Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

AGENDA

Meeting:	Children's Select Committee
Place:	Kennet Room - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN
Date:	Tuesday 27 January 2015
Time:	<u>10.30 am</u>

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Roger Bishton, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 713035 or email roger.bishton@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

<u>Pre-meeting information briefing</u>
There will be a briefing session starting at 9.30am, immediately before the meeting. Its focus will be on **Schools and the Local Authority** and will cover:

- What role the LA now has in schools
- What degree of influence the LA can exert and how it does so
- What services the LA provides for schools
- The governance arrangements of different school designations
- The role of school governors and how they are supported to undertake it

Membership:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman)	Cllr Christine Crisp
Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice Chairman)	Cllr Mary Champion
Cllr Sue Evans	Cllr Bill Moss
Cllr Pat Aves	Cllr Helen Osborn
Cllr Mary Douglas	Cllr Ricky Rogers
Cllr Chris Hurst	Cllr Philip Whalley
Cllr Simon Jacobs	

Substitutes:

Cllr Dennis Drewett	Cllr Stewart Dobson
Cllr Andrew Davis	Cllr Chuck Berry
Cllr Terry Chivers	Cllr James Sheppard
Cllr Dr Helena McKeown	Cllr Trevor Carbin
Cllr Jeff Osborn	Cllr Peter Edge
Cllr John Walsh	Cllr Ian Thorn

Non-Elected Voting Members:

Dr Mike Thompson	Clifton Diocesan RC Representative
Rev Alice Kemp	Parent Governor Representative (SEN)
Mr Ken Brough	Parent Governor Representative (Primary)
Mrs Lynne Swainston	Bristol Diocesan Church of England Representative

Non-Elected Non-Voting Members:

Mr John Hawkins	School Teacher Representative
Miss Sarah Busby	Secondary Schools Headteacher Representative
Miss Tracy Cornelius	Primary Schools Headteacher Representative
Ms Amanda Burnside	Further Education Representative

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PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1   **Apologies**

2   **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** *(Pages 1 - 6)*

To approve and sign the minutes of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 9 December 2014

3   **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4   **Chairman's Announcements**

5   **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named above for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution. Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named above (acting on behalf of the Corporate Director) no later than **5pm** on **Tuesday 20 January 2015**. Please contact the officer named on the first page of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6   **Final Report of the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group** *(Pages 7 - 20)*

A report is attached presenting the conclusions and recommendations of the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group for endorsement.

Cllr Phillip Whalley, Chairman of the task group, will provide a verbal introduction.

7   **Final Report of the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Task Group** *(Pages 21 - 46)*

To present the conclusions and recommendations of the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group for endorsement.

Rev Alice Kemp, Chairman of the task group, will provide a verbal introduction.

8   **Report of the Early Help Strategy Task Group**

A report is attached presenting the findings of the Early Help Strategy Task Group.

The Task Group was initially asked to look at how the Children's Select Committee could measure the effectiveness of the Early Help Strategy and whether it is achieving its objectives. It brought a report presenting its recommendations back to Committee in October 2014.

In December 2014 the committee received a report presenting the Early Help Strategy Implementation Scorecard. The task group were asked to reconvene to consider whether this reflected the task group's initial recommendations regarding how the committee could measure the Strategy's effectiveness. The task group met to consider this on 19 January 2015 and its report will follow.

9   **Task Group Update** *(Pages 47 - 56)*

A report by the Senior Scrutiny Officer providing an update on Task Group Activity since the last meeting is attached.

10   **Forward Work Programme** *(Pages 57 - 58)*

The Committee is asked to note the attached document showing the relevant items from the overview and scrutiny forward work programme.

11   **Coalition Changes - Update November 2014 to January 2015** *(Pages 59 - 62)*

A report by Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director, on developments relating to children's services arising from the Coalition Government is attached.

12   **Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday 24 March 2015, in the Kennet Room at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

13   **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter

of urgency.

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<u>PART II</u>

Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

None

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CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice Chairman), Dr M Thompson, Rev Alice Kemp, Mr J Hawkins, Cllr Sue Evans, Cllr Mary Douglas, Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cllr Christine Crisp, Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Helen Osborn, Mr Ken Brough and Miss Sarah Busby

Also Present:

Cllr Alan MacRae, Cllr Laura Mayes and Cllr Richard Gamble

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64   **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Amanda Burnside, Miss Tracy Cornelius, Cllr Chris Hurst, Cllr Ricky Rogers and Cllr Philip Whalley.

65   **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 October 2014.

66   **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

67   **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements made at the meeting.

68   **Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present or councillors' questions.

69   **Early Help Strategy 2014 - 2017 - Implementation Scorecard**

Consideration was given to a report by Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director which reminded Members that at its last meeting the Committee received the final report of the Early Help Strategy Task Group which made recommendations on how the Committee could effectively monitor delivery of the Early Help Strategy. The Committee requested that an implementation scorecard be prepared and brought back to this Committee for approval.

The Committee was reminded that the Early Help Strategy Task Group had recognised the importance of obtaining targeted information to monitor the Strategy's implementation. An Early Help Improvement Plan had been developed and approved which contained the key deliverables and milestones required in order to meet the objectives of the Strategy.

In addition to the Improvement Plan, an Early Help Dataset had been developed to gauge the impact delivery of the Plan was having on outcomes for children and young people. The Dataset was comprised of the following two elements:-

- Part 1 – Outcomes Scorecard
- Part 2 – Early Help Dataset

It was noted that there was no national dataset or benchmarks for early help and it was therefore necessary to develop and build on locally set benchmarks.

Although the Local Authority relationships with schools had been significantly changing in recent years, especially with the establishment of academies and free schools, the Local Authority still retained a key role in the attainment of all young people, and in particular the vulnerable. If the Local Authority was concerned about the standard of education in any school, then there would be discussions with that particular school to explore ways of overcoming the problems. It was noted that the Department for Education had fairly recently set up a group of regional school commissioners to maintain an oversight into the standard of education in academies.

After further discussion,

Resolved:

To refer the Early Help Dataset provided to the Early Help Strategy Task Group to consider whether the dataset is a suitable mechanism for monitoring delivery of the Early Help Strategy and whether it meets the Task Group's recommendations.

70   **Provision for Excluded Secondary Pupils following the National Secondary Exclusion Trial (SET) - update**

The Select Committee received a report by Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director, which provided an update on Wiltshire's participation in the three year National Secondary Exclusion Trial ((SET) and the development of provision for those pupils permanently excluded or at risk of permanent exclusion since the closure of the Young Peoples' Support Service (YPSS).

The Committee was reminded that in July 2011 Wiltshire accepted the Department for Education's invitation to take part in a national trial on permanent exclusion and alternative provision. The purpose was to pilot a new arrangement under which, if a secondary school permanently excluded a student, it would remain responsible for making educational provision for the student.

Following on from this national trial, in May 2012 a Power To Innovate Order was approved by Parliament which transferred the responsibility of the Local Authority to provide suitable education for permanently excluded students to those secondary schools agreeing to take part in the trial. 28 of Wiltshire's 29 secondary schools had agreed to take part and Wiltshire thereupon decided to close the Pupil Referral Units and YPSS, devolving the budget to the secondary schools, this being fully implemented by July 2013.

Unfortunately, from a national perspective this trial had not proved to be successful and came to an end in June 2014 but the responsibility for permanently excluded students remained with the Local Authorities.

In October 2013 the Select Committee agreed that the Council would continue to devolve funding to schools and replace the Power To Innovate with a service level agreement on a trial basis through which secondary schools agreed to provide suitable education for those students permanently excluded or at risk of permanent exclusion. Although Wiltshire Council would not be directly providing education it would ensure the quality of delivery through a robust monitoring process. This would consist of the regular collection of data about individual students, the random sampling of provision through visits, observations and regular dialogue carried out by the Local Authority's attendance at the In Year Fair Access Panels where most of the students were discussed and their progress reviewed.

Initial evidence indicated that these arrangements were working well but a representative group of headteachers had been set up to review the progress of this trial and discuss options to put in place once it ended. They were unanimously in favour of continuing existing arrangements with a service level agreement which would support the adoption of the Select Committee's agreed approach.

After some discussion,

<u>Resolved</u>:

1. **To note and welcome the updated report and arrangements for continuing the model of devolving funding to secondary schools beyond the end of the exclusion trial in 2014 and to pass on congratulations to all involved in the project.**

2. **To receive a report in March 2015 providing updated data relating to provision for Excluded Secondary Pupils and further detail on the council's arrangements for monitoring this provision.**

3. **To receive a further report on this topic in September 2015 and annually thereafter.**

71 **Task Group Update**

The Select Committee received an update on the activity of the following Task Groups:-

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Task Group
- Educational for 16-19s Task Group
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group
- Schools and the Local Authority Task Group
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Task Group

Resolved:

1. **To note the update on task group activity provided.**

2. **To note that a meeting with the executive and officers to discuss the scope of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Task Group has now been arranged for 22 January 2015; non-executive members will now be invited to express an interest in participating; and an update on progress will be brought to the next meeting.**

72 **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee received a document showing the relevant items from the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the Forward Work Programme for this Committee.

73 **Coalition Changes - Update from Department for Education**

The Committee received an update from Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director, on developments relating to children's services arising from the Coalition Government as follows:-

- Early years pupil premium
- Universal infant free school meals
- Keeping children safe in education
- Changes to the school admissions code
- School attendance
- Handling strike action in schools
- Preventing bullying
- National Curriculum Reform: KS4 science
- 16 to 19 headline measures
- Academies update
- Looked-after children: improving permanence
- Children Act 1989: transition to adulthood for care leavers
- Care leaver strategy
- State of the Nation Report 2014

Resolved:

1. **To note the update provided.**

2. **To receive an information briefing on the council's approach to tackling bullying at schools and colleges around the date of Anti-Bullying Week in 2015.**

74 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next scheduled meeting is due to be held on Tuesday 27 January 2015, in the Kennet Room at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

75 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.25 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Roger Bishton, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 713035, e-mail roger.bishton@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

27 January 2015

Final Report of the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group

Purpose

1. To present the conclusions and recommendations of the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group for endorsement.

Background

2. In October 2013 the Children's Select Committee discussed its work priorities for 2013-17 and agreed that schools should remain a key part of the Overview and Scrutiny forward work programme. It was agreed that the Coalition Government's reforms to the education system in recent years, particularly the academies programme, had significantly changed the relationship between local authorities and schools and that Wiltshire's response to this was an important area for investigation. This was later approved by the O&S Management Committee.

3. This also reflected aspirations in the council's Business Plan 2013-17:

   • Key Action #4. [We will] provide opportunities for every child and young person to improve their attainment and skills so they can achieve their full potential.

   • Outcome #4: Wiltshire has inclusive communities where everyone can achieve their potential.

   • Everyone has the opportunity of a high-quality education which gives them the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need to succeed.

   • There is a much narrower achievement and aspiration 'gap' for children and young people from vulnerable groups.

   • We will improve the attainment and achievement of all children and young people – we will promote school improvement, support the Wiltshire Learning Trust and work closely with private, voluntary and independent sector partners.

Terms of Reference

4. Following committee's decision that the council's changing relationship with schools should be a work priority, the committee asked the task group to consider where it could add most value. The task group undertook a scoping exercise with executive members and officers, considering a number of potential areas.

5. The task group concluded that our schools are the primary route through which the council can influence the attainment of Wiltshire children on a daily basis. It was therefore agreed that it should investigate how the council continues to provide the most appropriate services and support to Wiltshire schools in order to promote excellence and fulfil its statutory duties. The agreed terms of reference were:

   1. **To explore how the council promotes excellence and fulfils its statutory duties to children and young people in Wiltshire's schools.**

   2. **To explore whether the education services offered by the council meet the needs of schools and students, and if not, how they could be developed to help improve outcomes.**

Methodology

6. The task group comprised the following membership:

Cllr Philip Whalley	Task Group Chairman
Mr Ken Brough	Primary Parent Governor Representative on Children's Select Committee
Mr John Hawkins	Teacher representative on Children's Select Committee
Cllr Jon Hubbard	
Cllr Gordon King	

   NB. The task group's membership initially included Cllr Sheila Parker and Cllr Horace Prickett, who then took up executive positions and become ineligible for scrutiny activities. The task group is grateful for their contribution.

