



Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

24 September 2014

Report title	Wolverhampton Governance Strategy 2014 - 2016	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Philip Page Schools, Skills and Learning	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Tim Johnson, Education and Enterprise	
Originating service	Standards and Vulnerable Pupils	
Accountable employee(s)	Alexandra Chilcot	Head of Standards and Vulnerable Pupils
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Report to be considered by	Executive Team	22.10.14

Recommendation for action:

The Panel is recommended to:

1. Scrutinise the Wolverhampton Governance Strategy 2014 – 2016 and comment on the scope and effectiveness of the plans in securing the highest possible standards of governance across all Wolverhampton schools.

Recommendations for noting:

The Panel is asked to note:

2. That this item is being considered as pre-decision scrutiny and will therefore not be available to call-in once a decision is made by the Executive.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 In an increasingly autonomous school system, the new Governance Strategy sets out to capture the role of the local authority in promoting high standards of governance which drive improved outcomes for children and young people across all Wolverhampton schools.
- 1.2 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel is invited to scrutinise the contents of the strategy and make any suggestions or recommendations that strengthen the council's ability to carry out its functions.
- 1.3 The development and delivery of a funded core training package to be rolled out to all governors, focussing on the importance of being a skilled chair and driving school improvement utilising school to school support and mentoring approaches. Evaluating the effectiveness of governing bodies by maintaining an intelligence led approach to ensuring that the Council and governing bodies are effectively discharging their statutory duties, driving school improvement and improving outcomes for children and young people across the City.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Local authorities' statutory responsibilities for governance are set out in section 13a of the Education Act 1996.
- 2.2 That duty states that a local authority (LA) must exercise its education functions with a view to promoting high standards in primary and secondary schools. Local Authorities are discharging this duty within the context of an increasingly autonomous school system where school to school support is key. This requires the LA in 'intervening early to tackle failure' by establishing Interim Executive Boards and using National Leaders of Governance (NLG's) where necessary.

3.0 Discussion

- 3.1 The Wolverhampton Governance Strategy 2014 - 2016 will be circulated for consultation with all schools and other key stakeholders commencing with the headteacher briefing on 25 September 2014. Responses will be analysed by the Learning and Achievement Senior Management Team and incorporated as necessary and approval sought from the Cabinet Member Schools, Skills and Learning. A final draft will be presented to the Executive Team in October 2014 for approval before circulation of the final version of the strategy.
- 3.2 A draft of the strategy is attached for comment – see **Appendix 1**. The strategy explains how the new governance strategy will form an integral part of the overall school improvement strategy aimed at supporting all Wolverhampton schools.

3.3 A copy of the school governor application is attached for information – see **Appendix 2**.

4.0 Financial implications

The cost of implementation and monitoring of the Wolverhampton Governance Strategy 2014 - 2016 and the Councils statutory duties has been included in the approved revenue budget for the Learning and Achievement service. There are no further financial implications arising from this report.
(CF/08072014/N)

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 Under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 the Council has a duty to contribute to the development of the community by securing efficient primary and secondary education in the city. The Education Act 1996 also requires such functions to be carried out with a view to promoting high standards.

5.2 The Wolverhampton Governance Strategy 2014 - 2016 is intended to ensure that the Council succeeds in delivering the requirements of Section 13 of the Education Act 1996.
[Legal Code: TS/02072014/V]

6.0 Equalities implications

6.1 There are no further implications for the Council's Equalities policies arising from this report.

7.0 Environmental implications

7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

8.0 Human resources implications

8.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

9.0 Corporate landlord implications

9.1 There are no direct corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

10.1 Background papers

1. Draft School Improvement Strategy 2014
2. Governor Training and Development Programme 2014/15
3. Governor's Handbook (DFE Jan 2014)
4. Report/letter from focussed inspection
5. Current local authority School Governor application form

11.0 References

- 1996 Education Act section 13a
- 2006 Education and Inspections Act
- 2010 White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching'
- May 2014 'Schools Causing Concern – statutory guidance for local authorities'