants believed education could give children a sense of happiness and self-worth which could enhance confidence and raise aspiration.

Many participants also saw some intrinsic value in education. Primary school teachers in particular thought children should enjoy learning for its own sake, and saw their role as critical to helping ensure this was the case.

“The purpose of education is to learn.”

Student

Reflecting the increasing number of employment opportunities for UK citizens outside of the UK, one participant also mentioned that it was important that education help children position themselves in a global context. Along similar lines, language training was seen to be important. Clearly, there is some foresight on the part of many participants about the increasing significance of global social and economic interaction for which current and future generations will need to be prepared.

#### Strengths of education in Peterborough

Participants had a fairly good idea of the strengths and weaknesses of education in Peterborough, and were not surprised by some of the statistics presented as stimulus during the workshop. If anything, participants tended to have a more negative perception of education in Peterborough than the statistics indicate.

“They made it sound better than what I would've predicted.”

Student

In terms of strengths, participants were most proud of the dedication and quality of their teaching staff, who were also seen to be “motivating”. Another major strength was the inclusivity of schools in

Peterborough, as evidenced by a mainstream SEN policy, the variety of ethnicities represented in the student bodies and language learning activities. Such inclusivity was perceived to create a tangible sense of tolerance, empathy, and “wider perspective” amongst young people, although many participants did caveat their support for inclusivity by saying that teachers need to have time for every pupil in the class, as well as for subjects other than English (this issue is returned to in the discussion about weaknesses).

“I think [this school represents the best of education in Peterborough] because everyone gets a chance, everyone from different ethnic backgrounds and all that sort of thing... everyone gets a chance to learn at the same standard.”

Student

Another strength noted by participants was the emergence of an “education-driven culture”, demonstrating the importance many people are beginning to place on education. There is a sense that there is a lot of dynamism in Peterborough, that there are new initiatives and people are trying new things, but such initiatives are not yet well established.

“I think Peterborough is education-driven, that is one of its main focuses.”

Student

“[Peterborough] is trying to introduce more modern ways of educating people.”

Student

“They’ve introduced loads of different things so it’s like they’re trying new things all the time.”

Student

For example, some schools are beginning to network vertically across different levels of education, so that a primary school might partner with a secondary school to ease the transition between them, which can be a difficult phase for young people. Some secondary schools are also beginning to network horizontally with one another.

Finally, participants praised the more modern facilities of some schools and the intelligent use of information and communication technology (ICT), both of which were seen as positive developments.

## Weaknesses of education in Peterborough

### *Unfairness*

However, participants were also readily able to identify what they thought were weaknesses of the education system. Many participants expressed frustration at the perceived unfairness of the system. For example, while the students recognised the positive aspects of having diverse student bodies, they also felt that sometimes the additional

support given to pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) was at their expense. They felt they were given less attention and their progress in certain subjects slowed because teachers spent more time with pupils with EAL or disruptive pupils.

“It’s back to those middle-of-the-road kids... the ones that are causing the trouble are getting attention, the ones that are always going to do well always do well... but it’s the ones in the middle, you know, the vast chunk of the class, to be honest, aren’t getting it because of the disruptions.”

Participant<sup>63</sup>

This frustration can add to the already-present tensions between different ethnic groups in schools.

Some participants looked at fairness from the angle of resource distribution, and considered it unfair that some schools have more financial resources and better quality facilities and teachers than others.

“I think there’s a divide in schools, I mean like, I help out in a primary school, and it’s in... a run-down area of Peterborough, and you can see that there’s less funding for that, and I don’t think there’s enough initiatives to help raise the standards in them schools.”

Student

“There is like a huge amount of funding for certain things... but then there’s certain schools that are left almost untouched.”

Student

For parents, the variable quality of schools was the most problematic aspect of the education system.

Finally, some participants raised the problem of some schools, and academies in particular, being quicker to exclude students.<sup>64</sup> Statistically speaking, Peterborough does have, on average, quite a high rate of school exclusions.<sup>65</sup> However, the varying practices of schools with regards to exclusions appeared to be more of a problem for participants than the high average rate.

“Because [the teachers at this school] don’t necessarily have to go through loads of procedures, they find it easier to expel people. They’re responsible for the majority of Peterborough’s expulsions.”

Student

### *Problematic relationships between schools and parents*

Many participants identified as a weakness the problems schools had engaging some parents in their children’s learning.

Peterborough has a very high teenage pregnancy rate (52.8 teenage pregnancies per 1,000 girls aged 15-17), and is found in the lowest 20% compared to all English councils and other unitary authorities. Several participants linked this to parental disengagement from their

children’s learning, as part of a “vicious cycle” of young parents who disliked and/or undervalued education transmitting this attitude to their children.

“You have to look at like the home school factors... like what parents teach children to believe, because like, obviously that impacts what a child thinks about school.”

Student

Other participants lamented the fact that the family children are born into still determines in large part what they can achieve in life. There was a feeling that education should do more to help raise aspiration and give young people the skills they need to pursue their goals, no matter what their background.

However, there was a recognition of the impact parents and home life have on children’s learning; some schools had tried to become “community schools” through extended hours and breakfast clubs, but this was not perceived to be working.

### *The narrowness of the curriculum*

Participants were strongly of the opinion that the National Curriculum (NC) was both too prescriptive and too narrow. One of the most common complaints was that the NC placed too much emphasis on English and maths, at the expense of other subjects. Many teachers thought this was a problem because it undermined the confidence

of students who were not good at English and maths and risked disengaging them from education altogether, even if they were gifted in other areas.

Most participants also thought the NC did not give teachers enough freedom to play to their strengths or make learning more relevant to their students. Because participants placed considerable importance on students developing skills and competencies rather than acquiring specific knowledge, they considered this kind of ‘teacher tailoring’ to be of more value than schools offering standardised subjects.

Finally, a few participants commented that what is taught in schools does not necessarily prepare young people for work. This is perhaps indicative of some participants’ perception that one central purpose of education – to develop young people’s social and life skills – is not currently being fulfilled in Peterborough.

### *The accountability system*

Most participants noted that the accountability system was very problematic. As expected, teachers had the best understanding of how they and schools were held accountable, but other participants also raised concerns about exams and league tables.

Teachers were conscious of the difficult position they face in terms of being accountable to central government and also to students and parents. Participants stated that the administrative burden of reporting upwards was very heavy.

“There’s an awful lot of admin. [If I had extra resources] I’d probably employ someone to do the paperwork so I could teach.”