7. The Task Group met on nine occasions and received written and/or verbal evidence from the following witnesses:

Wiltshire Council witnesses

- Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
- Cllr Richard Gamble, Portfolio Holder for Schools, Skills and Youth
- Julia Cramp, Associate Director (joint with CCG) Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness
- Dave Clarke, Interim Head of School Effectiveness
- Fred Angus, Interim Manager of Learning, Teaching and Partnerships
- Jayne Hartnell, Interim Manager, Risk Assessment – School Effectiveness

Other Witnesses

- Corsham Primary School
- Hardenhuish School, Chippenham
- Melksham Oak School
- St Georges Primary School, Melksham
- The Manor School, Melksham
- Winterslow Primary School
- White Horse Education Partnership (WHEP)

The task group is grateful to all witnesses for giving their time to contribute to this scrutiny review.

Other evidence gathering

8.   Three members attended The Academies Show 2014 in London, an annual conference and trade event that addresses current issues faced by the non-maintained schools sector.

9.   Three members also attended an LGiU event, 'Strengthening the role of Councils and Councillors in the Local School System', held in Norwich in November 2014.

10.   The task group commissioned an online survey of all Wiltshire schools that ran for 4 weeks and received 68 responses (28.9% of all Wiltshire schools). The survey asked head teachers, assistant/deputy heads and business managers, which services it presently used, the likelihood of them continuing to use those services, and the reasons for this. It also asked schools about their intentions regarding future governance arrangements and also for their views on their relationship with the council. The task group was supported in analysing the results by the council's Knowledge Management team.

Local and national educational landscape

11.   Wiltshire has 235 schools, of which 200 are primary, 29 secondary schools and 6 special schools (as at September 2014).

12.   Approximately two thirds of Wiltshire primary schools are either Voluntary Aided or Voluntary Controlled. The majority of Wiltshire secondary schools are now academies (20 of 29) and the number of primary academies is growing. Overall, 22% of Wiltshire schools are academies.

13.   Academy schools are state funded schools that are directly funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and independent of direct control by the local authority. They are self-governing and are constituted as charitable trusts. They may receive additional support from personal or corporate sponsors. They must meet the same National Curriculum core subject requirements as other state schools and are subject to inspection by Ofsted. The following are all types of academy:

      Sponsored academy: A formerly maintained school that has been transformed to academy status as part of a government intervention strategy. They are run

by a Government-approved sponsor and are sometimes referred to as "traditional academies".

Converter academy: A formerly maintained school that has voluntarily converted to academy status. It is not necessary for a converter academy to have a sponsor.

Free school: An academy established via the Free School programme

14. An academy trust that operates more than one academy is known as an Academy Chain, although sometimes the terms Academy Group or Academy Federation are used instead. An Academy Chain is a group of schools working together under a shared academy structure that is either an Umbrella Trust or a Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

15. MATs are presently the Government's preferred academisation strategy. A MAT may take the form of a cluster of primary schools under the governance of a single trust or board, or a larger secondary school forming a MAT with its local feeder primary schools. This latter model, for example, has now been agreed in the Melksham area. MATs have responsibility for the performance of all the academies within the group, and the board of directors oversees the operation of the individual schools. However, the MAT can delegate some of its powers to governing bodies of individual academies, though it remains legally responsible for standards across the chain. Any group of schools applying to become a MAT must have at least one member judged as 'outstanding' or 'good', with performance in-line with national standards. It has been said that MAT's will in effect become "mini local authorities" that are increasingly self-sufficient in terms of providing support and services internally, using the economies of scale provided by several schools pooling resources and contracting jointly.

16. The Education White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching' 2010 recognised that 'the primary responsibility for improvement lies with schools'. However the White Paper and the subsequent Education Bill 2011 also recognised that there is a significant strategic role for local authorities. This role is set out under three headings:

- Promote educational excellence
- Ensure fair access to services
- Act as champion for vulnerable children and young people

17. In addition, the local authority retains specific duties related to school improvement under the Education Act 1996 (EA) and the Education and Inspection Act 2006 (E&IA). These include a general responsibility to maintain schools (EA 1996, Section 13) and a duty to use this responsibility to promote high standards (EA 1996, Section 13A). In order to carry out these duties, the LA retains powers to identify and intervene in schools causing concern (E&IA 2006). These powers are set out in the Statutory Guidance for Schools Causing Concern 2008, 2012 and most recently 2014.

18. An additional factor is the recent introduction of Regional Schools Commissioners, who are responsible for making important decisions about the academies and free schools in their area on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education. This includes:

- monitoring the performance of the academies in their area
- taking action when an academy is underperforming
- deciding on the creation of new academies
- approving changes to open academies, including:
    - changes to age ranges
    - mergers between academies
    - changes to multi-academy trust arrangements

The compatibility of the Regional Schools Commissioner role with the traditional role of the local authority is still evolving.

Evidence

The task group's survey of Wiltshire schools

19. The task group commissioned an online survey of all Wiltshire schools that ran for 4 weeks and received 68 responses. In drawing conclusions from the survey results the following should be noted:

- Although 29% of Wiltshire schools responded to the survey, their responses may not be representative of the opinions of the Wiltshire school population as a whole. It is possible that respondents have a closer relationship with the council than the school population overall, which may have influenced the sense of loyalty suggested by respondents' future intentions regarding council service take-up. The responses do, however, broadly reflect the cross-section of school designations.
- Only 12 (18%) respondents were academies, out of 50 academies in Wiltshire at present. Only 10 of these responded to the detailed questions regarding future take-up of services.
- 60 respondents were primary schools (30% of the primary school total) and 8 were secondary (27% of the secondary school total).

The council's statutory duties to schools

20. It was agreed that understanding the council's approximately 150 statutory duties and how they are fulfilled was an important first step for the review. Members asked officers to produce a document presenting these duties, describing:

- what are they?
- how do we meet them?
- who is responsible for meeting them?
- do we have to provide them for all schools?
- A RAG-rating of how well we are delivering each duty at present

21.   Officers were not aware of other local authorities who had attempted to compile such a document; a significant task due to the number and range of duties and the various teams involved in their delivery. Ultimately it was decided that the document was not an effective use of officer time and it was not completed. However, the task group has seen no evidence to suggest that the council is failing to meet any of its statutory duties.

22.   It was reported that when Ofsted inspects council arrangements for school improvement they evaluate them across nine themes set out in the inspection framework. These include effectiveness of leadership, clarity and transparency of policy and strategy, and how clearly the local authority has defined its roles. Councils are not inspected on the direct basis of fulfilling their statutory duties. It was also noted that some of the duties are clearly broad and important while others are 'technicalities'.

Services and support for schools

23.   The council's traded services to maintained schools are delivered through 'Right Choice for your school' and its traded services to academies through the Wiltshire Learning Trust. These are made up of a core team comprising local authority advisers, ex-head teachers, experienced senior leaders, classroom practitioners and subject specialists. The relevant team within the council is now called School Effectiveness, which includes School Performance, Strategic Planning, Business Support and Learning, Teaching and Partnerships.

24.   The council also offers other services to schools, including:

   - Health & Safety Service
   - Safeguarding and Child Protection
   - Accounting and Budget Support
   - Property Services
   - HR Advisory and Recruitment Service, Payroll and HR Administration

25.   Almost all Wiltshire schools buy at least one service from the council.

26.   The council has to provide some services to schools by statute, but not necessarily free of charge. Some services are provided entirely for free to maintained schools, but at a charge to non-maintained schools.

27.   The task group notes the existence of the Schools Forum School Services Working Group, has the following terms of reference (2005):

   a) Consider and agree services to be provided by Wiltshire County Council for and with schools.
   b) Consult with schools on the provision of these services
   c) Produce a prospectus of these services on an annual basis in The right choice for your school
   d) Monitor the quality and value for money of services, including those provided via central contracts
   e) Maintain a strategic overview of the future provision of services

f) Liaise, as appropriate, with other Council departments, working groups, advisory and scrutiny panels, and with other partners on all aspects of service provision, monitoring/review and procurement

g) Report annually to Schools Forum and the Education Advisory Panel on its work.

It was noted that the Schools Services Board has met less frequently since the restructuring of children's services in 2013 and that many of the Board's roles tie in with the remit of the proposed director-led group proposed under Recommendation 1.

Present and future take-up of schools services

28. A key objective for the online survey of Wiltshire schools was to establish their intentions regarding future take-up of the council's traded services. The survey asked schools to indicate if they used certain services and how likely it was that they would continue to do so in the future. If they answered "No", they were asked to indicate their reason. The most common responses were that:

- The school did not require the service. This was especially so for specialist services such as Traveller Education Service, Ethnic Minority Achievement Service or Head teacher mentoring;
- The school provided their own in-house service.

29. Certain services, for example HR and Occupational Health, were more likely to be provided by alternative providers than others. This may reflect the level of competition in those markets rather than the council's offer.

30. Overall the results suggest that, regardless of school designation, if the school has already used a service then it is highly likely that it will continue to use the service in future. The overall take-up of services (for those who responded) was 78% and of the schools who presently take up services, over 90% stated that they are fairly or very likely to continue using these services in future. However the take-up of services from the academies that responded was noticeably lower at 52%.

31. Evidence from the task group's interviews with schools and some survey responses suggests that we have two distinct but parallel patterns of behaviour: There is considerable customer loyalty and a continued intention to use council services, particularly amongst maintained schools. However, academies are more willing to either provide their own services or use providers other than the council.

32. This needs to be considered alongside several factors:

- On 1 January 2015, there were 57 academies of which 35 are primary schools, 20 secondary schools and 2 are special schools.

- In our survey of schools it was interesting to note that:

- 32 of 68 respondents (47%) had considered becoming an academy and decided against it;
- 25 of 68 respondents (37%) either were already academies or were considering becoming one.

- The number of alternative providers of services to schools is expanding and competition with the council will increase as the market expands.

Marketing schools services

33. Local authorities have responded in different ways to the academies programme in terms of the suite of services retained and how energetically they market them to schools. It was reported that Somerset County Council provide few schools services itself and instead tends to commission them from other providers. Staffordshire Council continue to provide a range of schools services, but do so through a public-private partnership between the local authority and Capita. Other councils such as Hertfordshire and Gloucestershire are similar to Wiltshire in continuing to directly provide a full range of services.

34. The task group has seen evidence that some other local authorities, such as Hampshire and Kent, take a proactive, business-oriented approach in the marketing of their schools services. This includes producing glossy brochures, customer contact management systems and proactively following up lost customers. Some of the local authorities spoken to believe that this has enabled them to keep take-up high and continue to provide a wide range of services.

35. 52% of survey respondents, regardless of school designation, agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "The council needs to be more proactive in marketing the services it offers to schools."

Customer service

36. The survey results and interviews with schools pointed to concerns regarding the customer support provided by the council 'around' its services to schools. A particular issue was response times, with only 20% of academy respondents and 52% of other respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that, "In general the council responds to enquiries and requests promptly". Around 70% of academy respondents and 53% of other respondents agreed or strongly agreed that, "The council doesn't always appreciate when schools are the council's customers and that in many cases schools can buy services from a range of providers.

37. When asked what one thing they would like to see the council do to improve the education of Wiltshire's young people, schools' responses included requests for:

- More staff to answer queries, discuss problems and to know who to contact;

- Faster responses to requests, even if to inform the school that the request will take time to action;
- A reception desk to advise to whom enquiries should be directed;
- Less onus on schools to chase returned phone calls.

Quality of schools services

38. 68% of respondents to the survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "The services and advice provided by the council have reduced in quality in recent years". However, around 70% of academies and 86% of all other schools agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "In general we have a good relationship with the council".

