

Key Decision Required:	YES	In the Forward Plan:	NO
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CABINET

28 FEBRUARY 2014

REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

A.5 ESTABLISHING AN EDUCATION AND SKILLS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Report prepared by Jon Barber)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- To clarify the arrangements for establishing an Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Education and Skills.
- To propose the role this Committee would have in supporting the Council's community leadership responsibilities in raising educational attainment and aspirations of young people in Tendring, and ensuring skills are aligned to career opportunities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has a comprehensive approach to working with partners, including Essex County Council and primary and secondary schools, to improve the educational attainment and aspirations of young people in the District. Although the Council has no direct accountability or responsibility for education, as a community leader it has a role to ensure partners work together in order to achieve the best outcomes for the District which support the Council's priorities.

An Education Improvement Group has been established, involving head teacher representatives from Tendring schools, which has developed a clear set of outcome-based actions in order to support the delivery of the shared aim to improve attainment.

In addition, the Tendring Locality Board, which brings together the County, District and Town and Parish Council's, has education as a key work stream.

The Council also work closely with partners, including local businesses, to support skills development in Tendring; particularly to ensure skills are aligned to future needs for businesses in the District.

In order to have a clear focus on the outcome of this partnership approach, it is proposed that a dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Education and Skills is established.

This will require a variation of the Constitution, which currently sets out the Council's three Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet recommends to the Council that it:

- (a) Establishes a dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Education and Skills;
- (b) Agrees the Terms of Reference for this new Committee, as set out in this report;
- (c) Determines the membership of the Committee, including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (The Chairman will have the option to have the flexibility to include up to two non-voting co-opted Members of the Committee to be drawn from the education community);
- (d) Approves amendment to the Constitution to allow a dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Committee for education and skills to be established;
- (e) Agrees that the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Education and Skills be paid the same Special Responsibility Allowance as the Chairs of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees; and
- (f) Agrees that members of the Committee have appropriate CRB checks and safeguarding training.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Establishing an Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Education and Skills supports the Corporate Priority to 'ensure people have the knowledge and skills to secure good employment'.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and Other Resources

The proposal would be within existing resources. It is proposed that the Chairman of the Committee be paid the same Special Responsibility Allowance as the Chairs of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

LEGAL

In accordance with Section 15 (duty to allocate seats to political groups) to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the new overview and scrutiny committee for Education and Skills shall comprise eight members appointed from respective political groups as follows:

Conservative (5 Members)
Independent (1 Member)
Labour (1 Member)
Trending First (1 Member)

In addition, it is proposed that the Committee includes up to two non-voting, co-opted members to be drawn from the Education community. This is expected to be a flexible position and used to support relevant issues being scrutinised by the Committee.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities / Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement.

There are no other implications.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

The Council has no direct responsibility or accountability for education. The proposed Committee will therefore focus on the wider partnership approach needed to bring about the education priorities from a number of organisations. The Committee will also consider the role the Council.

The Committee will support the objectives of the Tending Locality Board which has a key priority to improve educational attainment. The Lead Officer shall report back to the Locality Board as required.

The 'Tending Education Group' (composed of Officers from TDC and ECC, Tending Education Trust and representatives from primary and secondary schools in the district) will inform the work programme of the Committee.

Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Education and Skills

The General Role of Overview and Scrutiny

The Council's Constitution sets out the general role and proceedings of overview and scrutiny committees as follows:

- (i) Review and/or scrutinise decisions made, or about to be made, or other actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions, including exercising the right to call-in for reconsideration decisions made by the Executive and not yet implemented;
- (ii) Make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions; and
- (iii) Consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants

Within their terms of reference, each Scrutiny Committee will:

- 1 Review or scrutinise decisions made, or other actions taken in connection with the Council's functions,

- 2 Assist with policy formulation and review of policies
- 3 Make reports or recommendations to the Executive or the Council as appropriate, with respect to the discharge of any Council function or on any matter affecting the Authority's area or its inhabitants.

Overview and Scrutiny for Education and Skills – Proposed Terms of Reference

- The Committee shall consist of eight Members of Tendring District Council and two non-voting co-opted members etc.;
- The only Members permitted to be substitutes on the Committee will be those named at the beginning of the Municipal Year by the party Group Leaders.
- No Member will be permitted to participate in meetings of the Committee unless they have had appropriate CRB checks and safeguarding training.
- The Committee is politically balanced in accordance with Section 15 of the Housing and Local Government Act 1989.
- The Committee will have a standing Chairman and Vice-Chairman appointed by the Full Council.
- Prior to a Committee meeting being convened, the Chairman will approve the co-opted non-voting representatives from the education community relevant to the issue to be scrutinised by the Committee.
- The representative from the Education Community will be expected to possess the relevant knowledge, skills and, if necessary, qualifications to be able to provide the Committee with the relevant advisory role.

The Committee would perform the general functions of overview and scrutiny detailed above.

In support of the Council's *community-leadership* role in respect of improving the aspiration and attainment of young people in the district, this will include:

- Reviewing the key drivers that impact the educational attainment and aspirations in Tendring, including:
 - School performance in its wider remit (including how to support the recruitment and retention of teachers in Tendring schools)
 - School readiness of young people (including reviewing support that can be given to families)
 - The impact of migration into the district and contributory Council policies
 - The roles of partners, including the business sector, in supporting schools
 - Supporting the recruitment and training of school governors
 - The way partners work together to provide improved access to careers information to young people
- Reviewing the work undertaken by the Council, including within its partnership activities, to develop the skills of those that live and work in the District.

CURRENT POSITION

The Education Improvement Group (EIG) includes officers from Tendring DC, Essex CC and membership from primary and secondary schools as well as Tendring Education Trust.

The EIG has developed a set of improvement actions which include developing greater support for schools, families and governors. Currently, the work of this group is reported to the Tendring Locality Board, which is attended by senior Education Officers from ECC and the County's Cabinet Member for Education.

The Council does not have a route by which the work it does to improve education and skills in the District can be reviewed and therefore the proposal to establish an Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Education and Skills would address this.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None

APPENDICES

None