

<b>Decision maker:</b>	<b>Cabinet member children and families</b>
<b>Decision date:</b>	<b>Friday, 14 December 2018</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Education, development and skills strategy 2018-2021</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Assistant Director Education, Development and Skills, Children and Families</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose and summary**

To approve the Education, development and skills strategy (appendix a) and the Herefordshire school improvement partnership delivery model (appendix b).

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 Department for

Education (DfE) and the range of multi-agencies within Herefordshire to raise standards of achievement for children and young people in our county.

The delivery model sets out how improvement will be taken forward by the partnership across the county. The council aims to continue its approach of supported autonomy for schools and settings that has recently positively impacted on educational outcomes with rising standards in the primary phase over recent years. Close working with the county's accredited teaching schools is key to developing schools' pedagogy and practice.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- (a) the Education, Development and Skills Strategy 2018/21 attached at appendix a is approved; and**
- (b) the Herefordshire School Improvement Partnership delivery model at appendix b is approved.**

## **Alternative options**

1. The executive could chose not to have a strategy and a school improvement partnership.
2. However, councils and local authorities have the strategic lead for education and 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 strategy has been developed in consultation with local authority officers and school leaders with regard to performance information on pupils' outcomes across all key assessment points since 2012.
3. There is therefore no alternative option proposed to the recommendations above.

## **Key considerations**

4. 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; Ofsted recently identified that Herefordshire's primary schools are the best performing in the West Midlands and data indicate that pupils in Herefordshire's secondary schools are making the progress they should.
5. A key priority for the council 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.
6. 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. These are areas covered by the previous strategy where outcomes have been less successful across Herefordshire.

7. Central to the strategy is better partnership working with stakeholders so that there is a co-ordinated joined-up approach between educational establishments and the range of agencies on key challenges facing children and young people in Herefordshire, such as mental-health and on issues such as county lines.
8. 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.
9. 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 guide how demand for new places in both the primary and secondary phases is met.
10. Key groups, including for example the Education Strategic Board and the Herefordshire School Improvement Partnership, will monitor the success of the education, development and skills strategy. 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. The success of the education, development and skills strategy will be measured through the outcomes achieved by pupils at key assessment points; our ambition is to be in the top 25% (top quartile) of all local authorities.
11. The Herefordshire schools improvement partnership delivery model 2018/21 as attached at appendix b forms part of the overall strategy and sets out how improvement will be driven forward over the period subject to the funding available through the Department for Education's School improvement, monitoring and brokering grant. The partnership delivery model gives schools the freedom to develop approaches to tackling key performance issues and therefore improve outcomes for Herefordshire pupils.

## **Community impact**

12. 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. This includes an explicit focus on groups of children vulnerable to poor outcomes, including looked after children and care leavers.
13. 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. The strategy further links to the community safety strategy, the health and wellbeing strategy and the council's overall economic vision by aiming to ensure that children and young people in Herefordshire are healthy, safe and equipped with the skills they will need to be successful adults.

## Equality duty

14. 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.
15. 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.
  16. 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

17. The strategy and delivery model 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.
18. The council's children and families 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 and delivery model 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

19. There are no specific legal implications surrounding the implementation of the Education, development and Skills 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 council 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**

20. There are no risks associated with the recommendations; however, there are potential limitations to its successful implementation, which include government policy change and partners' ability to deliver. The strategy's flexibility and stringent monitoring of performance data will mitigate this.

## **Consultees**

21. School and college leaders, early years' providers and council officers have been consulted informally using face-to-face meetings and a survey tool. The outcome of this consultation was that these groups supported the draft strategy and made further recommendations which have been incorporated.
22. The children and young people's scrutiny committee reviewed the draft strategy at their meeting on 17 September and they confirmed their support for the strategy as a high level statement of intent and requested that further detail on the individual projects are circulated when they become available.
23. The political groups have been consulted as this is a key decision; there have been no comments or objections received.

## **Appendices**

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

Appendix B – Herefordshire School Improvement Partnership delivery model 2018/21

## **Background papers**

None identified.