39. As central government funding and local authority powers in relation to schools have reduced in recent years, the council has reduced the numbers of staff working in its education departments. Some schools viewed this as having caused a reduction in service quality in recent years.

40. There were also positive comments about the support and services the council provides and an acknowledgement that many of the difficulties experienced are due to the decreased resources available to both schools and the council.

41. Specific concerns were raised about the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Service and Children's Social Care. These focused on:

- Schools receiving conflicting information and requests about SEND matters from different council teams
- Issues with embedding the new 'My Plan' paperwork for students with SEND
- Slow response times to queries relating to supporting students with SEND

- General concern about the children's social care system
- Children's social workers changing too regularly, leading to disrupted service

Pupil attainment and promoting excellence

42. The task group notes that the council recently consulted on a new School Improvement Strategy, which is being implemented in the current academic year. The Children's Select Committee has been asked to undertake a piece of work on the outcomes of this Strategy in the summer.

Conclusions

The council's statutory duties to schools

43. The time required to produce the statutory duties document requested under paragraph 20 points to the number and range of the council's duties to schools and the spread of these across many different teams. This fragmentation may have increased in 2013 following the dividing of school responsibilities across

two new directorates: Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness, and Operational Children's Services.

44. The task group understands that the time investment required to produce the requested document made impractical. However, it not being completed meant that the task group was unable to establish the extent to which the council is meeting its statutory duties to schools (although there is no evidence that it is not doing so).

45. The task group believe that there should be a mechanism through which it is ensured that the council is meeting its statutory duties to schools. Over time the task group hopes that this could form part of the Children Select Committee's 'State of Education in Wiltshire' report proposed under Recommendation 1.

46. The task group concludes that action is required to

   a) Ensure there is complete clarity around who in the council is doing what in relation to schools;

   b) Enable strategic oversight of the council's services to, and relationship with, schools, regardless of which directorate they sit within.

   (Recommendations 2, 3 and 4)

Present and future take-up of schools services

47. The results of the survey and interviews with schools suggest that maintained schools show considerable customer loyalty to the council. Academy schools, particularly those that are in MATs, are more willing to provide their own services or use providers other than the council.

48. 40% (27) of survey respondents were either already academies or were actively considering becoming, or are in the process of becoming, an academy. The DfE have given strong indications that current policy is that the number of MATs will increase in the coming years.

49. These factors suggest that the speed and nature of the ongoing academy programme will strongly influence the future take-up of council services by schools. The task group concludes that action is required to ensure that the council's offer to schools remains appropriate to their needs and competitive in a growing marketplace (Recommendations 2, 3 and 4).

50. The task group has not attempted to draw conclusions about the likely future take-up of **individual** services based on the survey results. Discussions with officers suggest that there are likely to be complex factors behind different results, meaning that they cannot be taken at face value and more careful analysis is required. Instead the task group recommends that the results are considered by the relevant officers and executive members as part of the strategic review of the school services proposed under Recommendation 4.

<u>Marketing schools services</u>

51. The task group was impressed by the business oriented approach taken by some local authorities in marketing and trading their services to schools. It concludes that the council could maximise the future take-up of its schools services by ensuring they are proactively marketed as a single, cohesive offer. This could include:

- An attractively presented brochure and website that provide information on the full suite of the council's schools services;
- A customer contact management system to ensure schools receive a good customer experience;
- When a school stops using a council service, proactively investigating the reasons behind this.

(Recommendation 5)

<u>Customer service</u>

52. The results of the survey and interviews suggest the perception of a lack of cohesion between some council teams working with schools. One school commented that it is left to the school to 'join up' different services, while others reflected that they received conflicting advice from different departments.

53. The dissatisfaction from some schools regarding the level of customer support they receive is a concern. The issues seem to relate to:

- Response times to enquiries
- Inconsistent advice or information being given
- A lack of clarity over which team or officer is the appropriate contact

54. For some schools, particularly academies, these issues contribute to a feeling that the council is still adapting to a new landscape in which schools are (in some cases) customers and can choose from a range of service providers.

55. If the council is to maintain or improve the customer loyalty demonstrated in the survey then it must not only offer high quality services but a high standard of customer service overall. This includes a commitment to meeting reasonable response times, and to ensuring schools can access the people or information they need easily. (Recommendations 6 and 7)

56. Norfolk County Council has redefined its relationship with schools, emphasising that they are **partners** rather than customers. The task group strongly agrees with this approach, though recognises that successfully marketing and trading the council's services to schools requires more of a service provider > customer relationship.

<u>Quality of services to schools</u>

57. The task group noted the concerns raised regarding children's social care and SEND services. It recognises that the nature and volume of the council's interaction with schools on these matters could explain some of the negative comments. It concludes that the comments require further analysis before drawing conclusions and making recommendations. (Recommendation 8)

58. A reduction in council staff working in education was unavoidable given reductions in local authority funding and powers in recent years. The reductions may have had an impact on provision, although 67% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that "Council staff are experienced and knowledgeable (though only 40% of academy respondents agreed or strongly agreed). However, 68% of respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that the quality of service and advice provided by the council had declined in recent years. It is acknowledged that a reduction in staffing levels could potentially create the **perception** of a reduction in quality.

59. The task group understands that a number of experienced ex-council staff now trade their services to schools as consultants and is concerned about the potential impact of losing further experienced and knowledgeable staff. The importance of maintaining the required levels of officer experience and knowledge within the council must be recognised. (Recommendation 9)

Schools' relationship with the council

60. Around 70% of academies and 86% of all other schools who responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "In general we have a good relationship with the council". The task group welcomes this result and congratulates the council on its achievement. However, when interviewed by the task group a number of schools reported that the council has not fully adjusted to its reduced role and schools' increased autonomy. Some felt that the council still tries to tell schools what to do and tends to forget that schools are no longer a captive market. One head teacher suggested that there had been progress in recent years, describing the council's relationship with schools as having moved from parent>child to parent>adolescent, and it now needs to shift to adult>adult.

Pupil attainment and promoting excellence

61. The task group firmly believes that despite recent changes in education policy the council retains a crucial role in school improvement and as we press for excellence this must be central to all the council's work with schools. It also notes that while the role of Regional Schools Commissioners includes responsibility for school improvement in academies, the council retains a role in measuring their attainment alongside that of maintained schools. (Recommendation 10)

Proposal

62. That the Children's Select Committee endorses the task group's report and refers it to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services for response.

Recommendations

The task group recommends that the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

1. **Provides an annual 'state of education' in Wiltshire report to the Children's Select Committee on how the council has fulfilled its statutory duties to schools and ensured that all children have received a good education. The first report should include the issues raised in the task group's report. The proposed annual report may not necessarily be a single document and could be a collection of reports provided across the year.**

2. **Recommends the creation of an overarching director-led group to take a holistic view of all aspects of the council's relationship with schools and the services and support it provides to them. This group should include a range of partners, such as those who currently participate in the Schools Forum's Schools Services Board. The group should meet regularly and monitor the quality and take-up of the council's schools services and the continued delivery of the council's statutory responsibilities.**

3. **Identifies an officer at associate director level who has <u>overall</u> responsibility for the council's relationship with schools and the all of the services it provides to them.**

4. **Undertakes a review of the services we should continue to offer to schools, that includes consideration of:**

   - **Which services the council provides effectively and are valued by schools;**
   - **Which services can be provided by the council in a financially sound way;**
   - **Which services are being provided effectively by other providers;**
   - **The customer loyalty demonstrated by the task group's survey of Wiltshire schools; and**
   - **The impact of the increasing number of academies and MATs, and the developing market place for school services.**

5. **Brings all of the services the council provides to schools into a single, cohesive offer that is proactively marketed in a business-oriented way.**

6. **Introduces service level agreements (including enquiry response times) across all council services delivered to schools and for their delivery to be monitored by the director-led group proposed under Recommendation 2.**

7. **Introduces a schools support desk and/or resource to deal with schools' enquiries and direct them to the appropriate point of contact, with the aim of:**

- **Improving response times to schools enquiries**
- **Improving the experience of schools when interacting with the council**
- **Improving the council's internal communications and processes**
- **Increasing the cohesion of the council's schools services.**

8. **Investigates the concerns raised by survey respondents regarding SEND and children's social care services, and identify what action will be, or has been taken, in the executive response.**

9. **Ensures that any future schools service reviews properly take into account the importance of maintaining required experience and knowledge within the organisation.**

The task group also recommends that:

10. **The Committee's planned scrutiny exercise evaluating the effectiveness of the Wiltshire School Improvement Strategy 2014/15 should include a comparison with other local authorities' approaches to school improvement and their effectiveness.**

Cllr Phillip Whalley, Chairman of the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group

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Appendices

None

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

27 January 2015

Final Report of the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Task Group

Purpose

1. To present the conclusions and recommendations of the SEND Task Group for endorsement.

Background

2. In October 2013 the Children's Select Committee discussed its work priorities for 2013-17 and agreed that children and young people with SEND should remain a key part of the Overview and Scrutiny forward work programme. This was later approved by the O&S Management Committee.

3. The Committee's continued focus on SEND also reflected aspirations in the Council's Business Plan 2013-17:

    *   "Young people with disabilities, learning difficulties or special educational needs find it easy to manage the transition into adulthood and access a wide range of supported, independent living and work opportunities."

    *   "There is a much narrower achievement or aspiration 'gap' for children and young people from vulnerable groups (such as looked after children, children who receive free school meals or have disabilities, special education needs or mental health issues)."

    *   "To protect those who are most vulnerable"

    *   "To provide opportunities for every child and young person to improve their attainment and skills so they can achieve their full potential"

Terms of Reference

4. Following a scoping exercise that included officers and executive members, the SEND Task Group was established with the following terms of reference:

    To explore how we can best prepare young people with SEND for Adulthood, including:

- Local education and training options, including managing transitions
- Planning for employment and supporting local employers to employ young people with SEND
- Providing housing options to support young people with SEND to live in their communities
- Developing communities that are inclusive, welcoming and supportive of young people with SEND.

The task group's four themes are derived from the Department for Education's Preparing for Adulthood programme, which is part of the delivery support for the Government's SEN and disability reforms.

Methodology

5. The Task Group had the following members:

Rev Alice Kemp (Task Group Chairman and SEN Parent Governor Representative on the Committee)
Mr Ken Brough (Primary Parent Governor Representative on the Committee)
Cllr Trevor Carbin
Cllr Mary Champion
Cllr Sue Evans
Cllr Simon Jacobs
Cllr John Walsh

6. The Task Group met on ten occasions and received evidence from the following witnesses:

Wiltshire Council witnesses

Cllr Richard Gamble	Portfolio Holder for Schools, Skills and Youth
Cllr Alan Macrae	Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding
Cllr Allison Bucknell	Portfolio Holder for Staffing Equalities, Customer Care and Systems Thinking
Julia Cramp	Associate Director (joint with CCG) Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness
Susan Tanner	Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning
Vicky Dunnicliffe	Partnership/Education Officer post-16
Mary Curran	Lead Commissioner, Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness
Nicholas Breakwell	Head of SEND Service
Lucy Murray-Brown	Head of Campuses and Operational Models
James Cawley	Associate Director, Adult Care Commissioning and Housing
Nicole Smith	Head of Strategic Housing
Janet Obrien	Head of New Housing
John Walker	Allocations and Options Manager, Housing
Zara Letts	Strategic HR Manager, HR Strategy and Policy
Christina Gregory	Research Policy Coordinator, Voice & Influence Team
Lucy Kitchener	Lead Commissioner – Joint Commissioning

Debbie Mauchline   Team Manager, Disabilities Provider Services, Employment and Community Skills

External Witnesses

Wiltshire College
Fairfield Farm College
Wiltshire People 1st
Parent members of South Wiltshire Mencap

7. The task group is extremely grateful to everyone who gave their time to contribute to this scrutiny review.

8. The task group regrets that it was unable to undertake wider consultation with young people with SEND and their parents. Attempts were made to arrange an information gathering session with parent members of the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) but unfortunately timescales did not permit this.

