

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

14 March 2017

Executive Response to the Final Report of the School Improvement Strategy Task Group

Purpose of the report

1. To present the response of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to the Final Report of the School Improvement Strategy Task Group.

Background

2. On 31 January 2017, the Children's Select Committee endorsed the Final Report of the Task Group.
3. The Committee resolved to refer the following Task Group's recommendations to the relevant Cabinet member for response at the Committee's next meeting on 14 March 2017.

Executive response to the Task Group's recommendations:

That the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Recommendation No.1	Retains an effective School Improvement Service without any further reduction in resource and offers this as part of a traded service.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
The Council is retaining its School Improvement Service and will shortly set out how this will run for the 2017/18 academic year. From September 2018, it is anticipated that direct work with schools to improve educational standards will mostly be traded.			

Recommendation No.2	Authorises necessary action so that this traded service is introduced promptly and in readiness for the budgetary changes.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			

The Council has secured the services of a specialist in developing schools traded services and the initial phase of the work has already been completed. It has been agreed that the Council will look at developing a specific unit for trading with schools – linking with all areas of the Council that trade with schools.

Recommendation No.3	Considers offering this service to schools on a three year contractual basis which would provide greater financial stability.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
The Council will look at the potential to offer services to schools, including school improvement, for longer than one year.			

Recommendation No.4	Retains the present use of Heads and Retired Heads on a consultancy basis as SIAs and WIAs as this makes best and cost effective use of current expertise and helps disseminate best practice.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
There are no plans to change our current model of using serving and retired Headteachers on a consultancy basis to support our school improvement work.			

Recommendation No.5	Continues the programme that enables advisors to make 3 half-day visits each year to their allocated schools in order to ensure we are able to provide timely interventions and appropriate levels of support.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
The School Effectiveness Team will look at how school improvement work can best be delivered so that LA maintained schools (and Academies that buy the service) are well-supported (and challenged) to improve educational standards.			

Recommendation No.6	Reviews SIA /WIA training, assessment, and quality control, given the crucial nature of the advisors work and to ensure consistency and rigour.		
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Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
There is a continual process of reviewing SIA/WIA training, assessment and quality control.			

Recommendation No.7	Recommends that all schools in receipt of support from the School Improvement Service are routinely given the opportunity to provide feedback on the quality of that service.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
Schools are already encouraged to provide feedback on the quality of the service. This is also part of the work on developing school improvement as a traded service.			

Recommendation No.8	In response to future changes reviews the present system in order to create a new relationship and culture in which schools are seen as customers and receive a bespoke service.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
This is part of the work on developing a unit for trading with schools.			

That the Children's Select Committee:

Recommendation No.9	Adds a review of the strategy and support programme for disadvantaged learners to the forward work programme.		
Reason for recommendation			
Cabinet member	Cllr Laura Mayes	Lead Officer	David Clarke
Executive Response:			
We welcome the Children's Select Committee's intention to focus on delivery of our Disadvantaged Learners' Strategy as part of its forward work programme.			

Proposal

4. To note the executive response to the Final Report of the School Improvement Strategy Task Group.
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Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Officer contact: Adam Brown, Senior Scrutiny Officer, 01225 718038,
adam.brown@wiltshire.gov.uk