

## **Children and Young People's Services Select Committee**

**20 June 2018**

### **Draft School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022 Consultation Feedback**

#### **Report by Director of Education and Skills**

#### **Summary**

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills took a decision to consult with stakeholders on the creation of a new school Effectiveness Strategy on 27 April 2018.

The new School Effectiveness Strategy will outline how the County Council will work with education providers over the next four years to ensure that all West Sussex children and young people really do get the best start in life. The County Council is responsible for strategically organising schools and for school improvement across the county to ensure that the school systems works in the most sustainable and effective way to support pupil outcomes.

The consultation invited comments on a Draft Strategy that outlined the County Council's vision, principles and values for education in West Sussex. It proposed aims and objectives for School Organisation and School Improvement which the Directorate will focus on over the next four years. It sets out an approach to build sustainable capacity for school places and incorporates the policy to challenge and support schools to improve by targeting resources, broadening the services that are traded and enabling school-to-school support. This refreshes the current Strategy for School Improvement 2016-2019.

The Consultation opened on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May and will close on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Stakeholders have been able to complete a survey on the County Council's 'Have Your Say' website and discussions have been conducted with stakeholders through the following bodies;

- Primary, Secondary and Special Headteacher Executives – May 2018
- Youth Parliament – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018
- West Sussex County Council Governors Association Meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018
- Schools Forum - 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018
- West Sussex Parent Carer Forum
- Directorate engagement with staff

As part of the consultation the Draft School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022 will be discussed at the Children & Young People's Services Select Committee in to listen to feedback and views.

#### **The focus for scrutiny**

The Children and Young People's Services Select Committee is asked to consider and provide feedback on the Draft School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-22 and make comments before the strategy is finalised and approved by the Cabinet Member.

## Recommendation(s)

- (1) The Committee is asked to endorse the recommendation to progress the development of a new West Sussex School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022. This will incorporate a refreshed School Improvement Policy that will enable the County Council to challenge and support schools to raise standards.

## Proposal

### 1. Background and Context

- 1.1 The new School Effectiveness Strategy will underpin the aims in the West Sussex Plan 2017-2022 to "*Give our children and young people the best start in life*" and "*Ensure West Sussex is a prosperous place*". The new strategy will set out how the County Council will do this in partnership with stakeholders to meet the vision of "*Improving educational outcomes in West Sussex by championing all our children and young people*".
- 1.2 The County Council is committed to resetting its own priorities to address the impact of significant change in educational policy and practice and the local context in West Sussex. There are four clear drivers for changing how the County Council provides leadership; we need to:
  - Improve attainment and progress for West Sussex primary phase pupils
  - Reduce dips in attainment arising from unnecessary multiple transition points
  - Develop our collective commitment to enable all children and young people to experience an inclusive education
  - Secure long-term financial sustainability for all schools taking account the funding challenges that schools and settings face, in the West Sussex context of increasing pupil numbers.
- 1.3 The County Council is responsible for two areas of work that provide the framework for the education system in West Sussex. These are School Organisation and School Improvement; changes are needed in these areas to prepare for and mitigate against forthcoming funding challenges and the local impact.

### 2. Proposal

- 2.1 The Draft School Effectiveness Strategy sets out the priority areas that the County Council wishes to focus on. It summarises what the County Council needs to do in its approach to School Organisation and its policy for School Improvement. The consultation has tested these approaches.
- 2.2 **School Organisation: to create one model of strong and sustainable education for all types of schools and key stages.**

Officers will collaborate with School Leaders and the Dioceses so we can move to a strong and sustainable system for West Sussex under the guiding principles in the [2018 Planning Schools Places Document](#). Discussions will be held to ensure that schools are cost effective and in a viable position to support outcomes for pupils now and in the future. Where there are potential

risks to this, alternative arrangements will be jointly considered. This may include closer working with other schools in local areas. It is anticipated that through this approach opportunities to move towards the objective of all through primary schools can also be pursued.