Teacher

Teachers also complained of the need to respond to guidelines from the centre (which change “constantly”) as well as try to respond to the needs and desires of pupils and parents.

“There are so many different goal posts.”

Teacher

The examination system for evaluating students was seen as a particularly problematic aspect of the accountability system. Many participants signalled concern that teachers are forced to ‘teach to the test’, when this is not necessarily the best thing for pupil learning. Teachers were especially frustrated at what they perceived to be a lack of trust in their ability to evaluate their students in different ways throughout the year, arguing that using a variety of methods (coursework, presentations, tests) to evaluate pupils was very important.

Finally, some participants worried about the league table system which labels some schools as ‘failing’. Participants argued that labelling the school also meant labelling its students, and this was considered to be unacceptable.

### *Weak integration*

Participants raised two different perspectives on the idea of weak integration. First, some participants reported that the various levels of education were not well connected with one another, with the transition between primary and secondary school thought to be particularly difficult for pupils. Second, participants raised concerns about the extent to which the education system worked well with other public services and vice versa. One participant expressed concern that social services do not intervene quickly enough when teachers report a problem.

### *Other issues*

Several other weaknesses were raised by smaller numbers of participants. Some participants spoke about issues with resources. For example, a few of the students thought schools sometimes misused their resources by putting them into marketing, rather than improving facilities or other more useful purposes. Some of the teachers, although not particularly concerned about a lack of resources, said if they had more resources, they would put them towards hiring more teaching assistants or ensuring more parents were Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) approved, as this would enable them to do more field trips.<sup>66</sup> A few participants also thought school infrastructure could be improved if schools had more resources.

Other participants raised discipline as a problem. Some reported a lack of respect for teachers, while others emphasised students' poor attitudes to learning. Participants also questioned the accuracy of the statistics about truancy, arguing that "within school truancy" (students

not attending classes but remaining on the school grounds) was actually a huge problem.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, some participants raised the size of some schools as a weakness, asserting that they were "too big". There was concern that sometimes the numbers of children attending one school was too great for its facilities, and that children were not given enough social time or time outside to run around because of a lack of space.

"Anyone not in Year 12 or 13, they're not allowed out the school are they at lunch, they've only got this tiny little area for them to go out, so they don't get a chance to run off and burn off energy."

Student

"They take away what it means to be a child. There's no play time."

Student

### Opportunities for education in Peterborough

In spite of these problems, three main opportunities were identified by participants. These represent opportunities that participants believed could occur and which would be beneficial.

- More freedom for teachers was seen to be necessary and possible.

"[You should be able to] be responsive to your own young people."

Participant

- Better practical learning, more emphasis on apprenticeships and better Further Education provision were highlighted as areas that could be improved.
- More personalised, student-led learning was thought to lead to improved self-confidence and better results.

### Threats to education in Peterborough

Participants moved very quickly from discussing opportunities to identifying threats. Threatening Peterborough's ability to capitalise on these opportunities were four main issues, including:

- A lack of resources
- Divisiveness in Peterborough
- The culture of inspections and rankings
- The “vicious cycle” of parents that were disengaged from education impacting on their children's attitudes towards education

### *A lack of resources*

Although not one of the principal weaknesses signalled by participants, a lack of resources was thought to be one of the greatest threats to education in Peterborough. This may reflect the political rhetoric around cuts that has been omnipresent since the coalition government was formed. Interestingly, students seemed more concerned about the downstream rather than the direct effects of cuts. They worried that a lack of resources could lead to restricted

access to higher education, which might have an impact on the aspirations of secondary school students.

### *Divisiveness in Peterborough*

“There's a big ethnic divide in schools, I'd say.”

Student

Although one of Peterborough's greatest strengths is the inclusivity of its schools, school policy and the reality on the ground appear to be quite different. Participants voiced concerns about the impact of ethnic tensions in schools, sometimes linked to the perceived unfairness alluded to earlier, with EAL students appearing to receive more attention from teachers than other students. However, the divisiveness within schools is not only based on ethnic grounds. There are also tensions among pupils from different estates and even pupils from different schools. Participants cited the example of a school that had been created by the amalgamation of two schools, in which divisions were still palpable.

“I think the issue with the academies is that they combine schools that have historically been at war. Those politics have continued.”

Participant

The concern about divisiveness is clearly around the extent to which it might impact on discipline and therefore on students' learning.

### Box 3: A SWOT Analysis of Education in Peterborough

#### Strengths

- Dedication and quality of teaching staff
- Inclusivity of schools
- Emergence of an “education-driven culture”
- Dynamism and new initiatives
- Schools networking
- Modern facilities and ICT

#### Opportunities

- More freedom for teachers
- Better practical learning
- Better Further Education provision
- More personalised, student-led learning

#### Weaknesses

- The system can be unfair
- Problematic relationships between schools and parents
- The narrowness of the curriculum
- The accountability framework
- Weak integration between levels of education and between education and other public services
- Poor discipline
- Lack of resources
- Some schools are too big

#### Threats

- A lack of resources
- Divisiveness in Peterborough
- The culture of inspections and rankings
- The “vicious cycle”

#### *The culture of inspections and rankings*

Already noted as a weakness of the current system, many participants also considered the inspections and rankings culture to be a threat, particularly to schools operating in new ways and teachers having more flexibility. If these changes are to occur, the accountability system will need to be modified so it does not work against them. Several early

years and primary school teachers suggested ways to modify the current model of inspections to make it more appropriate. They regarded the retrospective branding of schools as ‘failing’ to be unhelpful. Rather, they thought Ofsted should take on more of a supportive, coaching role, inspecting schools and then helping them in areas of weakness, giving them some time to improve, before giving them a final inspection

result which could be published. This would be more appropriate in an environment in which schools are encouraged to innovate, but some of the new approaches do not work as well as expected. Several participants also raised the idea that Ofsted inspections should take place without prior notice.

### *The “vicious cycle” of parental disengagement*

This was another factor that emerged as both a weakness and a threat. Unless the cycle of parental disengagement from education having a negative impact on their children’s learning is broken, this will continue to be a threat to education in Peterborough. As this cycle is linked to teenage pregnancy, strategies to tackle teenage pregnancy will be crucial.

### Spontaneous aspirations for education in Peterborough

In the light of these discussions, participants described their aspirations for education in Peterborough. The predominant theme was that of “good care and good results”. Participants wanted schools to be involved in what was variously described as “intensive nurturing” and increasing pupils’ determination to keep learning (by the early years educators), building the confidence of young people (by secondary teachers), and motivating students (by the pupils).

Parents were most interested in having less diversity in the quality of schools, so that they would not have to choose a school for their children but rather could simply send them to their local school.