Foreword

9. The task group's ambitious terms of reference touch on many different services, organisations, legislative changes and local initiatives. The term SEND also encompasses a broad spectrum of different customer needs and challenges, the impact of which depends on age, family circumstances, learning difficulty and/or physical disability, healthcare needs, and other factors. Time has been needed in order to understand the challenges faced by young people with SEND and their families, and review the structures in place to support them. In some cases further work is needed by the committee, the executive and officers to investigate these further and make informed decisions about how they should be addressed.

10. Much of the task group's work has focused on the needs of those with more complex SEN, which represents approximately 1.7% of the population. It focussed less on the much broader issue of general SEN, which includes approximately 20% of the population. Reviewing provision for small customer groups with very specific needs raises difficult questions about the level of resource that should be allocated, especially in the current financial climate. The task group has tried to remain realistic and pragmatic in its thinking, but also believe it is important that young people with SEND and their families can rely on a certain level of offer from the council and its partners.

11. The task group has been impressed by the dedication of officers in the council's Joint Commissioning Team, including the Head of Commissioning and Joint Planning's contribution to the task group's work. In some areas, for example in its DCA Pathfinder work, Wiltshire is ahead of many other local authorities. The national SEND agenda means that many of the council's current SEND structures and processes are still embedding and good progress has been made. It is also acknowledged that some parents' experiences of public services when their child was young – services which have since changed and hopefully improved – may colour their perceptions of the council's offer, with

their young person now approaching adulthood. However, the review has highlighted two customer frustrations, encapsulated by two quotes from parents who met the task group:

1. "No-one tells you anything"

2. "You have to fight for everything"

12. The task group does not imagine that these frustrations represent all parents' experiences or are particular to Wiltshire, but hopes that the council is able to build on its Pathfinder success to lead the way in creatively providing a customer-led service for this group. There is a body of evidence demonstrating that the challenges associated with caring for a young person with SEND can place significant strains on a family, financially and in terms of their physical and mental wellbeing (not forgetting the joy that the young person will also bring). It is incumbent on the council to support those families so that they are not left behind when it comes to delivering the key outcomes in the council's Business Plan 2013-17 for all. The phrase, "Where everybody matters", is key for this customer group.

Summary of legislative and local context

13. In 2011 the Council started work on the Disabled Children and Adults (DCA) Review. The Review has three main aims:

- Make things better for the people who use the services and give them more choice in deciding what type of support they want
- Enable people to live the life they want
- Ensure the council works efficiently.

The Review also aimed to improve the transition process from child to adult services that was often described by families as 'falling off a cliff edge'.

14. During the same period, the government published the 'SEND green paper – Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability'. In it the Government made commitments that by 2014 they would implement a single assessment and introduce an offer of a personal budget for families with an Education, Heath and Care plan. In addition to this the green paper called for:

- Earlier intervention and prevention
- Giving control to parents
- Preparing young people for adulthood
- Services to work together for families
- Provide better support to vulnerable children
- Development of a 'local offer' that describes what support is available and by whom

15. In September 2011 the Council was chosen as one of 20 pathfinder authorities to trial aspects of the Green Paper. The DCA review and the requirements of

the Green Paper were brought together and managed as the DCA Pathfinder. It was subsequently recommended that an integrated service to support young people aged from 0-25 with SEND should be developed. The 0-25yrs SEND service has now introduced the following:

My Plans (Education, Health and Care Plans)
These replace SEN Statement, and other assessments and focus on a person-centred approach to outcomes based planning.

SEND lead workers
These are the main contact for the family and makes sure the right professionals are involved to support them.

Service operating principles

- Enabling and inclusive
- Person Centred
- Single assessment process and plan

- Timely services
- Excellent communication and information

Single management and aligned budgets

16. In July 2014 the Children's and Families Act 2014 received royal assent and the SEN Code of Practice: 0-25 Years was published. These made many of the things introduced under the council's DCA Pathfinder work a legal requirement from September 2014.

Theme 1: Education

Evidence

Post-16 learner placements

17. Because the task group's work is focused on how we prepare young people for adulthood, its work in this area has been focused on education for students with SEND aged 16 to 25.

18. When a young person with SEND is 16 they may leave full time education[1], continue in their school if it offers post-16 provision (i.e. school sixth form), seek a placement at a mainstream college or seek a placement at an Independent Specialist Provider (ISP). The SEND Lead Worker is key to helping identify an appropriate placement for the young person.

19. The majority of Wiltshire students with SEN leaving school after year 11 will access provision at either their school sixth form or at Wiltshire College. Further education and sixth form colleges have a statutory responsibility to meet the needs of young people with SEN and must secure the special

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[1] Though under Raising the Participation Age (RPA) they must remain in either education or training until they are 18.

educational provision a learner needs and to make reasonable adjustments to prevent them being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

20. Placements at independent providers are generally by exception, for example, if a mainstream sixth form or further education college is unable to meet a learner's complex education support needs. The decision on whether to fund a place offered at an ISP is considered against the learner's needs and the capacity to meet needs locally.

21. In recent years Wiltshire Council has placed fewer post-16 students with SEND at ISPs and an increasing number of students at Wiltshire College. In the 2013/14 academic year, there were 142 students with SEND at local mainstream colleges and 67 at ISPs. Officers have reported that this is likely to reduce significantly in the next academic year, when a high number of learners will have finished their courses, and fewer 'out of county' places will have been agreed during the previous year. This trend is likely to continue and the range of different ISPs at which Wiltshire post-16 students are placed will also be reduced. This is intended to make the council's task of quality-assuring its post-16 providers for students with SEND simpler and more robust, enable investment in developing local provision, and enable Wiltshire's young people to be educated and have their needs met in their communities.

22. Officers report that the shift away from ISPs towards Wiltshire College was informed by the views of young people and their parent carers as expressed in the feedback used to inform the DCA Pathfinder work. It also reflects the aspiration in the council's Business Plan 2013-17, "We will improve educational provision for disabled children in Wiltshire to enable them to stay in their local community". The approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- Young people should have access to an education based on person centred identified outcomes
- Provision should enable educational progression and preparation for adulthood
- All young people should have the same opportunity of access to appropriate education
- Successful transitions to adulthood should be planned and person-centred
- Wiltshire Council will support young people to remain in their local community

23. There is general agreement that some student's needs cannot be met locally, so there will always be some requirement for ISPs. There is also agreement that many students with some degree of SEND fare well in mainstream settings with an appropriate support package in place. The council's shift towards placing more students with SEND in mainstream settings is viewed as positive by some and negative by others and there are many facets to the debate:

24. **Development of independent living skills:** Some parents feel that ISPs' residential provision enables a better acquisition of independent living skills because the residential element provides an environment in which these can be taught and practiced in a structured way. Students may live together in a house or apartment on or near the ISP site and the learning of independent living skills within this environment forms part of the curriculum.

The counterargument is that when a young person finishes at an ISP that is not near their local community, they must transfer the skills they have learnt (such as catching the bus or visiting the shops) when they move back into their community. Students who are learning these skills at local colleges must transfer them to the home environment, which requires the support of parent carers in the process.

25. **Educational provision:** ISPs often have impressive facilities that are clearly designed around the needs of students with SEND. Mainstream colleges, which, whilst having some facilities designed specifically for students with SEND, most of their campuses will be designed with mainstream students in mind. Some people also believe that ISPs have historically possessed a greater degree of specialised teaching skills and a greater focus on the particular needs of their students. However, officers report the following:

   - Investments have been made in local colleges so that students with SEND can learn in the safety of specialised provision, as well as being offered the opportunity to access mainstream provision.
   - Having students with SEND working alongside those in mainstream provision creates an inclusive environment for the benefit of everyone (not just those with SEND).
   - Although ISPs' facilities and marketing ability makes them an attractive proposition to many parents and students, it was reported that learner outcomes for students with SEND have been shown to be better on average at Wiltshire College than at the ISPs, despite the lower average cost of the placement. However, the task group have not seen the data demonstrating this.
   - A higher percentage of students with SEND find employment after leaving Wiltshire College than those leaving ISPs. Again, the task group have not seen the data demonstrating this.
   - It has been difficult to obtain learner outcome and attainment data from some ISPs, making them difficult to quality-assure.

26. **Cost:** Officers report that an average placement for a student with SEND at Wiltshire College costs £10,000-20,000pa while the average cost of a student at an ISP is around £60,000-70,000pa, with some packages costing over £100,000pa. However, the task group understands that the figure for ISP costs only represents the cost of the education element and excludes the cost of housing etc, so the total figure is likely to be higher.

Officers reported that in some cases at the end of a two-year post-16 course an ISP will write to the council stating that the required learner outcomes

have not been achieved and therefore an extra year's provision is needed, potentially adding to the cost further.

27. **Community networks:** There is only one ISP within the county boundary (Fairfield Farm College); all other Wiltshire post-16 students attending an ISP are therefore travelling or residing outside of the county for their education. The council has emphasised the importance of maintaining young people's links within their communities, particular as people with SEND are at greater risk of becoming isolated in the community if they do not establish local networks. This is reflected in the council's Meeting Needs Locally agenda. Officers report that attending a college a significant distance from a student's home or community, particular if the placement is residential, can diminish their friendship groups, knowledge of the local area and links with local support services. People with complex are generally considered safer if they are able to stay within their local community due to the greater contact with family and friends. The case of Winterbourne View is referred to as an example of the potential risks of people with SEND living outside of their community.

28. **Integration:** The past decade has seen an increasing focus on keeping children with SEND of all ages learning alongside other students within a mainstream setting where possible. Some believe that this tends to inhibit the provision of an environment that is designed specifically around students' needs. Others believe that integrating students within a mainstream setting, whenever possible, is a better preparation for adult life in which people with and without SEND live and work alongside each other.

Wiltshire College

29. As the biggest provider of post-16 provision in Wiltshire, the task group visited Wiltshire College's Trowbridge and Salisbury campuses and would like to thank Kim Hunte and her team for receiving them. Members were given a tour of the facilities and spoke with students and the senior leadership team about recent developments to the College's provision for learners with SEND.

30. In recent years the College has invested significantly in its facilities for this learner group to enable young people with SEND to have the benefits of specialist provision within the context of local mainstream provision. Prior to this the College offered provision for students with moderate learning difficulties at three of its sites, and provision for students with profound and multiple disabilities and learning difficulties (PMLD) at Trowbridge only. However, infrastructure limited the College's ability to meet the needs of learners with complex health and personal care needs and with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

31. In 2013 the council approached Wiltshire College to work in partnership and submit bids for Demographic Capital Grants Funding to improve infrastructure and increase capacity at each of its campuses. The largest bid submitted was for the Salisbury campus due to the limited facilities in place

and the need to increase capacity in this area. This is likely to grow further with the increase in military families being deployed to the region from 2016/17 onwards. The award for the Salisbury campus was £756,000 and, when complete, will broaden the range of learners whose needs can be met to include learners with PMLD. Developments include improved access, facilities for learners' health and personal care needs and for developing independent living skills, including a kitchen and retail outlet.

32. The award for the Trowbridge campus was £529,200. This campus already had facilities for learners with complex needs and PMLD, but these required significant refurbishment and remodelling. The developments afforded by the grant funding are expected to increase capacity for learners with PMLD from 10 to 30 students and include a similar range of resources to that now available on the Salisbury site.

33. The award for the Lackham campus was £502,000. This has increased the size of foundation learners' accommodation by 100%, created a new sensory room and wet room, and is expected to double the capacity for LLDD learners.

Fairfield Farm College

34. As the only ISP in Wiltshire, the task group visited Fairfield Farm College (FFC) and would like to thank the Principal, Janet Kenward and her team for receiving them. Members were given a tour of the facilities and spoke with students and the senior leadership team about the college's provision. The FFC site is a 26 acre farm in the village of Dilton Marsh that includes a café and farm shop where students learn work skills to prepare them for work experience and post-college employment. Residential students live in college houses in the village.

