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| CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | Agenda Item No. 8 |
| 7 JANUARY 2013 | Public Report |

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services

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EDUCATION STRATEGY / IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEN

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and update to the committee on the work around reforming the Local Authorities education function and in improving outcomes for children with SEN through the development of an effective strategy for the future.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee is asked to note the update and to allow the working group to work with officers to further develop the proposals for consultation at the end of January.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 Single Delivery Plan - Programme 1 – Creating jobs through growth and improved skills and education.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At the Scrutiny Panel of the 12th November, a paper was presented to the committee outlining the future role of the Local Authority in Education and within the cabinet member update report, reference was made to the work being undertaken to update the SEN strategy for the city. There are a number of clear drivers for change to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in Peterborough.
- 4.2 Since this meeting, significant work has been undertaken looking at best practice, the situation in Peterborough and interventions that would have the most impact upon outcomes of children and young people. This paper presents the key lines of recommendations from which a new structure and delivery model will emerge. The full details of the background research will be included in the full consultation paper alongside detailed final recommendations going forward.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 Changes in Peterborough are being driven by legislative and localised challenges. From 2010 the Department for Education has been driving whole system change through the increased autonomy of schools. The Education Act 2011 introduced radical changes that have seen a rise in the number of academies to increase the autonomy of high performing schools and enable low performing schools to join successful Academy chains. The 2011 Green Paper for SEND emphasises the involvement of the family in the shaping and control of their support whilst pulling closer still Education, Health and Social Care into single assessment pathways. These changes will result in a requirement for alternative approaches to the current model of provision.
- 5.2 Locally, Peterborough faces continuing budgetary reductions and underperformance of schools. These factors, coupled with rapid growth in population of children, increasing diversity, both

ethnic and economic and a continued rise in the number of children identified as having SEND, put Peterborough City Council under increasing pressure to respond with equal measures of influence and moral authority.

5.3 EDUCATION STRATEGY

In responding to both the national and the local challenge, work has been undertaken to review what an effective education service in Peterborough would consist of. This has been based upon reviewing best practice elsewhere but also taking into account local circumstances that are so unique in Peterborough. The key findings from the work to date are -

1. A number of different models have emerged for LA education services across the country ranging from traditional models (including that currently operating in Peterborough), minimalist provision with the market taking on the role of the LA, outsourcing and the development of schools and local authority partnerships. However, on reviewing these options and the situation in Peterborough, a hybrid model of these approaches is suggested.
2. There is a need to retain a strong core team within Children Services to deliver services which are high priority to the council. Proposed areas include policy and strategy, assets and school planning, admissions and data, data/intelligence and support for schools causing concern.
3. Establish a School-to-School Partnership that is cost effective, successful in delivering outcomes and run by schools for schools from which the LA can confidently commission services. The LA would be a partner in this partnership and it is hoped this can be built upon existing partnership arrangements.
4. Establish strong Data and Intelligence function. This should go beyond the traditional role e.g. of providing school based data, pupil and SEN data and completing statistical returns. It should produce an intelligence framework and create systems that collect all data, including soft information from schools themselves, parents, governors, elected members, parents, traded services that creates a picture and identifies patterns that can be converted to intelligence which allows for early intervention when needed but also identification of the very best practice for dissemination.
5. Create a Continuum of SEND Provision around an agreed pathway 0 – 25 years identifying associated support and provisions. Consider future commissioning e.g. local authority; joint agency including schools; funding from central government initiatives such as mental health or tender for specific services. This ties into the work around developing the SEN strategy and the corresponding offer in the city.
6. Build on the developing framework of multi agency working to establish a clear partnership approach to early intervention, prevention and building capacity in schools for children and young people with SEND. Develop and commission a specialist services team to avoid fragmentation of service delivery, enable streamlined development and delivery of the single plan and utilise the strengths of collaborative partnerships to successfully implement statutory duties and respond to local needs.
7. Review opportunities to work with an external partner to help support school to school initiatives and the core services remaining within the local authority.

5.4 In order to deliver this new approach, there will be a transitional period whilst existing services work alongside new provision as the vision is developed with schools. There will need to be strong leadership of this approach in order to harness school, effect early intervention when needed and engage the interests of a range of diverse providers.

5.5 Some immediate emerging areas for change identified are -

1. In Year Admissions. Develop an advance strategy for admissions, that recognises

annual re-occurring patterns of movement into the area during the summer, and differentiates between an admissions problem and one of supporting students with EAL. Provisional in year admissions should be planned for annually in partnership with all schools to ensure an equitable solution to the issue. The local authority in partnership with schools should consider the development of a clear (and translated) City wide guidance for parents regarding the expectations of attendance, behaviour and support for learning in Peterborough schools.