“[Some teachers] don’t motivate you enough.”

Student

Many participants aspired to having many smaller schools as opposed to a few very large schools. This may be linked to the idea that schools should nurture each child and bring them to their full potential, which could be difficult in large, anonymous schools.

In line with the purposes of education identified by participants at the beginning of the session, several participants argued for more theme-based learning which would help students develop skills, rather than acquiring specific knowledge through the teaching of subjects.

Finally, parents and students wanted to be able to give anonymous feedback about schools and teachers via an online forum.

### Scenarios for the future of education in Peterborough

Most participants were then asked to consider four scenarios for the future of education in Peterborough. Full descriptions of the scenarios can be found in Appendix B. The scenarios were designed to reflect different distributions of power in the education system, alternative methods of financing education and the varying importance of technology in education.

The first scenario was a projection of the status quo, with the system working in a similar way to today. The second scenario was an attempt to reflect a world in which the policies of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government had been implemented. The third

scenario painted a picture of how the Commission on 2020 Public Services' principles might be applied to education. Finally, the fourth scenario described a world in which technology had fundamentally altered education.

Most groups preferred either the second or third scenarios, or a combination of the two, while one group could not decide but rather commented on elements of each scenario that group members liked or disliked. In general, the groups did not like the scenario in which technology played a predominant role in education; this seemed to stem from a fear that the social aspects of schooling would be lost. The groups were also clear that simply maintaining the status quo would not be appropriate.

The reasons for these preferences were strongly linked to the specific policy ideas presented in each scenario, which related to five themes, as listed below:

- Choice and personalisation
- School governance
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Financing

### *Choice and personalisation*

Some participants liked the idea of more choice of and in schools, while others did not. In some cases, participants preferred good quality

provision everywhere so they wouldn't have to choose, and this is in line with most of the evidence regarding choice in public services generally.<sup>68</sup> Some had other priorities for education that would not be met by a choice system, while others worried about the practicalities of how a choice system would work. However, most participants supported the idea of personalised learning plans for pupils, and some students did like the idea of being able to take certain subjects offered at different schools.

Participants had different reasons for not supporting more choice in education. The parents in particular simply wanted a good, uniform quality of provision everywhere. Similarly, another group lamented as "sad" that choice was necessary, as this was seen to be indicative of a problem or failure in certain schools.

Some participants also had different priorities for education, not all of which were fulfilled by giving students more choice, especially choice of taking individual subjects at different schools. For example, some parents thought having a community at school was more important than their child receiving the best tuition in every subject. In the same vein, some participants worried that the structure of a single institution was too important to lose since it provides children with stability, which is especially vital for children with chaotic home lives.

Some participants opposed the perceived "marketisation" of education. Others worried that students would not take the process of choosing seriously. This was of particular concern in relation to the idea of allowing students to choose classes, even from different schools;

several of the students and some teachers made comments to the effect that no one would take maths if that were allowed.

Finally, there was some opposition on the basis of concerns about the practicalities of enabling choice. For example, if popular schools are to be forced to expand, this would change their composition and potentially their results which made them desirable in the first instance. Moreover, communicating schools' reputations occurs more slowly than changes in the schools, so the allocation of resources based on choice may not be reflective of quality. With regards to the choice of subjects, participants questioned how teachers that were always in high demand would manage, and what would happen to other teachers whose classes were less popular.

However, there was certainly some scope for choice in education. Most participants liked that schools were able to adopt specialisms, such as sports or science. Everyone supported the idea of more personalised learning, including involving pupils in creating learning plans, as this was thought to be motivational for young people, and would help them build confidence and aspiration. Some of the students supported the idea of being able to take certain subjects at other schools, as they resented that timetable clashes meant they could not take all their preferred GCSE subjects.

### *School governance*

School governance was much debated. Some participants disagreed about the extent to which schools are currently run by boards of

parents and teachers, arguing that headteachers have a lot of power. Strong head teachers can sometimes drag the board along. In other cases, boards are at best a "critical friend" of the head.

Most groups had concerns about parent-run schools, with some participants worrying that the boards of these schools would not be very representative since only certain types of parents would be willing and able to get involved. Participants said that some parents would not know how to run a school, or would not have the time, skills or expertise to establish schools, while others simply would not care and therefore would not get involved. However, one group thought it was important for parents to have some influence over what was taught and how. Interestingly, some of the students worried that if their parents ran their school, they would not enjoy the "disconnect" they needed from home. These students enjoyed having a school life separate from home life and did not want this to be infringed on.

Some participants were dubious about the extent to which student councils could really influence teaching and learning. Student councils were thought to be symbolically important, but teachers said they were often powerless to respond to student council recommendations because they were so tightly bound by the NC and Ofsted requirements.

Many participants were confused about the role of the local authority. Some thought there was a role for local authorities, but that they did not need to be involved to the extent they are currently.

## *Curriculum*

A less restrictive National Curriculum, and variation by teachers and schools, was seen to be a very good thing, since they would enable teachers to play to their strengths and tailor learning for their pupils.

“I think the idea of teachers teaching things that they are good at, passionate about, knowledgeable about, will lead to children having a good experience of what their teacher wants them to get.”

Participant

There was appetite to see a very scaled-down NC that would emphasise skills and competencies rather than specific knowledge.

Indeed, the usual complaints with regards to variation in public services (about pupils learning different things in different parts of the country) were dismissed by one group who thought that being able to move halfway through the year without disrupting learning due to the NC was a myth anyway.

One group thought that balance was important. Teachers should not have absolute freedom, but they should have more freedom with regards to using different teaching styles and some curriculum freedom.

Another group was sceptical as to how creative teachers would really be. They wondered to what extent teachers would be likely to depart from the traditional teaching of subjects. They also thought that scaling down the NC might be an excuse for central government to withdraw support from teachers.

Overall, however, a more flexible NC that would give teachers substantial freedom over what and how they taught was seen to be highly desirable.

## *Assessment*

Most participants, and especially the students, considered national exams to be necessary, especially to demonstrate to employers across the country a specific level of achievement. Participants also saw national exams as helping to ensure minimum standards in schools. Some participants reacted negatively to the fact that without national exams, league tables could not be published so there would be no information with which to compare schools.

Participants did not like the idea of optional national exams, since they thought this would result in a clear divide in classes between pupils sitting national exams and pupils choosing not to.

However, teachers were in favour of having diverse methods of assessment; they wanted to be trusted to evaluate pupils along the way, although they considered some sort of regional or national standard of evaluation important as well.