35. FFC are understandably concerned by the decreasing allocation of learner placements at ISPs by Wiltshire Council. They are proud of the provision they offer and believe its residential element offers many young people with SEND the greatest opportunity for achieving positive learning and life outcomes. FFC acknowledges that residential provision often carries a greater upfront cost than day provision within a mainstream setting. However, they believe that the actual whole cost to the public purse of supporting a young person with SEND should be considered. FFC referred the task group to a 2011 report by the Nation Audit Office, which states:

"Placement decisions [made by local authorities] for students with higher-level needs are not consistently informed by a full analysis of comparable costs, creating risks to value for money. When deciding between independent specialist provision and general further education, comparable costs may include elements not funded by education budgets, but nonetheless paid for by the public purse. For example, while many local authorities consider a range of costs, less than a third responding to our survey have data on health and social care costs for students in mainstream settings. Our analysis suggests that taking all

comparable costs into account could influence whether local authorities choose mainstream or independent specialist provision."

(para 17) '<u>Oversight of special education for young people aged 16–25</u>'

36. FFC also expressed concerns about the placement allocation process as it is described on the council website, feeling that it contravenes Department for Education guidance by favouring mainstream colleges unduly. This matter was referred to officers for further investigation, who report that they are satisfied that the website is compliant but will keep the matter under review.

Conclusions

<u>SEND Lead Workers</u>

37. The role of the SEND Lead Worker is to:

   - Act as a single point of contact for the child/ family
   - Keep practitioners focused on the child/ family
   - Empower the child/young person/ family to make decisions and be heard
   - Coordinate actions agreed by practitioners and the family and avoid potential duplication

38. Some parents spoken to by the task group reported that they and the young person's school do not know who their SEND Lead Worker is. This leads to Lead Workers not being invited to reviews and, when they do attend, being unknown to the young person and their family. Lead Workers are central in supporting young people with SEND into their post-16 learning placement and a lack of meaningful involvement can result in this key aspect of the transition process failing to work effectively. The Lead Worker role is also crucial to other aspects of preparation for adulthood.

39. The task group recognises that the Lead Worker posts are relatively new and are still being developed. It also notes the responses already provided by officers regarding this issue: Schools have been given the necessary information and are responsible for inviting the relevant people to reviews. However, some parents clearly have concerns about the process this issue needs further investigation. (**Recommendation 1**).

<u>Mainstream colleges and Independent Specialist Providers (ISPs)</u>

40. The task group has heard persuasive arguments regarding the strengths and weaknesses of mainstream colleges and ISPs in terms of achieving positive life outcomes for young people with SEND. However, the task group's role is to offer a 'lay perspective' and it cannot conclude whether one model is inherently superior to the other and in what circumstances. Its role is to ensure that the council has used a sound process and evidence base in deciding its direction, which in effect has been to significantly increase the

proportion of post-16 students with SEND being placed at Wiltshire College. (**Recommendation 2**).

41. The task group was impressed by its visits to both Wiltshire College and Fairfield Farm College:

42. The capital investment Wiltshire College has made into improving its facilities for learners with SEND was evident on both of the campuses visited. The College showed a clear sense of direction in recognising past issues and the reputational challenges now faced, and in supporting a SEND student cohort that has increased dramatically in recent years.

43. Fairfield Farm College's grounds and facilities are immediately impressive and the College appears to offer a supportive environment and broad learning experience, afforded by the College's on-site farm, café and automobile workshop. The parents of young people with SEND could not fail to be impressed and reassured by FFC's learning environment and the sense of wraparound support offered.

44. Again, these are lay observations and the task group cannot assess the actual quality of provision offered by either provider. It is the task group's role to ensure that the council has appropriate quality assurance measures in place to ensure that Wiltshire students with SEND are placed appropriately. (**Recommendation 3**).

45. Wiltshire College's most recent Ofsted inspection report (April 2014) was rated overall as 'Needs Improvement'. However, supporting vulnerable students and those with additional learning needs was listed as a strength, which the task group commends:

    "Around one fifth of full-time students receive additional learning support and they achieve considerably better than their peers. Vulnerable students, such as those in care and students with complex learning needs, achieve very well."

46. This is in contrast to the perceptions reported by some parents from the Salisbury area. Some are evidently concerned at the prospect of their young person attending Wiltshire College, rather than the ISP that they may have expected them to attend in previous years. These concerns may or may not reflect actual issues with quality of provision, but the task group is also aware that reputational legacy issues remain in regards to the College's provision for students with SEND, particularly in Salisbury. These negative perceptions can be challenging to overcome and the task group was pleased to hear the College and the council acknowledge that there is work to do in this area. (**Recommendation 4**).

47. The task group acknowledges the financial climate in which post-16 learner placement decisions are now being made. It is difficult to assess the relative differences in weighting given to financial constraints, and to the placement that best meets the needs of the young person. However, the task group

accepts that the shift towards a greater use of mainstream post-16 provision is unlikely to be reversed. The priority must be that the funding the council does have is allocated in a fair way that is based on matching the needs of the young person with the provider.

48.	There is a perception amongst some that parents with the time, expertise and resources to 'fight their corner' have a much greater chance of success in securing their preferred placement than those who do not. Parent carers who are unhappy with a decision regarding their young person with SEND can seek mediation and/or take their complaint to an independent tribunal. But the task group did not find a full explanation of the mediation or tribunal process on the Local Offer website. SEND Lead Workers are central to supporting the young person and family through the placement process, so the concerns raised under paragraph 38 are relevant here too. (**Recommendation 5**)

49.	The task group's evidence gathering has demonstrated that being the parent carer of young person with SEND involves many challenges and can be exhausting at times. Some parents' preference for a residential post-16 placement for their young person, rather than a non-residential college, may partly be due to them being exhausted by the demands of caring for the young person up to the age of 16. This highlights the importance that good support services, particularly respite care, are available to parent carers so that they do not reach 'breaking point' (see Theme 3: Housing).

Theme 2: Employment

Evidence

50.	The SEND Code of Practice states that the vast majority of young people with SEND are capable of sustainable paid employment with the right preparation and support. The Code requires all professionals working with them to share that presumption. The National Audit Office report, 'Oversight of special education for young people aged 16-25', published in November 2011, estimates that supporting one person with a learning disability into employment could, in addition to improving their independence and self-esteem, increase that person's income by between 55 and 95 per cent.

Supported Internships

51.	The Code of Practice states that supported internships are one of the most effective ways of preparing young people with SEND for employment. Supported internships are a structured study programme based primarily at an employer. They enable young people aged 16-24 with SEND to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need through learning in the workplace. Supported internships are unpaid but support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. Alongside their time at the employer, young people complete a personalised study programme.

52. A Supported Internships scheme is currently being piloted by the council's Children's Commissioning Team and the Wiltshire Employment Support Team (WEST) to help young people with SEND find paid employment. In September 2014 eight young people (aged 18-24) from Wiltshire were supported under the project specifically designed for young people with complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The young people attend a three day study programme based at County Hall, Trowbridge, and in January 2015 two twelve-week work experience placements commenced.

53. Officers report that the project received approximately 15 applications in its first year. It is hoped that the scheme can be expanded in subsequent years once it has embedded and people had confidence in the outcomes it can deliver. Once these have been demonstrated the council hopes to encourage other public bodies to participate in the scheme.

Wiltshire Employment Support Team (WEST)

54. Within the council's 0-25 SEND service sits WEST, a small team who assist young people (14-25) with SEND to find and sustain paid employment with local employers. The task group received a briefing from the manager of WEST and considered WEST's Annual Report for 2013 to 2014.

55. WEST look at the different types of paid employment that will suit the young person, based upon their skills, interests and experience, and then aim to match individual skills to available jobs, including apprenticeships. WEST works with the young person to enable them to reach stability when in paid employment, and in applying for jobs and preparing for interviews.

56. WEST's Annual Report 2013-14 included a suite of targets set for WEST, copied below. The task group noted that in some cases WEST had significantly exceeded their agreed outcomes for the year (for example, number of employer meetings conducted and number of employer contacts made), while in others the agreed outcomes had been missed by fairly large margins (for example, case studies to be written, customers to start Apprenticeships and customers employed straight from education).

WEST outcomes agreed	Totals achieved (2013-14)	Previous year (2012-13)
• 50 people into employment	33	12
• 15 customers to increase their working hours	6	6
• 5-10 customers to change their job	6	6
• 5 employers to employ more than one person	5	2
• 15 customers to achieve 16+ hours employment	9	2
• 40 customers to attend Preparing for Employment	52	48

• 1000 employer contacts	1046	317
• 250 employer meetings	421	91
• 10 customers to start Apprenticeships	2	0

57. It was reported that there were a number of factors to consider in relation to these concerns:

- The agreed outcomes were based on having an expected number of job coaches in post, which was not reached during the year. It is hoped that the full number of job coaches will be in post in 2015;
- Having moved from adult care to the SEND team, a period of officer adjustment and learning in terms of working with young people;
- A culture where some people rely on 'out of work benefits', making them fearful of working over 16 hours per week in case this impacts on their benefit entitlement.
- Employers are receiving an increasing number of approaches about possible entry level positions and are therefore less keen to engage with WEST.

58. None of the parent carers spoken to by the task group (approximately 15) were familiar with WEST. Officers acknowledged that there is work to do in terms of raising the profile of the team and its work, which will be supported by its new position within the SEND team as opposed to within Adult Social Care.

Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

59. Under Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 all public bodies in England and Wales are required to consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. "Social value" in this context involves looking beyond the price of each individual contract and looking at what the collective benefit to a community is when a public body chooses to award a contract.

60. The task group is aware that within the council's Highways and Streetscene contract awarded in 2014 there was a requirement that the contractor offer 6 apprenticeships for young people. However, a March 2014 report to Children's Select Committee providing an update on Apprenticeships in Wiltshire stated that young people with SEND are less likely to achieve a level 2 qualification and, therefore, are less likely to access an Apprenticeship programme.

Area Board work

61. Devizes Area Board have recently commissioned a short film focusing on several case studies of young people with SEND who have found employment with Devizes employers. This is being taken forward by the council's Integrated Youth, WEST and Communities teams and a Create Studios, a social enterprise based in Swindon. The film is intended to:

- Alert young people with SEND to the opportunities available to them in the Devizes area;
- Alert potential employers to success stories of employment of young people with SEND and the support that is available to facilitate this;
- Demonstrate how some assumed barriers can be removed; and
- Encourage greater dialogue, improved mutual understanding and closer links between the business community and young people with SEND.

62. The film is intended to stand alone as an on-line or physical resource and could be used in presentations to schools and colleges when giving careers talks to demonstrate how young people with SEND can achieve employment and can overcome potential barriers.

Conclusions

63. The task group commends the achievements of the Supported Internships project thus far. It supports the council's approach of acting as an exemplar to other organisations and the aspiration to build on the success of the Supported Internships project's first year. It would be a great shame if the project was not given sufficient profile or resources in order to maintain momentum and build on its first year's work. (**Recommendation 6**)

64. The task group strongly supports the value of the council's WEST team and the importance of offering support to young people with SEND who may otherwise have difficulty finding paid employment. (**Recommendation 7**)

65. The task group would like to understand to what extent the council has met, and will continue to meet, the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 in relation to securing employment opportunities for young people with SEND. It recognises that when making commissioning and procurement decisions the upfront cost of contracts will be a significant factor. However, when times are economically tough it is more important than ever to get maximum value and this may involve looking at the wider social value of commissioning decisions. The council may be improving the economic wellbeing of Wiltshire more effectively by contracting with companies who engage with groups who are vulnerable to exclusion, such as young people with SEND. (**Recommendations 8 and 9**)

66. The task group supports the work done by Devizes Area Board in building links between employers and young people with SEND and demonstrating how many assumed barriers to employment can be removed . It is hoped that other Area Boards can follow this lead and launch their own initiatives to support employment for this group. This will require the profile of this work being raised across the council. (**Recommendation 10**)

Theme 3: Housing

Introduction

67. Having a stable, appropriate place to live is fundamental to building a positive, meaningful future and finding suitable, long-term accommodation can be more complicated for people with SEND due to having to manage their additional needs or requirements. The National Audit Office estimates that equipping a young person with the skills to live in semi-independent rather than fully supported housing could, in addition to quality of life improvements, reduce lifetime support costs to the public purse by around £1 million per person.

