

**Executive response to the 18-month progress review report of the
Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group**

Purpose

1. To present the response of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to a report of the Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group. The report was received by the Committee on 28 January 2014 and presented the results of a progress review undertaken by the Task Group 18 months after its final report was endorsed.

Background

2. In September 2010, the Children's Services Select Committee established the Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group to undertake a review of post-16 education available in the Salisbury area. The Task Group was established to:
 - a) Identify the number of young people leaving the Salisbury area to access 16-19 education;
 - b) Identify why these young people choose to travel and the impact of doing so;
 - c) Investigate the young people's perception of the 16-19 provision available to them;
 - d) Make recommendations, if a gap is identified, as to how this need might be met.
3. The Task Group reported its findings to the Children's Services Select Committee in May 2012, making thirteen recommendations, all of which were endorsed. The Committee agreed to regularly monitor their implementation and received an update report in March 2013. The Committee also agreed to reconvene the Task Group 12 months hence to undertake a detailed review of progress. The review was actually undertaken 18 months after the final report was endorsed.
4. A report of the findings from the 18-month review was endorsed by the Committee on 28 January 2014. A copy of this report is attached at **Appendix 1**. Dr Mike Thompson, Chairman of the Task Group, also noted that some comments provided by the Wessex Partnership were received too late for members to consider them as part of the report. These included:
 - Grammar schools have a successful collaboration in place, providing a broad Level 3 curriculum, catering for approximately 700 students. This

results in a considerable net influx of post 16 students to the Salisbury area from other parts of Wiltshire and other counties.

- The Grammar Schools and Wiltshire College provide Careers and Higher Education Fairs.
- Avon Valley College and The Stonehenge School had agreed a vision for a collaborative sixth form in the Salisbury Plain area. The schools noted that the population of the local area would increase significantly in the coming years due to local developments and the planned military influx. The aforementioned joint venture between AVC and Stonehenge would be difficult to achieve without major capital investment.
- Wiltshire College reported that many new students report poor experiences of Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG), with the Apprenticeship route being particularly neglected in the guidance students have received.

Executive response to recommendations

Recommendation 1. Wiltshire Council to produce a statement detailing its specific responsibilities as a school sponsor, as opposed its general educational responsibilities as a local authority.

Executive response: The Local Authority is engaging with the Academy at three levels. Firstly at the Annual Trustees meeting, secondly at regular Governor meetings by the local member for Bemerton Heath and thirdly at a School Improvement level by a Council officer meeting with the Senior Leadership Team. The Governors have resolved recently at their annual awayday that representatives of all the sponsors should meet and revisit the original vision for the school to understand more fully the strategic direction of the school in the future. Aligned and integral to this would be the role of each of the sponsors in the future. This is felt to be necessary as the Academy has now been in existence for nearly four academic years and each of the sponsors has also had, to a greater or lesser degree, structural changes.

The following bullet points encompass the work that the LA has done as a co sponsor in the past and will continue to do so in the future, dependent upon Officer capacity. The LA does not engage with other Academies with this kind of support or if it does, then a charge is made by the LA for its services.

Wiltshire Council's role as a sponsor has included

- A local Councillor who is a member of the Governing Body, nominated by the Leader of the Council. This ensures a local community perspective as part of the leadership of the school.
- School Effectiveness Officer support as part of the Ofsted Action Plan monitoring group, now a Governors sub Group, to ensure the school improvement progress is supported and challenged.
- School Effectiveness Officer support to the Trustees to ensure that the strategic direction of the school is enacted.
- School Effectiveness Officer support through the project management of the delivery of the new £17m build.
- School Effectiveness Officer support to the Governing Body following the last Ofsted report to support further development, structures and vision.

- School Effectiveness Officer facilitation of Extended schools priorities with primary schools.
- School Effectiveness Officer support for a Teacher Development Day re the new Ofsted Framework.

Recommendation 2. The local authority work with Avon Valley College and The Stonehenge School to develop joint local post-16 provision.

Executive response: Officers continue to work with both schools to improve post 16 provision. In addition to developing the post 16 offer, officers are working with both schools on delivery of the school organisation plan for the Amesbury and Durrington areas to meet the predicted demographic and core strategy changes. The exact configuration of post 16 provision has yet to be determined, having regard to the impact of re-basing and Core Strategy developments.

Recommendation 3. Because the disparity in funding received by Wiltshire and Hampshire for post-16 education remains, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Chairman of the Children's Select Committee to write a joint letter to the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Skills and Lifelong Learning to draw attention to, and request a review of this situation.

Executive response: The national funding formula for 16-19 provision, implemented in 2013-14, is now based on a national funding rate per learner and that this will start to reduce disparities between different areas and types of provision.

Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Appendices

Report of the Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group as presented to the Children's Select Committee at its meeting on 28 January 2014.