“In early years, what we do is... observations of children, because when they're doing their independent learning, their free learning, is when they're learning to their highest level. And so you make observations... and then you can look at them against developmental criteria.”

Teacher

“Every teacher in every year group assesses children... we do it all the way along.”

Teacher

### *Financing*

There were mixed reactions to various proposals regarding the funding of education. Some participants strongly disliked the idea of a pupil premium (disadvantaged pupils carrying extra funding so that the schools they attend have more resource to help them learn). This was not because they did not believe disadvantaged pupils should not receive additional funding, but rather because there are already grants to schools for disadvantaged pupils, and participants thought these were less stigmatising than attaching a premium or “price tag”, as they called it, to individual pupils. However, other participants thought the pupil premium was a very good idea, since it would allow schools with students with more needs to hire extra teaching assistants or other resources to help cater to students with additional needs without this impacting negatively on other students.

Another disagreement occurred about learning accounts (accounts which contain a lump sum of money to be used for educational purposes throughout children’s lives). One participant thought it would make funding more flexible and responsive to changes in the pupil composition in schools. One group said it would be more efficient for the headteacher. Some education professionals saw it as a way to get parents more involved.

“I particularly liked the bit about, in the funding bit, about the parent and the child getting discounts for certain bits, because I think that’s just going to encourage a little bit more involvement with parents, and we were saying in our group before weren’t we about how parents seem to be, almost the crux of the problem, as it were, fighting us. If they’ve got that incentive, maybe that’s going to improve their working with us.”

Participant

One of the students and several parents liked the notion of receiving some financial benefit for working harder. Indeed, this was one of the recommendations of the students before they heard the four scenarios.

“Give kids more incentive to perform, so... not necessarily money, like... rewards, like you get to go on a school trip if you’re good and you perform to this rate.”

Student

However, one group worried that schools paid through learning accounts would not be able to predict funding levels from one year to the next, which could hamper their ability to plan and develop. Another group worried that it would be unfair to families who were unable to participate as much in their children’s education.

The group that talked about teacher pay thought that it would be a good idea to make it flexible because then it could be performance-

related, although participants raised that it could be difficult to evaluate individual teacher's performance.

"I think I like the idea of flexible pay, because I think lots of teachers do enter the... system and just keep climbing. There is a ceiling and then... there's thresholds and that you have to prove, but lots of teachers seem to be able to get through them without, in my opinion, doing the goods."

Teacher

A participant-created scenario

One group listened to the presentation of the four scenarios, but was then tasked with creating their own ideal scenario for education in Peterborough in 2020. This group invented a scenario in which learning was mostly cross-curricular and theme-based, with students learning through projects about multiple subject areas. For examples, students might do a project on Victorian society in which they learned about history, philosophy and maths. The group wanted teachers to be trained to conduct Ofsted inspections. They wanted to strengthen the accountability mechanisms that currently operate in schools. Finally, they advocated the expansion of SureStart and community involvement in schools.

Overall, there were often mixed reactions to proposals, and, in line with what is already well-known about deliberative research, participants often wanted more information about how certain proposals would work in practice. However, the research did produce some interesting findings for the Commission in terms of its principles.

## 6 Interpretation of the findings

As described in Box 1, the Commission proposes three shifts for public services. This deliberative research was designed to test whether these shifts made sense to education stakeholders in Peterborough as a framework for reforming their education system in order to achieve the purposes of education they identified. The findings suggest that in general, stakeholders are sympathetic to the Commission's principles, but often identify obstacles to their implementation.

A shift in culture: from social security to social productivity

This shift implies that public services focus on their relationships with service users, because value and outcomes are created ('co-produced') at that interface. In education, this shift is likely to involve deeper pupil engagement in deciding what and how they learn, and more parental and community involvement in creating an education-driven culture. It means that teachers cannot have sole responsibility for delivering results for students, but rather that teachers offer good quality instruction, and students and parents engage to extract the most value they can from it. Especially given that participants identified the purposes of education as acquiring life skills, social skills and enhancing confidence, it is clear that teachers will only be able to

have a small impact on these outcomes, and that pupil, parental and community involvement in learning will be required.

The deliberative research in Peterborough shows that both schools and parents recognise the importance of pupil and parental engagement in the learning process, and most participants also favoured facilitating their involvement.

“Pupils should be involved in their own learning and making decisions about what they’re doing.”

Participant

However, participants identified both social and bureaucratic obstacles to acting on this knowledge. For example, participants thought that involving students in creating learning plans for themselves would be highly motivating for them, but teachers felt constrained by the prescriptiveness of the National Curriculum and the Ofsted inspection regime, and were uncertain of being able to implement student plans which were radically different from what was normally taught. Clearly, under the current framework, many participants did not feel that students could work at their own pace or explore in more depth certain areas of interest, especially if this were at the expense of English or maths.

Moreover, while participants appreciated the importance of parental and community involvement in education, they expressed frustration that regulations in place to protect the safety of the pupils often got

in the way of this. For example, although it is not a requirement for parent chaperones for field trips to be CRB-approved, the teaching professionals felt they had to operate this way, and that this restricted schools’ ability to do more off-site trips. Some teachers said that their school had been forced to ban parents or community members from entering school buildings in order to protect the safety of students. In other cases, schools simply had trouble engaging parents.

Therefore, as the Commission has previously recognised, other parameters will need to be shifted in order for the shift in culture to take place in education in Peterborough. The accountability framework will need to be modified so that it does not impede teachers’ ability to use student-led learning plans. Teachers will need to be given more power over exactly what and how they teach. The next section turns to this question.

#### A shift in power: from the centre to citizens

The Commission proposes a more local approach to public services, with power devolved down to citizens and local areas as much as possible. In the context of education in Peterborough, this shift was manifested in the aspiration for more freedom at the level of the teacher. Students, parents and teachers alike thought it was important for teachers to be able to play to their strengths and areas of expertise, and to make learning as relevant to their students as possible.

In contrast, participants were concerned about the extent to which more parental involvement in governing schools would be

desirable and the extent to which pupils could be entrusted with more responsibility to make choices about their education.

“If you look at the Year 6 SAT particularly, the reading paper example, the content of it may be very middle England, you know, about something that children that are coming from my school just don't have any experience of. Whereas I would've given them the same level of test, but it might've just been something about the drumming workshop we just did, or, you know, so it's much more appropriate.”

