

**Wiltshire Council**

**Children's Select Committee**

**3 June 2014**

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## **Task Group update**

### **Purpose**

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

### **1. Educational for 16-19s Task Group**

#### **Membership:**

Kaylum House  
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:**

At their first meeting the task group agreed to undertake a piece of wide-ranging 'learner voice' work, surveying Wiltshire young people about their experiences of 16-19 education. Officers met with a student from Bath Spa University studying for a Master's degree in Education to discuss the possibility of her designing or running this survey as part of her qualification. This meeting highlighted a number of issues and the chairman subsequently met with officers to discuss how these could be resolved. It was decided that

due to the scale of the task and it being a transition period in the relevant council teams the time was not right to begin this learner voice work. The chairman would therefore like to propose that the task group pauses work until September 2014, when the situation will be reassessed.

## **2. 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:**

The task group met on 3 April 2014 to undertake a 'deep-dive' meeting looking at the auditing process for children's social care casework. The following was discussed:

- Three main kinds of audits are undertaken:
  1. Audits by operational managers and Conference and Reviewing Officers
  2. Thematic Independent Audits
  3. Other Quality Audits

- The number of manager audits being undertaken had reduced in recent months because of other work priorities. The appointment of two Heads of Service should help to remedy this.
- It was agreed that, alongside other key performance data, the task group should receive a summary of recent children's social care audit activity. This will include the kinds of audits done with a breakdown of the results, allowing trends to be identified.
- The auditing framework is currently being reviewed and managers are being asked to undertake a different style of audit that incorporates a range of data, such as interviews with witnesses. These audits may be more time-consuming but will provide a more accurate picture of the child protection work being undertaken. The task group will receive a report on the new audit framework and initial results on 12 September 2014.

The task group also met on 21 May 2014 to consider the latest safeguarding performance data. The following was discussed:

- Setting meaningful targets for certain indicators is difficult and potentially misleading because the figures can be interpreted in different ways and may interrelate with other indicators in complex ways. It was agreed that for some indicators a banded target indicating an upper and lower limit of what is acceptable would be more appropriate.
- Similarly, RAG-rating certain indicators can be difficult depending on what constitutes success. Members felt that it was important to stick to a set definition of what Red, Amber and Green ratings meant.
- Members would continue to focus on monitoring the low percentages of child protection single assessments currently being completed within agreed timescales. The Operational Audit Group (an officer group) will also be looking at this. National comparators are not yet available for this indicator.

#### **Forward work programme summary:**

- The task group will focus on one of the following themes for its next 'deep dive' meeting (July TBC)
  - Multi Agency Forums (MAFs), including their operation and sustainability
  - The delivery of Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board's (WSCB) Business Plan objectives.
  - Quality assuring the 'Safeguarding considerations' sections of committee reports, which were introduced following the task group's recommendation in 2012.

- The task group will receive a report on the new audit framework and initial results (September).

### **3. Schools and the Local Authority Task Group**

#### **Members:**

Ken Brough  
John Hawkins  
Jon Hubbard  
Gordon King (to be confirmed)  
Phillip Whalley (Chairman)

#### **Terms of reference:**

- a) To explore how the Council promotes excellence and fulfils its statutory duties to children and young people in Wiltshire's schools.
- b) To explore whether the services offered by the Council meet the needs of schools and students, and if not, how they could be developed to help improve outcomes.

#### **Recent activity:**

The Task Group met on 22 April 2014 and considered an updated document describing the council statutory duties to schools, how they are met and by which team. The following was discussed:

- Members were concerned that there was no regular forum where senior officers from the relevant departments met to discuss specifically schools issues. This Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Schools reported that he would take this back for further discussion at Corporate Director level.