Housing options for young people with SEND

68. The options include staying at home with parents, supported living (where the person receives support to enable them to live in their own home) or residential care.

69. It was reported that an increasing number of young people with SEND – just as with young people without SEND – are now living at home with parents for longer. However, like most young people, young people with SEND often eventually want to live independently. When in single occupancy flats they are more likely than those without SEND to become isolated from the community without appropriate support networks in place.

70. An alternative model is to have a cluster of several flats located together around a communal space and potentially shared provision for a stay-over carer. This can be an efficient way of providing supported living to several people with SEND and mitigates the risk of tenants becoming isolated in the community. It also decreases the cost of care. A report produced by the Wiltshire Disability Partnership Board[2] showed that a key priority for people with SEND was "More housing available where people can live on their own with shared facilities too".

71. Historically there have been obstacles to developing this kind of housing provision: Since 1996 the housing application system has assumed that it is a single householder or family unit applying for accommodation. There are complexities around incorporating the possibility of individual tenancies around a communal living space due to the subsidy for single housing. Any shared element in accommodation increases overhead costs because they have to be managed and therefore tend to create a service charge to be administered to each tenant. Housing developers have historically not liked shared tenancies because when one tenant leaves issues can arise such as identifying liability for any unpaid bills. Also, developers can be reluctant to build any kind of housing that deviates from a standard model as it is perceived to be more expensive to build and have a narrower market appeal.

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[2] Wiltshire Disability Partnership Board (WDPB) is co-chaired by Wiltshire Council's Interim Head of Commissioning (Disabilities) and a learning disability representative. Other members of the board are either selected from key organisations or because it is part of their job role. WDPB consulted with a wide selection of Wiltshire people with SEND on their views on the issue of housing, and produced a 'Have Your Say' report presenting the results.

72. The New Housing team are now working with developers to build a limited number of developments based on this cluster model. These will comprise approximately five flats with secure entry systems clustered around a communal space, but with individual tenancies. Clients will be able to bid for them through the Homes4Wiltshire housing applications system. Because of the demographics only 4 or 5 clusters are expected to be needed and these are likely to be in the larger towns. There is likely to be a 3 year lead-in with these properties so they will not be available until approximately 2017/18.

73. It was originally reported that a mapping exercise would be undertaken to establish where people with SEND are in the county and forecast the future housing need on that basis. However there seems to be a lack of clarity around what data is available that could inform the development plans.

Homes 4 Wiltshire

74. The task group received a briefing from officers from the council's Homes4Wiltshire team: Like anyone else, people with SEND can register with Homes4Wiltshire when they are 16 years old and can bid for social housing when they are 18 years old. Officers are able to bid for a Homes4Wiltshire property on behalf of those with more profound or complex needs who cannot bid for themselves. An 'easy read' application form is available on request by contacting the Homes4Wiltshire Devizes office, but does not appear to be available via the Homes4Wiltshire website. The Homes4Wiltshire application **guidance** is not currently produced in an 'easy read' format but officers have reported it will be produced shortly.

75. The Wiltshire Disability Partnership Board's 'Have Your Say' report found that the majority of users seem to understand the Homes4Wiltshire application and bidding process, but some problems did arise after this. Some found the internet and telephone bidding systems confusing and some thought that bidding for a house amounted to having secured it, leading to confusion and disappointment. A key outcome from the report was for "More support for people with learning difficulties to bid for houses and understand what is happening."

Respite care for young people with SEND

76. The task group has not investigated the provision of short breaks or respite care for young people with SEND in detail. However, it has become aware of the following issues:

77. Young people aged 5-17 who have a severe learning disability and are assessed as meeting the criteria may currently access breaks at Canon's House in Devizes. Canon's House is a registered children's home that supports severely learning-disabled young people whose needs are so specialist that all other short breaks services are considered insufficient.

78. When a young person turns 18 they are no longer eligible for care at Canon's House and are instead directed towards a suitable residential adult care

provider. Some parents have expressed concern that this leads to their 18 year old young person being supported alongside people who are much older, some of them elderly. Parents are also concerned that, unlike the pre-18 respite provision, adult provision does not provide structured activities that develop the young person's independent living skills.

79. The task group is also aware of a specific case of an young man with complex SEND who has not accessed a respite service since he turned eighteen due to his challenging behaviour.

Short breaks

80. The Wiltshire Short Breaks Scheme is for any child or young person aged 5+ who receives 25 hours or more support in school. It can be taken in three ways – hours at a specialist Barnardo's play scheme, cash, or half-and-half. During June 2014, Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Parent Carer Council jointly held a series of consultation events to inform future development of short breaks for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability. An online survey was then held and parent carers voted in favour of a change to the eligibility age for the scheme, changing it from 4-17 to 5-18 (the day before the 19th birthday). Accordingly this change has been implemented for the 2015/16 Short Breaks Scheme.

Conclusions

81. The task group welcomes the work underway to develop housing suitable for young people with SEND along the apartment cluster model described. This model seems to offer the perfect balance for many young people with SEND, allowing them to live independently in the community, but amongst their peer group and with shared support available.

82. The task group is also aware that this model has been 'sold' to parents and young people for several years and yet a scarcity of this form of housing exists. Some parents and young people have become disillusioned with the situation and there is a need for the council to engage with them and discuss the council's direction in order to build trust and relieve anxiety about future housing prospects. (**Recommendations 11 and 12**)

83. Social workers and SEND lead workers must be able to support and guide young people and their families through the housing process. Under the Code of Practice 2014, local authorities must ensure that a young person's EHC plan review, which is undertaken in Year 9 (and every year thereafter), includes a discussion of where they want to live in the future, who they want to live with and what support they will need. Local housing options, support in finding accommodation, housing benefits and social care support must be explained.

84. The task group's conversations with parents suggest that social workers and SEND lead workers do not always offer a thorough explanation of housing options and the processes for accessing them. Housing officers have

acknowledged that engagement with children's services, as opposed to adult social care, could be improved to enable young people and their families to plan ahead better and begin preparing for adulthood earlier. As the cluster model flats described come on stream it will be particularly important that social workers and SEND lead workers are aware of them and can support young people in bidding for them if they wish. (**Recommendations 13 and 14**)

85. One parent commented, "The constant emphasis on 'keeping young people at home' ignores the impact of this on parents…My son staying at home has a real impact on my life and this and any appropriate type of respite service has been overlooked." The task group is concerned that all young people with SEND who meet the eligibility criteria should have access to suitable respite care. It is unsatisfactory if a young person receives this provision amongst their peer group up until their 18th birthday, but any provision thereafter is amongst people who may be much older. Young people who do not have SEND do not tend to mix with much older people – they spend time with people their own age – and young people with SEND should be given the same opportunity.

86. For those already receiving support from children's services, the Care Act 2014 makes it clear that local authorities must continue to provide children's services until adult provision has started or a decision is made that the young person's needs do not meet the eligibility criteria for adult care and support following an assessment. Children's services must not be discontinued simply because a young person has reached their 18th birthday ('Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years' paragraph 3.52). However, it is also the case that it is technically illegal to provide care for under 18 year olds alongside people who are over 18. The task group were pleased to hear that the issue is being addressed as a priority and further information will be welcome.

87. The respite care or short break provision available to those who are 18 to 25 should be structured and continue to develop the young person's independent living skills. The task group notes that the council's DCA Pathfinder project is aimed at improving the transition process from children to adult services, which is often described by families as 'falling off a cliff edge'. The change in provision from age 17 to 18 potentially represents an example of such a 'cliff edge' and, if so, requires attention.

88. There are a number of potential options for addressing the identified gaps, which require investigation beyond the scope of the task group: These might include the development of a specialist 18-25 respite facility in Wiltshire. This could extend its services to providing 'outreach' care in young people's homes. Alternatively the council could work with existing respite providers of all age groups to develop a more age-appropriate respite service that ensures young people who are over-18, but still young adults, can access respite care amongst their own age group and continue to develop their independent living skills. The task group understands that similar options are

now being investigated and look forward to the committee receiving further information.

89.   It is a concern if young people with SEND who exhibit challenging behaviour and are 18+ cannot access respite provision in Wiltshire. Some parent carers describe the availability of respite as an essential lifeline in coping with the demands of caring for a young person with SEND. This should not become unavailable when the young person turns 18, no matter how the complex the young person's needs may be. (**Recommendation 15**)

Short breaks

90.   The task group welcomed the news that the Wiltshire Short Breaks Scheme has recently been extended so that young people remain eligible until one day before their 19th birthday.

Theme 4: Community Inclusion

Evidence

Wiltshire's Local Offer

91.   Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 all local authorities must publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEND.

92.   The Code of Practice states that the Local Offer should not simply be a directory of existing services; its success depends upon full engagement with children, young people and their parents and the process of developing the Local Offer will help local authorities to improve provision. Wiltshire's Local Offer website was developed following a series of workshops and engagement events with stakeholders and can be found at www.wiltshirelocaloffer.org.uk

93.   In 'testing' the Local Offer website, the following issues were identified:

- Some searches did not yield any information, potentially causing frustration.

- The website emphasises what 'outcomes' young people can expect to reach at certain stages of their life or what rough expectations they can have of organisations, but this information could be more practical and specific. Those parents the task group met were generally looking for specific information about what support or opportunities they could access, who from and what the process is. This approach isn't always reflected on the Local Offer website. For example, the task group was not able to ascertain what the process is for a young person of 16 who wants go to a certain college. Interestingly, officers reported that parents

who took part in consultations on the Local Offer expressed a preference for information that **did** focus on outcomes. It may be that further consultation will be needed in order to check parents' views of the final result.

Activities for young people with profound and/or multiple SEND

94. Those with profound and multiple disabilities often find it more difficult to find paid employment than those with less complex needs. Some young people with SEND may never be able to access paid employment due to the complexity of their needs. The task group regrets that time did not allow a review of the alternative activities available for this customer group in Wiltshire.

Community Campuses

95. The task group received a briefing from the Head of Campus and Operational Models on how the needs of young people with SEND had been reflected in the council's Community Campus programme. It was reported that the design process for each community campus included consultation with young people, including those with SEND. Work was also being done to ensure that signage in community campuses is suitable for those with SEND i.e. produced in Braille and symbol typefaces as well as standard text.

Conclusions

Wiltshire's Local Offer

96. Caring for a young person with SEND can be very challenging; it is important that it is not made more difficult through a lack of clear information being available. A clear message from parents spoken to by the task group was the perceived lack of information available and a lack of clarity in how to access it. The following quotes sum-up how some parents feel about the this area and the importance that the council gets communications with families right: *"There are things going on but it's hard to find out about them", "I don't know where to start", and "There needs to be better sign-posting and information".*

97. It is hoped that these kinds of comments will reduce as initiatives like My Plans, SEND Lead Workers and the Local Offer develop and become fully embedded. The Local Offer in particular represents a huge opportunity to create a one-stop resource for the parents of young people with SEND and the task group strongly supports its development. The current Local Offer represents a good start in providing clear and comprehensive information about resources, services, processes and points of contact. The task group acknowledges that the website only launched in September 2014 and a lot of work has clearly been done already. It will be important that resources are made available to continue its development and create the 'one stop shop' for information that young people with SEND and their families need.

(**Recommendation 16**)

<u>Activities for young people with profound and/or multiple SEND</u>

98. Because people with more profound SEND may not be able to access paid employment it is important that they have access to other activities that give meaning and purpose to their lives. It would seem important to follow through the person-centred approach used to plan post 16 education and employment for this group in the provision of appropriate and meaningful activity. This may be an area for further investigation by the committee in the future.