2. English as an Additional Language. Broker the development through the schools partnership of a network of support and expertise that can be drawn on by all schools to ensure excellent practice in this area. Identify within the network, a champion/lead for this work who will work with the LA to develop supportive cultures for EAL within schools and identify where additional subject specific tuition or a school based “training centre” may be provided.
3. Behaviour Develop a multiagency integrated outreach service to support schools, children and families in relation to social, emotional and behavioural issues. This should be commissioned jointly by the LA in conjunction with Schools; Health, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and Social Care from the Pupil Referral Service and special schools.
4. Ensure that there is a clear and coherent assessment, education and support pathway for more vulnerable children and children with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability from 0 – 25 in order to meet the anticipated requirements of forthcoming legislation. Review and consider the provision available along the pathway and plan future requirements.
5. Embed the development and practice of the multi agency integrated teams, ensuring the involvement of schools and firm up commissioning arrangements between Health, Education, Social Care, CAMHS and the voluntary sectors in supporting the most vulnerable children in the city.

5.6 The final proposals for consultation are planned to be complete by the end of January and it is intended to share these draft proposals with the task and finish group in early January.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN SEN STRATEGY

5.7 There has been significant work in the last year in understanding the delivery of SEN provision across the city. This work is now being developed into a strategy to set the direction of travel for this group in the next 5 years. In developing an SEN strategy, a number of key principals have been established at the outset. These are ensuring -

- 5.8
- Positive outcomes for children and young people in Peterborough are everyone’s business
 - All children and families will have fair access to education
 - Children and young people will receive excellent quality teaching and learning provided by a range of outstanding schools and settings
 - All children and young people will be included with additional support as appropriate, within local community educational facilities
 - Services providing support for children, young people and their families will demonstrate evidence of good outcomes and value for money
 - Children and their families will participate in the design and planning of services that will meet their needs for support
 - Specific needs of children, young people and their families will be addressed by the Local Authority in their role as a strong champion and strategic commissioner of services.
 - A clear pathway for support and intervention will enable families to access the support

that they need when they need it

- Children and young people will benefit from increased mutually supportive working relationships and collaboration between schools

5.9 In address these principles a number of key aims need to be considered within the strategy -

- To ensure that as many children and young people as possible can be educated within Peterborough's schools, accessing any additional support when they need it
- To ensure that children and their families are able to participate fully in decision making and planning to meet their needs
- To confirm roles, responsibilities and expectations of schools, key agencies and the voluntary sector in providing the opportunities and support required to ensure that children and young people achieve positive educational and social outcomes
- To describe how Peterborough will ensure excellent quality of provision and practice
- To enable a proactive response to the legislative changes proposed for 2014
 - Development of single assessment pathway and Education, Health and Social Care plans 0 – 25 years
 - Changes to the guidance on the identification of SEN
 - Use of personal budgets
 - Need to outline clear and transparent information regarding the "local offer"
- To ensure that Peterborough fulfils its duty to publish information (Equality Act 2010) about how it intends to promote the following entitlements for children and young people with special educational/additional needs:
 - High standards in education
 - Participation in decision making, school and the community
 - Identification and assessment of need and
 - Sharing of best practice across schools
 - Availability of quality and robust provisions

5.10 Key to ensuring an effective SEN strategy is ensuring that the correct provision is in place. It has been identified that the current provision across mainstream and special schools for SEN does not meet the current or emerging needs of Peterborough children and there will be a need to revise and potentially decommission elements of this provision. In considering how this provision changes the following is assumed -

- Local authority and partners work in partnership to make emerging and existing SEN needs of individual children
- A need to refocus provision on earlier intervention
- A need to address behavioral issues
- An ethos that supports inclusive education for the majority
- Data on National trends in relation to complexity of need
- Facilities to support pupils with physical needs remain unchanged

5.11 The formal SEN strategy will be consulted on during the Spring period with a full action plan to ensure delivery.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The findings outlined in the report will be translated into a detailed action plan and a new structure to the education support function within Children's Services. This will be presented at the next scrutiny meeting in March 2013.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 A full consultation will take place in the new year once the strategy has been fully developed. Key stakeholders will be involved in the development of the strategy during the autumn.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 The final strategy consultation documentation is being developed and will be available at the end of January. It is intended to share this with the panel's task and finish group in January. Any information will be sent to member of the committee when available. A full update will be provided to this panel in March.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

9.1 None

10. APPENDICES

10.1 None

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