On 29 April 2014 Cllrs Hubbard, Prickett and Whalley attended The Academies Show 2014 in London – a national event comprising a comprehensive programme of talks and seminars on all areas of the academies programme. The following emerged as key themes:

- Local authorities vary in terms of the emphasis they place on trading services to schools, with some proactively trading services to schools outside of their local authority area.
- Multi-academy trusts are being given significant attention nationally. A multi-academy trust (MAT) is an organisation that runs a number of academies, which could include Free Schools, under a single charitable company. The advantage of such collaborative arrangements are seen to be economies of scale, shared and better services, a broader curriculum offer, and better opportunities and career development for staff.

On 20 May 2014 the task group met to discuss their forthcoming meetings with head teachers and governors. These meetings will gather schools' perspectives on their relationship with the local authority and how schools would like it to look in the future. The results of these meetings will then inform a wider snap survey of schools across Wiltshire.

**Forward work programme summary:**

- Meetings with school head teachers and governors (June)
- Meeting with the CEO of the White Horse Federation (June/July)
- Receiving details of the take-up of school improvement services traded with schools by the council (June)
- Designing and implementing a survey of Wiltshire schools (September)

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

**Membership:**

Ken Brough  
Trevor Carbin  
Mary Champion  
Sue Evans  
Simon Jacobs  
Alice Kemp (Chairman)  
John Walsh

**Terms of reference:**

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

1. local education and training options, including managing transitions
2. planning for employment and supporting local employers to employ young people with SEND
3. providing housing options to support young people with SEND to live in their communities
4. developing communities that are inclusive, welcoming and supportive of young people with SEND.

**Recent activity:**

On 4 April 2014 the task group met to focus on their forth theme, "Developing communities that are inclusive, welcoming and supportive of young people with SEND." The following was discussed:

- The Head of Campus and Operational Models reported on the consultation undertaken with young people with SEND in regards to the development of community campuses. Work is being done to ensure that the signage in campuses is suitable for those with SEND i.e. signs

included in braille or in symbol form. The task group agreed to visit Corsham Campus once it has opened (June). It was noted that Community Operations Boards (COBs) and Area Boards had a significant role in proactively engaging with people with SEND and ensuring that their community campuses are designed in a way that is inclusive. It was agreed that members of the task group would attend a meeting of the Area Board Chairmen (ABC) to discuss this issue.

- It was provisionally agreed to defer consideration of the task groups first theme, “local education and training options, including managing transitions”, for approximately 6 months. This was to allow time for the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection of Wiltshire College to emerge and as well as other developments in SEND provision.

The task group’s next meeting will focus on its third theme, “providing housing options to support young people with SEND to live in their communities”. Officers from the Housing and SEND teams will provide a briefing on:

- What the housing options are for young people with SEND
- The housing information and advice available
- How this is accessed and when
- The particular housing challenges faced by young people with SEND

#### **Forward work programme summary:**

- Visits to post-16 education providers for SEND in and out of county (September)
- Receive a briefing on the Wiltshire Employment Support Team (WEST), which supports young people in finding and sustaining paid employment with local employers (July/September).
- Receive further details of Supported Internships. (July/September).
- To investigate Wiltshire Council’s approach to employment and young people with SEND, including: Non-traditional interview formats, work experience opportunities, job sharing and the Apprenticeships programme. (July/September).
- Receive a briefing on housing options, information and advice from the council Housing team. (July)
- Meeting with Area Board Chairmen to discuss area board inclusion of young people with SEND. (July)
- Potential meeting with Wiltshire People First, a disabled people’s user led Self Advocacy organisation. (TBC)

## **Proposals**

- 1. To note the update on task group activity provided.**
- 2. To agree that the Education for 16-19s Task Group will pause activity until September 2014, when the situation will be reassessed.**
- 3. To note that Cllr Sheila Parker and Cllr Horace Prickett have taken up portfolio holder positions and are therefore no longer members of the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group.**
- 4. To appoint Cllr Gordon King to the Schools and the Local Authority Task Group.**

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Report author: Henry Powell, Senior Scrutiny Officer,

01225 718052, [henry.powell@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:henry.powell@wiltshire.gov.uk)