Teacher

There appears to be a tension in participants' desire for more personalised learning, more parental engagement and the conclusion that power should be devolved to teachers. However, in terms of personalisation, participants seemed to believe that learning could be sufficiently tailored if there were a less prescriptive National Curriculum and teachers had more control over what they taught. This would also allow teachers to respond more easily to pupil suggestions and desires for their learning. Although the pupils did not appreciate their choice of subjects being restricted because of what was offered at their school and timetable clashes, both parents and pupils were clear that they would not want to lose the community feeling of their schools in a drive to achieve the greatest level of choice and quality.

How increased parental engagement can be achieved when teachers are given more control over what and how they teach is less certain.

One aspect of the choice agenda is that it seeks to engage parents in making (or helping their children make) decisions about which school their children attend. Placing less emphasis on these types of decisions may have negative implications for parental engagement. However, if parents value more than just the quality of their children's education (that is, they also value the social aspects, community-building and so on), then perhaps the way that parents are asked to participate in their children's learning needs to be reconsidered. One idea might be that teachers meet with parents to establish a compact outlining each party's responsibilities for contributing to a child's learning. This would allow teachers to tailor the compacts to each family's situation. Follow-up meetings could be used to raise any concerns about a child's progress, and enable parents and teachers to decide together how these could be addressed.

Learning from the participants at the deliberative event that they thought teachers were the lowest level at which power could be competently exercised has significant implications for education policy. One of the major themes of education policy over the last 20 years has been to devolve more power to parents through the mechanism of school choice. This research indicates that this policy may not be seen favourably by citizens, although further research would be needed to say anything conclusive. The coalition government's proposal to give schools greater freedom over the curriculum may be better aligned with the type of redistribution of power advocated by the participants in Peterborough.<sup>69</sup>

A shift in finance: reconnecting financing with the purposes of services

Finally, the Commission advocates a new approach to funding public services, which involves harnessing new resources and using funding to further the purposes of services. Much of the discussion at the deliberative workshop about resources centred on how to allocate and use them fairly – perhaps because participants identified the main purpose of education as giving children and young people the skills and confidence they need to make choices about their own lives, and that means giving every child that chance.

Participants responded well, in general, to the idea of learning accounts with financial or educational benefits to increased participation in the learning process, which may indicate one way forward to incentivise citizens to contribute some of their own informal resources (time, energy, and so on) to education at a time when public resources are constrained.

On the other hand, although fairness in education was clearly important to all participants, they did not always agree on how fairness could be achieved. This was demonstrated by disagreements over whether or not the pupil premium was a good policy idea. Some participants preferred the approach of giving grants to schools for disadvantage because they worried a pupil premium would stigmatise individual students, despite the fact that grants are less responsive to changes in the composition of student bodies than the pupil premium would be. Other participants liked the idea of the pupil premium

because they thought more help for disadvantaged children was appropriate. Importantly, all the participants were concerned about fairness in education funding, but this example shows that they disagreed about the mechanism to achieve this.

## Conclusion

Education is a cornerstone of modern society. Providing a good education for children and young people may be important for reducing national inequalities, ensuring the workforce is skilled, enabling the country to compete in a globalised economy and creating good citizens. However, as this research shows, for individuals, the most important purpose of education is *to give children and young people the skills and confidence to write their own life story*.

The findings analysed in this report indicate that the Commission's principles provide a good framework for evaluating policies that might further this purpose. In general, participants believed that involving students and parents more, giving more power to teachers and ensuring that funding was fair were important to achieving the main purpose of education. However, the research also showed that several different education policies could stem from each of the Commission's principles, not all of which were considered to be appropriate by many of the participants. A good example of this is that the Commission calls for a devolution of power "to the lowest appropriate level".<sup>70</sup> This research revealed that the participants of the deliberative event in Peterborough believed that power should be vested in teachers, with only some power given to parents and students.

As previously stated, this kind of deliberative research does not allow one to draw generalisations about which education policies might be applicable in the rest of England. However, the insights gained

in one deliberative session are invaluable. By understanding what a range of stakeholders in one city think about current education policy proposals and the Commission's principles and, more importantly, why, one can begin to construct a framework to guide further research in this area.

## Afterword

The education debate of recent decades has tended to pit very different visions of the ideal state funded school against each other: religious versus secular, single sex versus co-ed, selective versus comprehensive, competitive versus collaborative, autonomous versus government controlled. It is a debate too between very different visions of what and how children should be taught and tested: traditional versus progressive, academic versus vocational, mixed ability versus streamed, teacher-led versus child-centred, exams versus continuous assessment.

Echoes of these debates could be heard in the deliberative session in Peterborough. As ever, there was broad agreement about the basics – everyone wanted a good school, close to where they live, where they (or their children) would acquire the knowledge and skills needed in adulthood. But on what constitutes a good school – what it should look like, how it should be organised, governed and funded – there was, as always, a good deal of disagreement.

In the past, politicians saw it as their role to pick sides in the educational debate and to proselytise for a particular camp (“Minister promises return to ‘chalk and talk’ teaching in new numeracy drive”). But I would argue that the challenge facing policy makers today is quite different. Rather than choosing between competing educational models, policy makers should be creating a framework that allows space for all of them; a model in which *schools* can choose between different pedagogical approaches and *parents* can choose between

schools. The usual technocratic arguments for school choice are well rehearsed. By forcing schools to ‘sell’ themselves to parents and to compete for pupils, an incentive towards constant improvement is built into the system, resulting in a steady ratcheting up of standards. That may indeed be the result, at least in those (largely urban) areas where the potential for meaningful choice and competition actually exists. But there is another, less technocratic argument for school choice that gets less of a run-out: that it increases ‘suitability’ or ‘fit’ regardless of its impact on quality. This argument rests on the belief that the very process of choosing validates the choice – or, in business speak, that “the customer is always right” – and holds that parents and pupils have a right to decide for themselves what kind of school best matches their particular needs, circumstances or aspirations. Whether their decisions are deemed by ministers, officials or academic experts to be wise or even well informed is, frankly, a second order issue.

This is not to say that in implementing the 2020 Commission’s recommendation that power be shifted from the centre to the citizen, the state should adopt an entirely *laissez faire* attitude. After all, individual decisions have public consequences, and in any case are backed by public funds. That is why the key task for policy makers is to define, on behalf of the wider society, the limits to parental freedom and school autonomy in a liberalised, diverse, choice-based school system.

The net result of this ‘first principles’ reassessment of the government’s rightful role, should be a significant reduction in political interference and micro-management. In fact, I would argue

that there are essentially just four key roles for government: to define, through the curriculum, the essence of what, as a society, we believe it means to be educated; to act as a guarantor of academic standards by requiring all schools to deliver a certain level of attainment and/or improvement for their pupils; to ensure, through the admissions process, that hard-to-teach children are not unfairly discriminated against when trying to access the school of their choice; and to take active steps to ensure that children who are disadvantaged, whether by social background or by disability, are given the additional support they need to reach their potential.

