

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

14 October 2014

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:

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:

In March 2013 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 and then conducting analysis of the provision on offer. Following further scoping it was decided that the time was not right to begin this review. In June 2014 it was put on hold.

On 9 September 2014 the O&S Management Committee agreed that this task group should now be asked to review the draft Wiltshire Education,

Employment & Skills Strategy 2014 prior to its approval by Cabinet on 11 November 2014. Task group meetings for this are now being arranged.

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 12 September 2014 and considered the most recent Safeguarding Improvement Data Set. The following was discussed:

- Several indicators suggested a rise in child protection activity since the previous quarter. The task group were concerned at the number of indicators RAG-rated as 'red' due to missed targets and exceeding statistical neighbours, including the following:
 - Number of Strategy discussions started
 - Number of Section 47 enquiries started
 - Rate per 10,000 of initial Child Protection Conferences (CPC) taken place
 - Rate per 10,000 children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)

- Members were concerned that the above-target activity could reflect cases being in the child protection system unnecessarily. It was reported that the opening of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has made initiating Strategy discussions easier, contributing the rise in their numbers. One week's worth of Strategy Discussions would be audited to investigate the reasons behind their increase. The task group have requested reports describing the findings of these audits and presenting reasons for the for the number of Strategy 47 enquiries being commenced.
- The task group also received a report introducing the new proposed model for social care audits. The new audit tool and guidance is based on those currently operational in Essex which have been commented on positively by OFSTED. The model is more holistic and allows the opportunity to consult a wider range of stake holders. However, the it will also require more time from auditors for completion. It will be piloted during the mock OFSTED inspection due at the end of September and any further amendments to the model and/or tools will then be made. It is anticipated that the tool and guidance will be in use on a monthly basis by the end of 2014.
- The task group will now focus on a) implementing a consistent protocol for how child protection and LAC indicators should be RAG-rated, and b) agreeing a reporting and monitoring mechanism for the increasingly qualitative auditing framework. Members feel it is important that qualitative audits lead to evidence that conclusions can be drawn from.

Forward work programme summary:

The task group will next meet on 14 November 2014. The forward work programme includes:

1. Multi Agency Forums (MAFs) – current operation and sustainability of MAFs across the county.
2. WSCB Business Plan 2014/15 and Annual Report 2013/14
3. Out of County Placements

3. Schools and the Local Authority Task Group

Members:

Ken Brough
 John Hawkins
 Jon Hubbard
 Gordon King
 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 7 August, 5 September and 12 September 2014. The meetings have focused on drawing out key themes from the task group's meetings with head teachers, and on designing an online survey to be sent to all Wiltshire schools. The survey is scheduled to be launched in October and will be asking head teachers and business managers about their perceptions of the schools services they currently receive from the council and their schools' intentions regarding the future take-up of those services.

Several members of the task group will be attending the LGiU training event in Norwich on the 3 November: Strengthening the role of Councils and Councillors in the Local School System.

Forward work programme summary:

- Designing and implementing a survey of Wiltshire schools (October)
- Attending LGiU training event (November)
- Analysing results of the survey of Wiltshire schools (November)

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:

The task group met on 4 July, 10 September and 3 October. The meetings have covered the following:

Housing

- Members received a briefing on the Homes4Wiltshire process, the particular challenges that people with SEND may face in finding accommodation and the support provided by the council. Housing staff receive some training to understand the needs of vulnerable adults and an easy-read version of the Homes4Wiltshire application form is available. Members are considering whether an easy-read guide to the applications process, designed around people with SEND, may also be helpful to avoid confusion and disappointment during the bidding process.
- An alternative to single occupancy flats is several 'bedsits' located together with space for one stay-over carer. This is an efficient way of providing supported living to several people with SEND and mitigates the risk of tenants becoming isolated in the community. Members were concerned that there may be not sufficient suitable properties available or being built. On 22 October the task group will meet with the executive members for housing and relevant officers from the New Homes team to discuss this.

Employment

- Members received a briefing on the Supported Internships Programme: Eight young people from Wiltshire are being supported under this pilot project specifically designed for young people with complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The young people attend a three day study programme, before commencing two consecutive twelve week work experience placements within the council or one of its contractors. The internships are designed to equip young people with the skills needed for work. At the end of the internship placements the aim will be for the young people to move directly into sustainable paid employment. Members are interested in how this scheme can be expanded and made sustainable in future years, including encouraging other organisations to take part and offer employment opportunities to young people with SEND.
- Members received a briefing on the council's Wiltshire Employment Support Team (WEST), which assists young people into finding and sustaining paid employment with local employers. WEST provides a person centred service, working with the young person to enable them

to reach stability when in paid employment with the planned aspiration for them to do this independently.

Community Inclusion

- Members received a briefing on the work of the council's Voice & Influence Team. Wiltshire is considered a national exemplar of hearing the voice of young people with SEND and has been mentioned in a recent government white paper. New legislation means that young people's views will increasingly take precedence over those of their parents; this heightens the need to ensure the council is consulting effectively with all young people regardless of their disability. Members are interested in to what extent young people's voices have a genuine impact on the policy or service being consulted on.
- Members also received a briefing on the council's Community Connecting team. The team's assists people 14 to 25 years of age with SEND to find out more about their local community and how they can access some of the following:
 - Finding voluntary work
 - Socialising
 - Joining a club
 - Further Education; including College courses and other training opportunities
 - Using their community facilities to do things that they enjoy
 - Meeting friends
 - Traineeships
 - Travel training

Education

- Members visited Fairfield Community College – an Independent Specialist Provider and charity for 18-25 students with learning disabilities. The college site is a 26 acre farm in the village of Dilton Marsh in Wiltshire. In September 2011 the College opened a new café and improved farm shop where students can learn 'real work skills' to prepare them for work experience and post college employment. Residential students live in college houses in the village. The College offers a thirty eight week year to first year students and a forty week year to second and third year students.
- Members are interested the merits of residential provision versus day provision and to what extent the whole cost and impact on outcomes are considered when making placement decisions. They are also interested in how to ensure that all parents and young people have an equal opportunity to secure the placement they would like.

Forward work programme summary:

8 Oct Education: visit to Wiltshire College – Trowbridge campus

15 Oct	Education: visit to Wiltshire College – Salisbury campus
22 Oct	Task Group meeting: Housing: Meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Housing officers
12 Nov	Task Group meeting To discuss the draft final report
25 Nov	Meeting with parents who are members of SW Mencap

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on task group activity provided.**
- 2. To note that O&S Management Committee have asked the Education for 16-19s Task Group to consider the draft Wiltshire Education, Employment & Skills Strategy 2014, with conclusions and recommendations referred to Cabinet for consideration on 11 November 2014.**

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