

Report of: Chair of Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee

Meeting of	Date	Ward(s)
Executive	29 September 2016	All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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Subject: Alternative Provision Scrutiny Review – Findings of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report requests that the Executive receive the recommendations of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee following the completion of its review of Alternative Provision. A response to the recommendations set out in the report will be considered at a future meeting of the Executive.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee be received.
- 2.2 That the Executive Member’s response be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee’s recommendations.

3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2015 the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee commenced a review of Alternative Provision. The aims of the review included identifying how the number of children in alternative provision can be reduced, how we can ensure that provision is on the highest quality, and how schools and academies are ensuring the best possible outcomes for the most vulnerable children. The Committee considered evidence from a range of witnesses and carried out several visits before forming its recommendations and finalising its report in June 2016. The report of the Committee is appended.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

The proposals in the report need to be costed before a response is made by the Executive.

4.2 Legal Implications

Relevant legal implications will be considered as part of the response to the review.

4.3 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications at this stage. Any environmental implications will be identified as part of the Executive Member response.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The Committee has had regard to any equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses during the course of the review. Details of any such implications are set out in the appended report. A Resident Impact Assessment has not been completed as the Executive is only asked to receive the report at this stage. The impact on residents will need to be fully considered as part of the Executive Member response to the review, at which point a Resident Impact Assessment will be completed if required.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 Overall, the Committee concluded that mainstream school is the best setting for the vast majority of pupils, however appreciated that alternative provision is beneficial for a small number of pupils disengaged from mainstream education. It is hoped that outcomes will be improved through strengthening referral mechanisms and developing the support provided to pupils within alternative provision and those at risk of referral.

5.2 The Committee has made fifteen recommendations related to the review objectives. Several of the recommendations are intended to minimise the need for and use of alternative provision. Recommendations have also been made to increase the effectiveness of alternative provision for the pupils who do require this style of education. In carrying out the review, the Committee met with officers, alternative provision providers, senior school representatives and pupils to gain a balanced view. The Executive is asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations.

Appendices:

- Alternative Provision – Report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Background papers:

- None.

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