As the Peterborough deliberative session made clear, government currently does all four of these badly. The curriculum is too long and overly prescriptive, constraining teachers and strangling innovation and experimentation. The accountability system, designed to identify and root out failure, has instead succeeded only in hollowing out the educational experience, with schools quite rationally marginalising certain subjects and pupils in pursuit of a better league table ranking. The admissions system changes from area to area, school to school, and is riddled with loopholes that the sharp-elbowed middle classes have become ever more proficient at exploiting – a fact evidenced by the extraordinary levels of social segregation between schools. And the opaque system of deprivation funding, applied in different ways by different local authorities, does little to compensate schools in low income areas for the significant additional costs of teaching pupils from sometimes crowded, chaotic, even dysfunctional homes.

The lesson, I would argue, is clear. If government did less, but did it better, improvement would quickly follow. It should define the core educational offering in a slimmed down curriculum that affords teachers the space they need to teach. It should design a school accountability system that isn't so crude as to distort the teaching process. It should guarantee fair access to schools through a consistently applied admissions system, perhaps based on 'fair banding'. And it should put in place a transparent system of deprivation funding like the pupil premium that will give schools with challenging intakes the resources they need to overcome the manifold disadvantages their pupils face.

Get this right, and government can probably leave the rest to schools and parents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Astle', with a stylized, flowing end.

**Julian Astle**

# Appendix A – Deliberative event

## Participants

Thirty-two participants were recruited to take part in the deliberative event; two confirmed participants did not attend on the day. Participants were given a financial incentive and were also invited to dinner after the event to encourage attendance.

Participants fell into four main categories (numbers reflect participants who attended the event):

- teaching professionals from all levels (11)
  - › primary teachers and teaching assistants (6)
  - › secondary teachers and teaching assistants (2)
  - › teachers from support schools (PRU, special school, Polish Saturday school) (3)
- parents (6) and school governors (2)
- A/S level students (6) and post-graduate student (1)
- other stakeholders (4)
  - › school nurses (2)
  - › employer (1)
  - › youth justice worker (1)

Attempts were made to have an ethnically and socio-economically diverse group with adequate representation of both genders.

The final ethnic composition of the group was mostly White British, with two participants identifying themselves as Indian, one identifying as Black African and one identifying as White Polish. When compared to the composition of the population of Peterborough, this was a fairly representative sample.

Participants were fairly evenly split between socio-economic groups B (10) and C1 (17), with two participants identifying as C2 and one as D.

Twenty-three participants were female and seven were male.

The average age of teaching professionals was 35.5 years; the oldest teaching professional was 52 while the youngest was 26. The other professionals ranged in age from 25 to 49. The average age of the parents was 43.5 years; the oldest parent was 50 and the youngest was 25 years old. Five students were 17 years old and one was 18 years old; this reflects the year level of the students targeted, chosen for their experience of the school system and ability to respond to the same questions and materials as the parents and teaching professionals through the course of the deliberative event.

## Structure

The deliberative event lasted three hours. On arrival, participants were introduced to 2020 Public Services Trust as an organisation and told the purpose of the research: “to discuss the goals of education, how the system in Peterborough works and what it achieves and any changes that could be made to make education in Peterborough better.”

Participants were seated at five different tables in two different rooms. A moderator facilitated the discussion at each table.

For the first session, participants were divided into five groups of between five and seven based on stakeholder type. Students sat at one table; primary school teachers at another; secondary and support teachers at a third; parents and school governors at a fourth; and finally students at the last table. The first session focused on the purpose of education, the current state of education in Peterborough and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of education in Peterborough. Halfway through the first session there was a presentation with some key statistics about education in Peterborough to which the participants were then given time to react. Moderators asked open-ended questions that encouraged participants to discuss with one another, giving their spontaneous reactions rather than selecting one of several responses provided.

After a break, participants returned to plenary to listen to a presentation of the four scenarios (see Appendix B) and were then seated in new groups of about six, this time of mixed stakeholders. The discussion in the second session focused on reactions to the four scenarios, so it was important that all participants understood and were able to respond to the opinions of different types of stakeholders. In this session, four groups were asked to respond specifically to the four scenarios, while one group who had listened to the four scenarios was then asked to create its own.

In the last ten minutes, participants returned to plenary to verbally evaluate the event and give feedback. Reactions were very positive,

with participants saying they enjoyed hearing what different people thought and being able to voice their opinions.

## Appendix B – Scenarios

### Scenario 1

Schools are run by boards of parents, teachers and community members who make decisions about how the school is run, but local authorities also have substantial involvement in how schools operate. The national curriculum continues to expand and there is substantial guidance not only about what is taught but also how it is taught, so teachers have little freedom to tailor what they teach to meet the needs of their pupils. However, it does ensure that every child in England learns the same things. Jack's Year 9 experience is typical – he takes different subjects which are taught by different teachers. The teachers set goals for Jack, but sometimes he doesn't understand why he is learning certain things. Jack spends most of his time sitting at a desk, listening or doing exercises. In this world, pupils sit national exams and the results are published to help parents and children choose schools. Children have some choice about what school they attend. If a school is oversubscribed, the decision about which children can attend is made according to guidance issued by the local authority, which differs from one authority to another. Some authorities decide based on which children live closest to the school, some use a lottery system and some take children with a sibling already at the school. Not all children get their first choice. Schools' budgets depend largely on the number and type of pupils enrolled (SEN and deprived pupils

attract extra funding). However, the funding system is not transparent or consistent because different local authorities receive, and disburse, different amounts per pupil, and the extra money for deprivation and special educational needs also varies from authority to authority. In addition, the funding system is slow to respond to changes in pupil numbers and composition, so funding often reflects historical rather than actual levels of deprivation. This also means that unpopular schools continue to fill up and popular schools are not able to expand quickly. Teachers' pay is uniform across the country, with the exception of London where salaries are slightly higher.