<u>Community Campuses</u>

99. The task group does not know if the needs of people with SEND are being reflected in the design of community campuses other than Corsham, for example, through including Braille and symbol based signage. The committee may wish to investigate the extent to which people with SEND are using community campuses . (**Recommendation 17**)

Proposal

100. That the Children's Select Committee endorses the final report and recommendations and refers them to the relevant Cabinet Members for response.

Recommendations

The task group recommends that the Cabinet Member for Children's Services;

1. **Provides a report describing how the council is developing the SEND Lead Worker role and responding to the concerns raised regarding engagement with young people and their families and the potential impact on important transitions;**

2. **Provides a report showing the evidence base behind the council's increasing use of placements at local mainstream colleges rather than Independent Specialist Providers (ISPs) for young people with SEND. This should include data on cost, learner outcomes and destinations;**

3. **Provides a report describing how the council ensures that all post-16 schools and colleges attended by Wiltshire students with SEND meet their educational and care needs;**

4. **In order to reassure prospective students with SEND and their parents, asks officers to work with Wiltshire College to develop a marketing campaign to raise awareness of the significant developments to Wiltshire College's provision for students with SEND in recent years. This should include real life success stories demonstrating positive learner and life outcomes;**

5. Reassures the committee that clear information, advice and guidance on the post-16 SEND placement process, the decision making criteria, and the options for appealing decisions where necessary are readily available to all young people with SEND and parent carers;

6.
   a) Reports how it will be ensured that the excellent Supported Internships scheme will expand in future years to provide an increasing number of employment opportunities for young people with SEND within the Council and other organisations;
   b) Provides an update on the Supported Internships project in 12 months' time;

7. Provides an update report in 12 months' time on the work of the Wiltshire Employment Support Team (WEST) and the delivery of its agreed outcomes for 2015-16, including how awareness of this important service is raised amongst young people with SEND and their families;

8. Describes how the council is meeting its duties under the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 in terms of creating employment opportunities for young people with SEND;

9. Works with other Cabinet Members to ensure that the council's procurement framework gives weighting, where appropriate, to organisations that offer employment opportunities for young people with SEND, such as through participating in the council's Supported Internships scheme;

10. Notes the work being undertaken by Devizes Area Board to promote employment opportunities for young people with SEND and, wherever possible, encourages other area boards to pursue relevant schemes.

11. Working with the Cabinet Member for Housing, provides further details of plans in place to develop independent housing with shared communal space that is suitable for young people with SEND, including details of any mapping work undertaken and projected numbers and timescales;

12. Working with the Cabinet Member for Housing, takes forward an engagement campaign with young people with SEND and their families to raise awareness of the housing options currently available and the plans for developing them. This should include:

   a) Engagement with young people who are not yet old enough to live independently but who will be impacted in the future;

b) Information that is relevant for young people with complex needs and their families;

c) An engagement event organised with the WPCC and/or other advocacy groups as appropriate;

d) Information or links being included on the Local Offer website;

e) Wiltshire special schools to be given information on the housing work underway so it can be disseminated during their transition events;

13. Ensures that the children's social care and SEND teams are fully aware of the housing options available to young people with SEND and are able to offer comprehensive advice and guidance on how these can be accessed, including the Homes4Wiltshire Process and information on the proposed cluster apartment developments;

14. Working with the Cabinet Member for Housing, makes the 'easy read' Homes4Wiltshire application form available on the Homes4Wiltshire and Wiltshire Local Offer websites;

15. Provides an action plan describing how it will be ensured that:

- Young people with SEND aged 18+ have access to respite care in Wiltshire that is structured and develops their independent living skills alongside peers of a similar age;
- Young people with SEND who exhibit challenging behaviour continue to have access to respite care in Wiltshire when they turn 18, meeting the requirements of the 'Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 To 25 Years' paragraph 3.52.

16. Confirms that adequate resources will be provided to ensure that the Wiltshire Local Offer becomes a fully up-to-date and comprehensive information source for young people with SEND and their families. It should enable easy-access to service users' questions about what support and opportunities are available to them, who provides them and how they can be accessed;

17. Working with the Cabinet Member for Campuses, Area Boards, Libraries, Leisure and Flooding, provides information showing to what extent community campuses are being used by people with SEND;

The task group also recommends that:

18. Children's Select Committee reviews the implementation of the task Group's recommendations in 12 months' time.

Rev Alice Kemp, Chairman of the SEND Task Group

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Appendices

None

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

27 January 2015

Task Group update

Purpose

To provide an update on recent task group activity and propose any decisions requiring Committee approval.

1.   Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Task Group

This task group was established by the committee on 14 October following a request from the executive to undertake a piece of scrutiny work on this topic.

On 22 January the chairman and vice-chairman of the committee will meet with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding and Associate Director for Children and Families to discuss where this task group can add most value. A verbal update on this will be provided.

2.   Educational for 16-19s Task Group

Membership:

Jon Hubbard (Chairman)
George Jeans
Gordon King
Jacqui Lay
Mike Thompson

Terms of reference:

To review the quality, range and equity of access to further education in Wiltshire. The Task Group have also agreed the following outcomes for this review:

a) Young people are aware of the full range of 16-19 opportunities available to them
b) Young people feel supported to make informed choices from their local 16-19 offer
c) The local 16-19 offer reflects what young people want
d) Young people can access their local 16-19 offer

e) The local 16-19 offer reflects the skill-sets that local employers want.

Recent activity:

On 11 November 2014 this task group submitted a report to Cabinet on the draft Wiltshire Education, Employment & Skills Strategy 2014. It is now in abeyance and it is proposed that it is now disbanded.

3. **Obesity and Child Poverty Task Group (joint with Health Select Committee) – to be confirmed**

On 13 January Health Select Committee discussed a possible Obesity and Child Poverty Task Group, with the intention of this being a joint exercise with the Children's Select Committee. A briefing note from Frances Chinemana, Public Health Consultant, was considered and is attached here at Appendix 1.

Further discussions will now take place to agree terms of reference and an approach for the task group, prior to its formal establishment and membership being sought. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

4. **Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group**

    Membership:

    Ken Brough
    Andrew Davis
    Jon Hubbard (Chairman)
    Alice Kemp
    Bill Moss
    Bridget Wayman

    Terms of reference:

    a) To monitor the implementation of any recommendations made by the Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group that are endorsed by the Children's Select Committee and accepted by the executive.

    b) To scrutinise Wiltshire Council's delivery of improvements to safeguarding children and young people as set out in the Safeguarding and Adoptions Improvement Plan.

    c) To receive a twice-annual report from the Council's Lead Member for Safeguarding Children and Young People providing details of their safeguarding activity.

    d) To continue/conduct ongoing scrutiny of services for Looked After Children (LAC).

e) To work in collaboration with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Panel to clarify future joint-working arrangements.

Recent activity:

On 10 December the task group met and considered reports on:

Multi Agency Forums (MAFs)

- It was reported that the council does provide encouragement and support to MAFs, but does not 'own' them. They come under the auspices of the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB).
- Members asked for clarity on what the role of MAFs is, given that they are an important part of the council's Early Help and safeguarding work and that they do not all operate in the same way.
- It was agreed that there is valuable social capital in MAF attendees from different agencies coming together and building relationships.

It was resolved that:

1. The MAFs' current terms of reference would be circulated to task group members.
2. Statistics on social worker attendance at MAFs would be circulated to task group members.
3. Members would attend a selection of MAFs around the county in order to better understand the different ways in which they operate.
4. With this evidence, the task group will revisit MAFs at its March meeting.

Common Assessment Framework (CAFs)

CAFs were recently rebranded and became Early Help CAFs. The new version includes a broad scoring system where the severity of the case can be rated. CAFs form an important element of the council's early help work.

The task group considered information on
a. The number of active Early Help CAFs broken down by referring agency
b. The process for stepping up/down to Social Care
c. The number of Early Help CAFs that have been open more than 1 year/2 years

A key factor in the success of a CAF is setting smart objectives rather than non-specific vague objectives. Work is underway to improve the writing of CAFs.

Annual Report 2013/14 and Business Plan 2014/15 of the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB)

These documents were considered by the task group and can be viewed here:

WSCB Annual Report 2013/14:

http://www.wiltshirelscb.org/images/stories/pdfs/WSCB.Annual.Report.2013-2014_FINAL.09072014.pdf

WSCB Business Plan 2014/15:

http://www.wiltshirelscb.org/images/stories/pdfs/WSCB.Business.Plan.2014-15.FINAL.pdf

The task group resolved that:

1. Officers would provide an update on the development of the council's Social Networking Policy.
2. As agreed in its July 2013 report, the task group would compare the minutes of WSCB meetings with its Business Plan to ensure that the agreed objectives are being addressed.
3. To recommend that the format of future WSCB Annual Reports and Business Plans is more reader-friendly by including an executive summary of the key points covered.

Forward work programme summary:

- 28 January 2015 – child protection and LAC data scrutiny
- 31 March 2015 – 'deep dive' meeting looking at MAFs
- 27 May 2015 – child protection and LAC data scrutiny
- 9 September – 'deep dive' meeting

Topics for 'deep dive' meetings:

1. Quality assurance of the 'Safeguarding considerations' sections in committee reports
2. Consideration of the Corporate Parenting Panel's Care Leavers Working Group report on care leavers
3. Out-of-county placements

5.   **Schools and the Local Authority Task Group**

The task group's final report is included elsewhere on this agenda.

6.   **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Task Group**

The task group's final report is included elsewhere on this agenda.

Proposals

1. **To note the update on task group activity provided.**

2. **To disband the Education for 16-19s Task Group.**

3. **To note that discussions are underway regarding a joint Obesity and Child Poverty Task Group with the Health Select Committee and an update will be brought to the next meeting.**

4. **To note that the Safeguarding Children and Young People's Task Group has considered the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) Annual Report 2013/14 and Business Plan 2014/15.**

5. **To endorse the Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group's recommendation that the format of future WSCB Annual Reports and Business Plans be amended to be more reader-friendly by including an executive summary of the key points covered.**

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Appendices

Appendix 1   Briefing note on obesity and child poverty

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee Topic: Obesity with Child Poverty as an interlinking strategy. Briefing for Frances Chinemana: 30 December 2014

Why obesity is a priority for the Council

The prevalence of obesity in England has trebled since the 1980s. Obesity contributes to the onset of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer. Obesity in adults is expected to continue to rise. The Foresight Report suggested that by 2015, 36% of males and 28% of females aged 21-60 living in England could be obese. Different projections produced by the National Heart Forum suggest that 30% of men and 28% of women may be obese by 2020. In Wiltshire 25.2% of adults are classified as obese, more than in the South West or England. Wiltshire Council commissions and provides a number of interventions for adults and children to achieve a healthy weight.

The impact of obesity in Wiltshire

During 2012/13, Children in Reception Year and in Year 6 in Wiltshire were weighed and measured as part of the National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP). In that period 7.6% of Wiltshire Reception pupils measured were found to be obese; this compares to 9.3% for England. In Year 6 15.1% of Wiltshire children were found to be obese; in England the figure was 18.9%. Although this ranks Wiltshire 3rd lowest out of 14 Local Authorities in the South West this is still a significant number of children that are obese. If the proportion of obese children continued to rise, a whole generation could have a shorter average life expectancy than their parents. The Wiltshire NCMP data has been analysed to look at differences between geographies, areas of deprivation and gender. This analysis shows for both Community Areas and Children's Centres that there are some significant variations between areas and from the overall Wiltshire figures.

The consequences of being overweight / obese costs the NHS an estimated 5-6% of the total NHS budget. Beyond these costs there are broader impacts on the economy as a whole from e.g. work hours lost, sick benefits, long term disability issues. The personal and social consequences of obesity include:

- An obese person incurs 25% higher health expenditures than a person of normal weight in any given year.
- Obese people earn up to 18% less than non-obese people.
- A severely obese person is likely to die 8-10 years earlier than a person of normal weight.
- Children who have at least one obese parent are 3 to 4 times more likely to be obese.
- A comprehensive prevention strategy would avoid premature mortality and morbidity and reduce overall costs to health and social care and the wider economy.