### **2.3 Improve schools through effective challenge and support to all schools and settings**

To continue to provide effective school improvement in the face of financial challenges, the Directorate will take steps to target its resources more effectively. By categorising LA maintained schools once a year, the team will focus their time on working with schools that are most in need of improvement. To sustain the service, the intention is to grow the number of services that are available for all schools to purchase to generate income. It is anticipated that this and facilitating peer-to-peer support will enable the County Council to continue to deliver the statutory expectations and provide leadership and consistency across the education system in West Sussex.

- 2.4 The consultation also invited feedback from stakeholders on the two aspects of the strategy and to assess the impact of the approaches (see 2.3 and 2.4) that the Directorate will take to meet the aims and objectives.

## **3. Resources**

- 3.1 The School Effectiveness Strategy is being developed within existing resources as part of the Directorate of Education & Skills budget. Additional investment and resources will be required to enable and implement aspects of the strategy. This funding will be sought through appropriate business cases.
- 3.2 The School Effectiveness Service is currently fully funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (£0.8m), the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokerage Grant (£0.7m) and an annual £9 charge per pupil to all West Sussex maintained schools (£0.6m).
- 3.3 The consultation and future strategy is taking account of the changing landscape of education provision, the increasing number of academies, funding for schools and the financial position of the County Council in its ability to continue to deliver fully funded services.

## **Factors taken into account**

### **4. Issues for consideration by the Select Committee**

- 4.1 Scrutiny of the summary of the consultation results provides members of the Children's and Young People's Services Select Committee insight into the views of stakeholders on the Draft School Effectiveness Strategy. The Committee is asked to consider the recommendations as listed above.

### **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The Draft Strategy has been consulted on between 18 May and 25 June 2018. Interim results and emerging themes of the consultation will be presented at the meeting.
- 5.2 Results will be made available to the public on the council's 'Have your Say' portal.

## **6. Risk Management Implications**

- 6.1 There is a risk that if we do not progress the development of a new School Effectiveness Strategy, the Council will be in a position where it continues operating under the current School Improvement policy which is no longer considered fit for purpose. In the face of funding pressures and challenges the current way of working will not continue to be affordable. The service needs to reset its focus to create a sustainable service that supports educational outcomes.
- 6.2 The School Effectiveness Strategy will be accompanied by an action plan to ensure that progress is made against the Aims and Objectives. A number of initiatives will arise that will require capital investment and resources; they will have to be prioritised against other council projects and there is a risk that it won't be secured. The Directorate will seek funding through appropriate processes and with a Business Case when appropriate.
- 6.3 The Draft Strategy sets out a clear direction, and feedback from stakeholders shows that this can divide opinion. In its aspiration to achieve the aims and objectives there may be reputational risk to the council. To minimise the risks, efforts will be made to collaborate with partners at all opportunities to ensure that they are listened to and concerns heard.
- 6.4 All of the initiatives will be managed by the Directorate using a project management approach that includes appropriate risk management tools and escalation.

## **7. Other Options Considered**

- 7.1 There was one alternative option to wait until the current Strategy for School Improvement ends in 2019.
- 7.2 In light of the new West Sussex Plan, this option was rejected to allow the optimum time to make sufficient impact in school improvement and educational outcomes. It is proposed that a new approach will be embedded within the Directorate from September 2018 to prepare for forthcoming changes and allow benefits to emerge as soon as possible.
- 7.3 Replacing the strategy in 2018 ensures its alignment with the West Sussex Plan from 2018–2022.
- 7.4 The Draft School Effectiveness Strategy proposes a direction of travel for the Education and Skills Directorate. The feedback received will inform the final Strategy that will be approved by the Cabinet Member.

## **8. Equality Duty**

- 8.1 The consultation exercise has been structured to ensure people with protected characteristics have had the opportunity to respond accordingly so their views are known and any impacts fully understood.
- 8.2 Feedback is being considered and will inform an Equality Impact Assessment and the final strategy will be amended in line with this and consideration of the council's equality duty.

## **9. Social Value**

- 9.1 Not applicable

## **10. Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 10.1 Not applicable

## **11. Human Rights Implications**

- 11.1 Not applicable

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## **Appendices**

### **Background Papers (documents which are referred to in the report)**