### Scenario 2

Schools are run by boards of parents, teachers and community members, with substantial freedom from local authority control. The national curriculum gives guidance on core objectives, but there is substantial freedom at the level of the teacher on how those are taught and what other supplementary learning occurs, and technology is enabling teachers to be increasingly creative about this. Olivia, for example, takes three hours of Mandarin each week, interacting with her Mandarin teacher and a 21st century 'pen pal' in China via Skype and a webcam. These freedoms mean that there are differences between schools and between different parts of the country in what children learn and how they learn it. Pupils sit national exams, the results of which are published to help parents and children choose schools. Parents and children are free to choose a school that matches

their preferences for curriculum and teaching style, and if schools are oversubscribed, as in the first scenario, different local authorities apply different admissions policies. However, groups of parents, teachers or educational organisations can also receive funding from central government to establish their own schools, so enabling more choice. Funding is similar to the first scenario in that schools' budgets are based on the number of pupils enrolled, and disadvantaged pupils have a 'premium' attached, so schools that admit those pupils are paid a bit extra. But unlike in the first scenario, funding levels respond quickly to changes in pupil composition, so that popular schools grow while unpopular ones disappear or are taken over by popular ones. Teachers' pay is flexible – schools can decide to use more or less of their budget on teachers' salaries.

### Scenario 3

Like the first two scenarios, schools are run by boards of parents, teachers and community members who make decisions about how the school is run and what is taught. The national curriculum gives guidance on core objectives, but there is substantial freedom on how those are taught and what other supplementary learning occurs. This means that there are differences between schools and between different parts of the country in what children learn and how they learn it. For example, Isabelle's school chooses to let pupils define their own learning goals and plan to achieve them, while Isaac's puts emphasis on learning skills, like teamwork and active listening, rather

than specific knowledge about subjects. Parents and children are free to choose a school that matches their preferences for curriculum and teaching style. If a school is oversubscribed, it is required to expand by adding more classes or by taking over another school to meet demand. Schools can choose whether or not they would like their students to sit national exams according to their education philosophy, and students that would like to sit exams can do so at an alternate school. At the secondary school level, students can choose to enrol in individual classes at different schools, to get the best teaching in every subject. For example, Jayden takes maths and science at one school, music and wood-working at another school and social studies from home by correspondence. This is facilitated through a Peterborough-wide registration website. Schools can choose how they spend their budget, including flexibility in teachers' pay. Every child in Peterborough is given an account which contains a lump sum of money to be used for educational purposes throughout the child's life, and this is used to pay the chosen school or classes. Disadvantaged children are given a larger amount than better-off children. Educational opportunities all have a monetary value, but discounts may be given based on the extent of participation of parents and students. For example, Charlie's school gave him a discount because his father agreed to come in and teach a class about the culture of his home country, and Sophie's school gave her a discount because she committed to reading for an hour before bed each night. This system enables parents and children to use non-monetary resources to save monetary resources for use in the future.

#### Scenario 4

Schools are run by boards, as in the other scenarios. Technology has come to play a big role in education. Correspondence learning has gained in popularity, and now the majority of pupils are at least partially educated online, although they are required to be enrolled in a school of their choice as well unless they are registered as home-schooled. Schools have become, above all, places to learn social skills and competencies like working in a team and communication, and the national curriculum has come to reflect this by strongly advising learning through projects. Learning is highly personalised, with students taking subjects that reflect what they enjoy and hope to do in the future, so as to encourage lifelong learning. Ali gets up each morning and does his maths lesson at home, accessing help online if he needs it, which he usually does. He then heads into school to work on his latest group project, which involves learning about human biology – Ali and his classmates teach each other about the make up of cells, supervised by teachers who intervene only if necessary, and then together make a model cell – Ali's group is using a goldfish bowl, jelly and pipe cleaners for their model. Later in the afternoon Ali gets back online to talk via Skype and a webcam to a student living in Mexico about projects they are both doing on the Mayan civilisation. Students are not required to sit national exams unless they wish to do so. Since there are not as many pupils at school each day, school buildings are often used by companies as meeting places, in exchange for taking on students to give them a taste of what it is like to work in certain

local businesses. Schools' budgets are based on the numbers of pupils enrolled (including in online classes, but these attract less funding), and teachers' pay is uniform across the country, with the exception of London where salaries are slightly higher.

# Endnotes

- 1 HM Treasury, *Budget 2010* (London: The Stationary Office, 2010): 5.
- 2 Stephen Machin and Anna Vignoles, *Education Policy in the UK* (London: Centre for the Economics of Education, 2006): 7-8; Sam Freedman and Simon Horner, *School Funding and Social Justice: A Guide to the Pupil Premium* (London: Policy Exchange, 2008): 12-13.
- 3 For more in-depth explanations of the Commission's principles, please see Commission on 2020 Public Services, *Beyond Beveridge* (London: 2020 Public Services Trust, 2010).
- 4 For more on how competition in the English school system operates, see Rebecca Allen and Simon Burgess, *The future of competition and accountability in education* (London: 2020 Public Services Trust, 2010).
- 5 For more on the effects of school choice on equality, see Peter Taylor-Gooby, "What are the Implications of Public Services Reform for Societal Inequality?" in Buddery *et al. Equality, Cohesion and Public Services* (London: 2020 Public Services Trust, 2010): 63.
- 6 HM Government, *The Coalition: our programme for government* (London: Cabinet Office, 2010): 28.
- 7 *Ibid.*: 28-29.
- 8 See for example Deborah Wilson, *Targets, Choice and Voice: Accountability in Public Services* (London: 2020 Public Services Trust): 35.
- 9 See <http://www.thersa.org/projects/citizen-power> for more information about the Peterborough-RSA partnership.
- 10 oneplace, "Peterborough Overview", accessed online on 30 March 2010 at <<http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/pages/areaoverview.aspx?region=50&area=451>>.
- 11 For more detailed information about the participants and the organisation of the deliberative event, see Appendix A.
- 12 oneplace, "Peterborough City Council organisational assessment 2009", accessed online on 7 July 2010 at <<http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/localorganisations/organisation/pages/default.aspx?region=50&area=451&orgId=1714>>.
- 13 Peterborough City Council, *Population and Dwelling Stock Estimates 1991-2007*: 6.
- 14 *Peterborough facts and figures*, 2008: 1, accessed online on 5 April 2010 at <<http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/pdf/community-factsfigures-population-forecasts.pdf>>.
- 15 Peterborough City Council, *Population and Dwelling Stock Estimates 1991-2007*: 7.
- 16 *Ibid.*: 9.
- 17 oneplace, "Peterborough Overview".
- 18 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: About the area: People living in this area" accessed online on 30 March 2010 at <<http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/areaperformanceindicators/Pages/default.aspx?region=50&area=451&GEARSEntId=2689-AC&gearsexpcats=289&Gkey=282VqlaaVSJaK4iyLhJ81zLTmElGy5R0UqJ31sW%2bt2g5ikjLpHkDnOTRVck87W79yEiCcBLOCpc9RNzTrhGr5brPO%2bb3d%2b%2bGDDR517GGD9Y0j6kY4jRN0kEriJrXJQ%2fK2Rp6MnbcAR4h3zHgn2nRNUntae2u%2fw aRWZWAN02IK47%2b9DRvn2RokL%2bkr4hXb>>.
- 19 The Research Group: Cambridgeshire County Council, *The Impact of Population Change in Peterborough* (Peterborough Regional Economic Partnership, 2007): VIII.
- 20 *Peterborough facts and figures*, 2008: 1.
- 21 Calculations based on data drawn from Peterborough City Council, *Population and Dwelling Stock Estimates 1991-2007*: 12.
- 22 oneplace, "Peterborough Overview".
- 23 *Peterborough facts and figures*, 2008: 1.
- 24 oneplace, "Peterborough Overview".
- 25 This is based on the percentage of the population reliant on various means tested benefits. oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: About the area: People living in this area".
- 26 The Research Group, *The Impact of Population Change in Peterborough* (2007): X.
- 27 *Ibid.*: IX.
- 28 Employment-deprived is defined as involuntary exclusion of the working-age population from work.
- 29 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Be healthy" accessed online on 12 April 2010 at <<http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/areaperformanceindicators/Pages/default.aspx?region=50&area=451&GEARSEntId=2689-AC&gearsexpcats=198&Gkey=282VqlaaVSJaK4iyLhJ81zLTmElGy5R0UqJ31sW%2bt2g5ikjLpHkDnOTRVck87W79yEiCcBLOCpc9RNzTrhGr5brPO%2bb3d%2b%2bGDDR517GGD9Y0j6kY4jRN0kEriJrXJQ%2fK2Rp6MnbcAR4h3zHgn2nRNUntae2u%2fw aRWZWAN02IK47%2b9DRvn2R5YLS2W021e>>.
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- 31 Peterborough Children's Trust Partnership Board, *Peterborough's Children and Young People Plan 2009-2012*: 8, accessed online on 12 April 2010 at <[http://www.nfer.ac.uk/emie/documents/Plans/CYPP2009\\_PETE.pdf](http://www.nfer.ac.uk/emie/documents/Plans/CYPP2009_PETE.pdf)>.
- 32 Peterborough City Council, *Peterborough: A place for people to grow: Best Value Performance Plan 2007/08*: 7.

