

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 8
14 JULY 2014	Public Report

Report of the Director of Children's Services

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IMPROVING EDUCATION OUTCOMES TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to review the outcomes from the Task and Finish Group. A number of meetings have been held and it's proposed to close the work of this group with recommendations being made for moving forward.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee reviews and agrees the recommendations made in section 5.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since 2012, an informal task and finish group has been working with officers around improving the committees understanding of Education performance and supporting the authority with the changes it is proposing in light of the changing role of local authorities in supporting education. To increase accountability around education, a proposal was made to the scrutiny committee on the 12th June 2013 to formalise this group into a formal task finish group to look at improving education in Peterborough.

- 3.2 The terms of reference (appendix 1) identified that the task and finish group will consider the following areas -

- Consider how to instil in all elected members the vision that Peterborough's educational performance is everybody's responsibility
- How does the new proposed Improvement Board report into Scrutiny?
- What school level data does Scrutiny need to properly exercise their function?
- What information does Scrutiny require from our school improvement team to monitor school improvement role against the Ofsted requirements?
- Consider what data Scrutiny needs to assist in school place planning i.e. ethnicity, in year admissions, birth rate, numbers, available places
- How does Scrutiny challenge their school support services and schools to meet the needs of children in their wards i.e. EAL, special needs
- How will Scrutiny understand the requirements of the Local Authority given the recent academisation programme and its officer's responsibilities?

- 3.3 The task and finish group have met on the following dates –

29th October 2013
9th December 2013
3rd March 2014
25th June 2014

- 3.4 Information shared with the committee has included –

- Detailed breakdown of Foundation Stage, Year 1 Phonics, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, Key

Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 outcomes across a range of measures of attainment and progress broken down into groups including EAL, FSM, ethnicity and socio-economic characteristics.

- Information on the Pupil Premium Grant, best practice from across the country and information from schools at a local level.
- Considered the draft Ofsted report for School Improvement Arrangements.
- Ofsted data outlining the percentage of schools judged good or better at their latest inspection, and the proportion of children attending schools judged good or better.

5. KEY ISSUES

5.1 In line with the lines of enquiries outlined in the terms of reference, the following recommendation are endorsed to the committee (date for completion show in brackets) –

5.2 1. Consider how to instil in all elected members the vision that Peterborough's educational performance is everybody's responsibility.

Recommendation -

- An 'All Party Policy' meeting on education outcomes is held ensuring that members understand the role and duties of the local authority and the difference between maintained schools and academies (Autumn Term)
- Ofsted reports on individual schools are distributed to ward members when published with the opportunity to ask questions of officers where appropriate (ongoing).
- Ensure that the school improvement strategy and other key documents (e.g. school organisation plan) are shared with all members and that they have the opportunity to discuss and question them (following agreement at the Scrutiny Committee)

5.3 2. How does the new proposed School Improvement Board report into Scrutiny?

Recommendation -

- Agreement is being sought with the School Improvement Board that the governor representative for the board is the independent co-opted member of the scrutiny committee (Al Kingsley - who is a governor). This will help a key link to be formed between the Board and the committee (July)
- The terms of reference for the School Improvement Board include a requirement for a termly report to the Director of Children's Services with an annual report to the Scrutiny Committee. (ongoing)

5.4 3. What school level data does Scrutiny need to properly exercise their function?

Recommendation -

- Through reviewing the data available to the authority, the link between ethnicity and achievement will become a standard data set for the committee. In addition, a greater focus on the outcomes for pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant will be considered in the future. These will be included in future reports to the committee (November and March annually)

5.5 4. What information does Scrutiny require from our school improvement team to monitor school improvement role against the Ofsted requirements?

