

Scotland needs more vocational colleges

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The Scottish Conservatives are calling for Scottish Government to get behind community efforts to promote vocational education, Ruth Davidson said on a visit to Newlands Junior College in Glasgow today.

The brainchild of entrepreneur and philanthropist Jim McColl OBE, the college supports young 14-16 year-olds who are not learning well in the mainstream education sector – and instead gives them a chance to develop and learn new skills.

The college is the only one of its kind in the country – but the Scottish Conservatives are now calling on ministers to work with both the private and voluntary sectors, as well as other philanthropists, to set up similar colleges across Scotland.

Such a network would ensure thousands of youngsters who are in danger of dropping out might instead learn skills and be re-motivated.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

“Too many youngsters across Scotland either drop out of mainstream education, or leave without the skills needed to make the most of their lives.

“Newlands Junior College is a shining beacon which shows that, with the right ideas and support, we really can ensure every child makes the most of their abilities.

“Jim McColl is to be applauded for the extraordinary work he has begun.

“But it is hugely regrettable that it took such a fight to make Newlands Junior College happen, and that it is the only example of its kind in the country. This simply must change.

“After years of under-performance and a stubbornly persistent attainment gap, I believe Scotland’s failed one-sized-fits-all education system needs reform.

“We simply cannot allow Scottish education to continue to stagnate. It is time to open ourselves up to new ideas and bring in the support of Scotland’s business community and voluntary sector where they can contribute.

“The Scottish Government is putting together its governance review as we speak.

“We would encourage it to consider great initiatives like Newlands Junior

College and focus on what works.”

[News story: Local alcohol action areas will tackle alcohol related harms](#)

On the 27 January the Home Office launched a new phase of the programme to tackle alcohol-related crime and health harms and create a more diverse night-time economy. The programme initially launched in February 2014 covering 20 areas.

Each area will be supported by the government to implement their plan which will see local agencies including licensing authorities, health bodies, and police coming together with businesses to address problems caused by alcohol in their local area.

Sarah Newton, Minister for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Countering Extremism, said:

Local alcohol action areas demonstrate the government’s commitment to work with industry, police, local authorities and other partners to make our streets safer.

Violent crimes involving alcohol have fallen over the last decade – but it is clear that alcohol misuse has a significant impact on communities across the country.

Our pubs, bars and restaurants make a valuable contribution to our economy and our society and it is important that people are able to enjoy them without the fear of becoming a victim of crime.

Alcohol-related crime and disorder costs an estimated £11 billion per year in England and Wales, and the government wants to support local communities in reducing the scenes of drunkenness and violence that blight communities, particularly at night.

The first phase of LAAA saw a variety of interventions introduced to reduce street drinking, vulnerability and violence. These ranged from club hosts patrolling bars to offer help to those who are vulnerable, to mandatory safeguarding training for taxi drivers, increased trading standards activity on underage sales of alcohol, to a triage service for street drinkers, and even a non-alcoholic bar for teenagers.

The 33 new areas will be supported in developing and implementing their plans by specialist support managers. They will receive support and expertise in crime prevention, licensing and public health from the Home Office, Public

Health England, the Welsh government and Nightworks, a company that specialises in diversifying the night-time economy.

Sarah Hanratty, Interim Chief Executive for the Portman Group said:

We warmly welcome the second round of the LAAAs; and the opportunity to support local communities in reducing alcohol-related harm and creating safe and thriving night time economies.

Drinks producers and retailers have an important role to play and are committed to reducing the harms related to alcohol misuse through their support of the local alcohol partnership schemes; a range of initiatives that work to make local communities safer and create great places for people to live, work and socialise.

The programme will run for 2 years and LAAA areas will also be put in touch with mentors who have successfully tackled the issues that they face and will come together to problem solve and share best practice.

The 33 local alcohol action areas are:

- Barnsley
- Bedfordshire
- Camden
- Colchester
- Cornwall
- Derbyshire
- Doncaster
- Exeter
- Fareham
- Hastings
- Havering
- Hull
- Isle of Wight
- Islington
- Merton
- Northumberland
- Norwich
- Nottinghamshire
- Peterborough
- Shropshire
- Southwark
- Surrey
- Swansea
- Swindon
- Wakefield
- Wandsworth
- Westminster
- Weston-super-Mare
- Weymouth

- Wirral
 - Wisbech
 - Wolverhampton
 - Wrexham
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Shri Amulya Kumar Patnaik appointed as Commissioner of Police, Delhi

Shri Amulya Kumar Patnaik, IPS (AGMUT: 1985) has been appointed to the post of Commissioner of Police,

12th Raising Day Celebration of National Disaster Response Force to be held tomorrow

The 12th Raising Day celebration of National Disaster Response Force is going to be held here tomorrow.

Government Constitutes Task Force for preparing Action Plan for Next three Olympic Games: Vijay Goel

Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Vijay Goel here today said that the Prime Minister Shri Narendra