- 33 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Make a positive contribution (children and young people)".
- 34 Peterborough Children's Trust Partnership Board, *Peterborough's Children and Young People Plan 2009–2012*: 18.
- 35 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Economic wellbeing" accessed online on 12 April 2010 at <[47 oneplace, \*Peterborough: Area Assessment\* \(2009\): 8.

48 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Enjoy and achieve".

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51 oneplace, \*Peterborough: Area Assessment\* \(2009\): 9.

52 \*Ibid.\*

53 Sam McLean, \*Citizen Power in Peterborough: A Scoping Study\* \(London: RSA, 2010\): 35.

54 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Economic wellbeing".

55 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Enjoy and achieve".

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57 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How strong is the local economy?: How skilled are people here?". <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/areaperformanceindicators/pages/default.aspx?region=50&area=451&GEARSEntId=2689-AC&gearsexpcats=194&Gkey=282VqlaaVSJaK4iyLhJ81zLtmElGy5R0UqJ31sW%2bt2g5ikjLpHkDn0TRVck87IW79yElCcBL0Cpc9RNzTrhGr5brPO%2bb3d%2b%2bGODR517GGD9YOj6kY4jRN0kEriJrlxXJQ%2fK2Rp6MnbcAR4h3zHgyN2nRUnTae2u%2fwaRWZwAn02IK47%2b9DRvn2WtwXbmr%2b4>.

58 The Research Group, \*The Impact of Population Change in Peterborough\* \(2007\): IX.

59 \*Ibid.\*: X.

60 oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Economic wellbeing".

61 oneplace, \*Peterborough: Area Assessment\* \(2009\): 18.

62 For more information on the participants at the event and the structure of the deliberation, see Appendix A.

63 Because participants were in mixed groups for the second half of the event, it is not possible to identify the stakeholder group to which they belong. In these cases, the identifier 'Participant' is used.

64 News on pupil exclusions confirms that academies have a higher rate of exclusion than other state schools. BBC, "Large drop in pupil expulsions from schools in England", \*BBC News: Education and Family\* \(29 July 2010\), accessed online on 1 August 2010 at <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10802142>>.

65 Permanent exclusions from schools, including primary, secondary and special schools, is 0.24% \(in the bottom 5% compared to other unitary authorities or all English councils\) and deteriorating. See oneplace, "Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is](http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/infobyarea/region/area/areaperformanceindicators/pages/default.aspx?region=50&area=451&GEARSEntId=2689-AC&gearsexpcats=198&Gkey=282VqlaaVSJaK4iyLhJ81zLtmElGy5R0UqJ31sW%2bt2g5ikjLpHkDn0TRVck87IW79yElCcBL0Cpc9RNzTrhGr5brPO%2bb3d%2b%2bGODR517GGD9YOj6kY4jRN0kEriJrlxXJQ%2fK2Rp6MnbcAR4h3zHgyN2nRUnTae2u%2fwaRWZwAn02IK47%2b9DRvn2d3fQ%2f8%2bRqDR></a>.</p>
<p>44 oneplace, <i>Peterborough: Area Assessment</i> (2009): 8.</p>
<p>45 Unless otherwise stated, comparisons are to other unitary authorities, rather than to the national average, although Peterborough tends to rank similarly when compared to the national average.</p>
<p>46 oneplace, )

- the wellbeing of children and young people: Make a positive contribution (children and young people)”.
- 66 Although it is not a requirement for parents to be CRB approved unless they have unsupervised or regular contact with students, it is important that participants perceived that schools had to operate within these restrictions.
- 67 According to oneplace, the secondary school persistent absence rate in Peterborough is 4.8%, placing Peterborough in the top third compared to other unitary authorities, and this is improving. oneplace, “Performance indicators for Peterborough: How good is the wellbeing of children and young people: Enjoy and achieve”.
- 68 For more on how citizens view choice in public services generally, see Ipsos MORI, *What do people want, need and expect from public services?* (London: 2020 Public Services Trust, 2010): 22-23.
- 69 HM Government, *The Coalition: our programme for government* (2010): 28.
- 70 Commission on 2020 Public Services, *Beyond Beveridge* (2010): 12.

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