Recommendation -

- Data on the latest position on Ofsted outcomes in Peterborough schools will continue to form part of the regular data set including the proportion of schools judged good or better at their latest inspection. (standard reporting cycle)
- The proposed working party (see later note) will consider in further detail outcomes from the Ofsted inspections of schools in Peterborough. (September onwards)

5.6 5. Consider what data Scrutiny needs to assist in school place planning i.e. ethnicity, in year admissions, birth rate, numbers, available places

Recommendation -

- The school organisation plan covers sufficient information and is part of the annual cycle of reports to the Scrutiny Committee. Where appropriate, the working party may wish to receive updates on the school place planning situation including proposed building schemes. (annual cycle)

- 5.7 6. How does Scrutiny challenge their school support services and schools to meet the needs of children in their wards i.e. EAL, special needs

Recommendation -

- When data is produced for future committees it will be appropriate to do this at ward level to help members to understand how schools in their area are performing. This will not be easy to undertake at Secondary level but at a primary level this could be undertaken. Data on socio-economic, demographic, attendance and educational needs would also help members understand their ward profiles compared to wider Peterborough. (November and March)
- It is proposed that the working party review on a rotation basis the support services provided by the local authority either through visit or report. Examples include attendance, SEN services, finance, school place planning. (September onwards)

- 5.8 7. How will Scrutiny understand the requirements of the Local Authority given the recent academisation programme and its officers' responsibilities?

Recommendation -

- It is proposed that a paper to be brought in this municipal year to the Scrutiny Committee outlining the council's statutory responsibility for Education (including legislation), its role and approach to academies.

- 5.9 To support the continued role of scrutiny to understand in more depth the educational landscape in Peterborough, it is proposed that an informal working party is formed in September from the committee to work with officers within the Education Division to gain a better understanding of Peterborough performance. This will include visits to schools and discussions with Heads and Governors to understand their challenges, approaches and best practice. Notes of visit and outcomes from meetings will be recorded. The outcome of the working group will be reported termly or at the request of the Scrutiny Committee. The group will meet termly to consider the performance of schools.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed recommendations will contribute to raising the profile of schools with Members and ensure that scrutiny has the information it requires to hold the officers to account.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 N/A

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Date of the Education Working Group will be circulated to the committee with a view to setting the first meeting for September. Other actions will be undertaken as outlined in section 5 of the report.

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 Appendix 1 – Improving Educational Outcomes - Scrutiny Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference

1 Purpose and Terms of Reference

- 1.1 For the Task and Finish Group to consider how the Scrutiny Committee scrutinise school performance and its school improvement services to raise educational attainment.

2 Methodology of the review

- 2.1 How can our Scrutiny committee effectively scrutinise school performance and school improvement to challenge both school support services and schools to raise attainment?
- 2.2 The Task and Finish Group will answer the following questions:
- Consider how to instil in all elected members the vision that Peterborough's educational performance is everybody's responsibility
 - How does the new proposed Improvement Board report into Scrutiny?
 - What school level data does Scrutiny need to properly exercise their function?
 - What information does Scrutiny require from our school improvement team to monitor school improvement role against the Ofsted requirements?
 - Consider what data Scrutiny needs to assist in school place planning i.e. ethnicity, in year admissions, birth rate, numbers, available places
 - How does Scrutiny challenge their school support services and schools to meet the needs of children in their wards i.e. EAL, special needs
 - How will Scrutiny understand the requirements of the Local Authority given the recent academisation programme and its officer's responsibilities?
- 2.3 The groups initial focus would be upon the following areas –
- Pupil Premium
 - EAL

3 Identification of Key Witnesses

- 3.1 Although the scope hasn't yet been approved, the following groups are expected to be key witnesses –
- Headteachers / School Leaders / Governors
 - Lead member for Education, Skills and the University
 - Senior Officers within Children's Services
 - External bodies within the city with a vested interest – Academy Trusts, PLP, FE colleges etc.

4 Identification of Research and background information required

- 4.1 It is suggested the data from the November scrutiny panel around outcomes and performance forms the basis for the review. Detailed pupil level information should be available in the coming months alongside detailed comparative data. Historic data will be provided to support the member review.

5 Agreed timescales of review

- 5.1 Report to Scrutiny March 2014. Officers will be called to assist as and when required.

6 Reporting Timetable

- 6.1 It is proposed that the group meets monthly for the initial period of the review.

Membership of the working group is –

Councillor Day
Councillor Fower

Councillor Shearman
Councillor Saltmarsh
Councillor Jamil
Alistair Kingsley