

Meeting:	Children and young people scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	Monday 17 September 2018
Title of report:	Education, development and skills strategy 2018-2021
Report by:	Director for children's wellbeing

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose and summary

To consider and make recommendations to the executive on the Education, development and skills strategy (appendix a).

The strategy sets out how Herefordshire Council will work with partners, including school and college leaders, early years' settings, external agencies such as Ofsted and the DfE and the range of multi-agencies within Herefordshire to raise standards of achievement for children and young people in our county.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) the committee determine any recommendations it wishes to make to inform the executive's consideration of the draft Education, Development and Skills Strategy attached at appendix a..**

Alternative options

1. Each local authority has the strategic lead for education; local authorities have a legal duty to ensure that every child fulfils their educational potential. A strategy for education, development and skills is required to facilitate this and to make the council's strategic priorities clear to all stakeholders; the council could choose not to endorse the strategy 2018/21. There is no alternative option proposed to the recommendation as it is the function of the children and young people's scrutiny committee to make reports and recommendations to the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive.

Key considerations

2. The children and young people scrutiny committee agreed as part of its work programme to undertake pre-decision call in scrutiny on the Education, Development and Skills Strategy 2018 – 2021.
3. The draft education, development and skills strategy 2018-21 attached at appendix a sets out the council's core purpose and key priorities for the next three years, with the overall aim of keeping children and young people safe and giving them a great start in life. This replaces the Strategic Plan for Education for Children and Young People in Herefordshire 2014 – 2017. Outcomes across several key performance indicators, particularly in the primary phase of education, improved over the lifetime of this plan.
4. The council's core purpose centres around children and young people's safety and well-being and on ensuring that there is high-quality provision in Herefordshire so that all children and young people can achieve their potential.
5. Over the next three years there will be a particular emphasis on supporting vulnerable children, particularly children in need, so that they achieve as well as their peers. An additional focus is identified as helping young people make a successful transition to adulthood by tapping into opportunities which exist both within the council and wider community.
6. Central to the plan is better partnership working with stakeholders so that there is a co-ordinated joined-up approach between educational establishments and the range of multi-agencies on key challenges facing children and young people in Herefordshire, such as mental-health and on issues such as county lines.
7. The council aims to continue its approach of supported autonomy for schools and settings that has positively impacted on educational outcomes. Standards in Herefordshire schools have risen over recent years. This is particularly true for outcomes in the primary phase in 2018. Close working with the county's accredited teaching schools is key to developing schools' pedagogy and practice.
8. Getting the best for Herefordshire from regional and national initiatives is at the heart of this strategy. Over the past year, close liaison with external agencies, including the Department for education, has resulted in real benefits for the county such as the successful bid which brought £500k of DfE additional funding for schools and the creation of the 16-19 SEN free school. The Schools capital investment strategy will meet demand for new places in both the primary and secondary phases.
9. The success of the education, development and skills plan will be monitored by key groups, including the Education Strategic Board and the Herefordshire School Improvement Partnership. These groups include leaders from schools, settings and the county's colleges who are absolutely focussed on improving outcomes for

Herefordshire's children and young people. The council monitors the strategy through various mechanisms. These include: members' performance challenge, task and finish groups, children's and young people's scrutiny committee.

Community impact

10. The principal aim of the strategy is to improve outcomes and life chances for children and young people. The strategy sets out how the council, with our partners, will address the issues and priorities identified.
11. The strategy links to the children and young people's plan and its four pledges to keep children safe from harm, healthy, feeling included as part of the Herefordshire community and to develop their ability to 'be amazing' through increasing opportunities for leisure, education and training and through providing better support to overcome barriers to their achievement.

Equality duty

12. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
13. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Our providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regards to equality legislation.
 14. The strategy will support the council in its overall duty to promote equality. In particular, the strategy focuses on improving the educational outcomes of vulnerable groups of children and young people. The strategy proactively supports the council to fulfil its public sector equality duty by requiring all vulnerable children and young people to receive extra support to overcome barriers to their achievement. The education strategy further contributes to the equalities duty of the council by proposing a review of the strategy to improve SEN and disability provision.

Resource implications

15. The strategy will be delivered within current resources and is budgeted for in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS.) There are no additional resource implications arising from the recommendation.

16. The council's children's wellbeing directorate has a total budget of £153m, £122m of which is dedicated schools grant and over £112m goes directly to early years settings, schools and the pupil referral unit. This strategy will influence the use of this and other resources but any decisions that require a council decision will be subject to the correct governance.

Legal implications

17. There are no specific legal implications surrounding the implementation of the Education Strategy, however implementation of this Strategy would demonstrate how the Council is meeting its legal duty under Section 13A of the Education Act 1996 to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential in relation to all its education functions and specifically to ensure that all its education functions are (so far as they are capable of being so exercised) exercised by the authority with a view to:

- (a) promoting high standards;
- (b) ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training; and
- (c) promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person under the age of 20 (or persons aged 20 or over but under 25 who are subject to learning difficulty assessment.)

Risk management

18. There are no risks associated with the recommendations; any risks associated with recommendations made by the committee will inform the executives consideration of its response to those recommendations. The risks are identified in the plan, together with the actions to mitigate them.

Consultees

19. School and college leaders, early years' providers and council officers have been consulted using face-to-face meetings and a survey tool. These groups broadly supported the draft strategy and made further recommendations which have been incorporated.

Appendices

20. Appendix A – Education, development and skills strategy 2018/21

Background papers

None identified.