Why child poverty is a priority for the Council

Extensive research and data show that children who grow up in poverty face a greater risk of having poor health, being exposed to crime and failing to reach their full potential. This in turn can limit their potential to earn the money needed to support their own families in later life, and so a cycle of poverty is created. Therefore in order to ensure today's poor children are not tomorrow's poor adults child poverty needs to be tackled.

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There are a number of recognised health impacts of poverty on child health. These include:

- An association with a higher risk of both illness and premature death.
- Children born in the poorest areas of the UK weigh, on average, 200 grams less at birth than those born in the richest areas.
- Children from low income families are more likely to die at birth or in infancy than children born into richer families.
- Children are more likely to suffer chronic illness during childhood or to have a disability if they live in poverty.
- Poorer health over the course of a lifetime has an impact on life expectancy. E.g. professionals live on average 8 years longer than unskilled workers.

Children are said to be living in relative income poverty if their household's income is less than 60 per cent of the median national income. Essentially, this looks at whether the incomes of the poorest families are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole.

The impact of child poverty in Wiltshire

Analysis by HMRC demonstrated that in August 2011 Wiltshire had 11,610 children (0-19yrs) living in poverty, which represents 11.4% of children. This is an increase of 400 children (0.4%) in Wiltshire since 2008, which compares well with other local authority areas in the South West of England. However, there is high variability in Wiltshire with pockets of high deprivation found in particular localities and significant deprivation across some vulnerable groups.

What we are doing to address obesity in Wiltshire

In 2015 Wiltshire Council Public Health will be developing an obesity strategy and implementation plan in conjunction with Wiltshire CCG. The strategy will take a life course approach addressing the broad causes and evidence-based approaches to address excess weight in Wiltshire residents.

What we are doing to address child poverty in Wiltshire

The Child Poverty Act, which commits this and future governments to eradicating child poverty by 2020, received Royal Assent in March 2010 tasking local areas to produce a child poverty needs assessment and strategy. The Wiltshire Child Poverty Strategy has been developed by the multi-disciplinary Child Poverty Group which reports to the Wiltshire Children & Young People's Trust Executive. It went to Cabinet in November 2014 and is going to be adopted by full Council in 2015.

The government's consultation document focuses on tackling child poverty through:
- Supporting families into work and increasing their earnings;
- Improving living standards;
- Preventing poor children becoming poor adults through raising their educational attainment.

There are 5 key objectives of the Child Poverty Strategy:
- Objective 1 – Provide effective support to vulnerable families with 0-5 year olds
- Objective 2 – Narrowing the Educational Attainment Gap
- Objective 3 – Develop an inclusive economy that will enable equality of economic opportunity for all

- Objective 4 – Provide locally-focused support based on a thorough understanding of needs
- Objective 5 – Promote engagement with the Child Poverty Strategy and related implementation plan

The relationship between child poverty and obesity

Obesity has been linked to chronic diseases such as diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, osteoarthritis and certain forms of cancer thus demonstrating the significance of obesity for health and wellbeing. In the UK, as is the case in most other high income countries, obesity is more prevalent in the lowest income quintile.

Whilst the overall NCMP results for Wiltshire are encouraging there is a clear deprivation gradients across all years and measures of weight, which are indicators of inequality within Wiltshire. Melksham and Westbury Community Areas were highlighted as having significantly higher percentages of children who are obese or overweight. Pewsey and Malmesbury had significantly lower percentages of children who were obese.

Intended outcomes from scrutiny involvement

Scrutiny involvement, including a task and finish group, could provide valuable insights by looking at the following issues:

- How the council can have greatest impact on reducing obesity across the life course through its services
- How the consultation process for the obesity strategy can add maximum value
- Developing Area Board ownership of obesity issues, particularly linked to childhood poverty, following adoption of the Child Poverty Strategy and Implementation Plan.

References

- Wiltshire Child Poverty Strategy
- Wiltshire JSA for Health and Wellbeing 2013/14

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Overview & Scrutiny Current Forward Work Plan

Children's Services Select Committee												
	October 2014	November 2014	December 2014	January 2015	February 2015	March 2015	April 2015	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015		
Review/Task Group					Council 24th	Cabinet 17th	Cabinet 21st	Council 12th Cabinet 19th	Cabinet 16th	Cabinet 21st Council 28th	**Officer**	**Status (inc date)**
Pupil Performance data						Annual report 24 March					HP	Standing report presenting school pupil attainment 2013/14 EY to KS5 stage
Educating permanently excluded pupils	Review in progress		Report to Committee 9 Dec			Report to Committee 24 Mar					HP	Updated data on provision for Excluded Secondary Pupils and further detail on arrangements for monitoring this provision.
Safeguarding Children & Young People Task Group	Review in progress										HP	Next meeting: 28 January 2015. Focusing on the last quarter's child protection and LAC data.
SEND Task Group	Review in progress			Final Report 27 Jan		Executive Response 24 Mar					HP	Final report to Committee for endorsement on 27 January 2015
Early Help Strategy Task Group			Report to Committee 9 Dec	Report to Committee 27 Jan							ED	Meeting Jan 2015 to consider the proposed Early Help Dataset, reporting back 27 January 2015.
Children's Centres Task Group									Report to Committee 2 Jun		HP	Currently seeking membership. Scoping discussions planned with executive and officers.
Wiltshire Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) Annual Report 2013/14 and Business Plan 2014/15				Report to Committee 27 Jan							HP	The documents were considered by the Safeguarding C&YP Task Group on 10 Dec 2014. This item is to note the task group's findings.
Schools and the Local Authority Task Group	Review in progress			Final Report 27 Jan		Executive Response 24 Mar					HP	Final report to Committee 27 January 2015 for endorsement. Executive response expected 24 March 2015.

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Wiltshire Council
Children's Services Select Committee
27 January 2015

Coalition Changes – Update Nov 2014 to Jan 2015

School admissions code

1. [Statutory guidance][1] has been released detailing changes made in the new version of the Schools Admissions Code, which came into force on 19 December. There have been two changes of substance and a number of minor amendments designed to improve the clarity of the document without altering its intended effect. The significant changes are:

   - To allow schools to give priority to applicants eligible for the Pupil Premium; and
   - To bring forward the timetable for determining admissions arrangements so that objections can be resolved by the Schools Adjudicator before the start of the admissions round.

2. There is additional [advice][2] on using the pupil premium, service premium or early years pupil premium oversubscription criteria in school admissions, as well as updated [advice][3] on the admission of summer born children.

3. The final version of the new Code contains wording different from the consultation draft in a small number of places. Most of these make no difference to the intended effect of the Code but one, relating to 'out of age' admissions, will require an amendment to most, if not all, admissions arrangements in the forthcoming round.

Standards for school food in England

4. This [advice][4] outlines the requirements to provide food to registered pupils. It also includes information on the School Food Plan, the provision of milk and the free fruit and vegetables scheme. The new standards include:

   - 1 or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment every day
   - at least 3 different fruits, and 3 different vegetables each week
   - an emphasis on wholegrain foods in place of refined carbohydrates
   - an emphasis on making water the drink of choice:
     - limiting fruit juice portions to 150mls
     - restricting the amount of added sugars or honey in other drinks to 5%
   - no more than 2 portions a week of food that has been deep fried, batter coated, or breadcrumb coated
   - no more than 2 portions of food which include pastry each week

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[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-the-pupil-premium-or-service-premium-in-admissions

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission

[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-food-in-england

School exclusion

5. [Statutory guidance](#)[5] for maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units on the exclusion of pupils has been released. It replaces the document of the same name published in September 2012 and applies to exclusions from 5 January 2015.

6. The overall legislation governing the exclusion process remains unchanged. Regulations have been amended to clarify that governing bodies' duty to arrange education from the sixth day of a fixed period exclusion would be triggered by consecutive fixed period exclusions totalling more than five days.

7. Statutory guidance has been updated in a small number of areas, in particular to provide greater confidence to headteachers on their use of exclusion and greater clarity to independent review panels and governing bodies on their consideration of exclusion decisions.

National curriculum framework for key stages 1 to 4

8. This [statutory guidance](#)[6] contains the full national curriculum framework, including programmes of study and attainment targets for key stages 1 to 4. All maintained schools in England must be teaching the programmes of study for key stage 1 to 3 from September 2014, and key stage 4 from September 2016.

Technical and vocational qualifications for 14- to 19-year-olds

9. The DfE have published [guidance](#)[7] listing the technical and vocational qualifications approved for teaching from September 2015 and reporting in 2017 performance tables.These documents include:
   - 2 new qualification categories:
     - technical awards, for reporting in the 2017 key stage 4 performance tables
     - technical certificates, for reporting in the 2017 16 to 19 performance tables
   - the second annual list of qualifications in the tech level category, for reporting in the 2017 16 to 19 performance tables
   - the second annual list of qualifications in the applied general qualifications category, for reporting in the 2017 16 to 19 performance tables.

10. Each qualification includes a link to a 'purpose statement' to help students decide whether the qualification meets their needs. Each qualification for 16- to 19-year olds also includes a link to letters of support from employers and universities.

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[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-and-vocational-qualifications-for-14-to-19-year-olds

Ofsted inspection of LA school improvement functions – revised Framework

11. The revised Ofsted framework[8] for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement has come into force with immediate effect. The previous Framework was published in May 2013, following consultation, and withdrawn without notice in late May 2014. There were 13 inspections under the old framework, including two re-inspections. Nine of the inspections resulted in a judgement of '*ineffective*' and four in a judgement of '*effective*'.

12. The most important changes in the new Framework are that Focused School Inspections, where a number of schools in a local authority are inspected over a short period, have been brought within the Framework, and that the single word judgement has been replaced by a narrative judgement. A new criterion for selection for this risk-based inspection is that pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve less well than pupils not eligible for the pupil premium nationally. And reports will assess the impact of the local authority's strategy to narrow attainment gaps.

DfE Consultation: Revisions to working together to safeguard children

13. The DfE is seeking views on changes to the statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children[9]. The revisions include 3 major changes and some small updates and clarifications. The three proposed changes being consulted on are:
    • the referral of allegations against those who work with children;
    • notifiable incidents involving the care of a child; and
    • the definition of serious harm for the purposes of serious case reviews.

Sexual exploitation of children – Ofsted report

14. Ofsted has published report[10] of a thematic inspection to evaluate the effectiveness of local authorities' current responses to child sexual exploitation. Inspectors found that local arrangements to tackle sexual exploitation are often underdeveloped, and leadership lacking. Some areas have only begun to address the issue strategically within the last 12 months, despite statutory guidance issued more than five years ago. The report raises issues of continuing concern to local authorities and their partners as they make up ground in formulating a more effective response to child sexual exploitation.

DfE consultation: Young carers' draft regulations

15. The DfE is consulting on new regulations[11] for young carers. The Young Carers' (Needs Assessments) (England) Regulations will come into force on 1 April 2015 and will put into effect Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014, under which local authorities in England must assess whether young carers within their area have needs for support and, if so, what those needs are. The draft regulations set out how this must be done.

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[8] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-inspections-of-local-authority-arrangements-for-supporting-school-improvement

[9] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children

[10] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-exploitation-of-children-ofsted-thematic-report

[11] https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/young-carers-draft-regulations

Academies Update

16. Number in Wiltshire as at beginning of January 2015:

Sponsored academies	14
Non-sponsored converter academies	43

17. New academies in January:

    The Avenue Primary School
    Wyndham Park Infants'
    St Mark's C of E (VA) Junior
    Exeter House Special School

CAROLYN GODFREY
Corporate Director

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Largely taken from the DFE website content 25 November 2014 to 12 January 2015.

12/01/15