

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee - 19 July 2018

Review of Elective Home Education Final Report

Recommendation of the Review Group

1. That the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee considers the final report of the Review Group on Elective Home Education, with a view to supporting the recommendations and agreeing its submission to the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and Learning and Employability for their endorsement and information.

Report of Julie Roberts, Scrutiny and Support Officer

Summary

Reason for Recommendation

1. The investigation by the Review Group (which was conflated with members of both the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee and the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee) into the issue of elective home education is now complete and the Review Group has produced a final report and recommendations. The Select Committee is asked to consider the report and determine whether it endorses the recommendations. The Committee is also asked to agree its submission to the Cabinet for information.

Report

Background

2. The Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) made a referral to both the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee and the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee in respect of their concerns over the potential vulnerability of Elective Home Education (EHE) pupils in Staffordshire. Following this referral, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of both Select Committees gave consideration to whether there was value in considering this issue again after elements of EHE had been considered as part of the Children Missing Out On Education Working Group in 2014. As a result of the significant increase in EHE numbers, changes to many of the reasons for pupils becoming EHE and changes to the EHE Policy they felt a review would be beneficial.

Summary

3. The Review Group held an inquiry session where it met with a range of Staffordshire parents who had elected to home educate their children, as well as head teachers and officers, to help establish the level of EHE in Staffordshire and the reasons for becoming EHE, specifically why the number of those becoming EHE has risen so significantly.

4. The most significant rise in EHE numbers is around poor school attendance and avoiding prosecution/exclusion. The Review Group has concerns over the reasons behind this rise, which was mirrored nationally, and hopes that this report promulgates their concerns whilst suggesting ways to ameliorate them.

Next Steps

5. Subject to the endorsement of the Committee, the final report, together with any accompanying submission that the Committee may wish to make, will be submitted to Cabinet for its information and endorsement.

Link to the Strategic Plan

6. Ensuring that Staffordshire's children and young people can get the best start in life and receive a good education so that they can make a positive contribution to their communities is a priority for the County Council.

Implications

7. The equalities and legal; resource and value for money; and risk implications are set out in the attached report.

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Appendices/Background Papers

Appendix A - Final Report of the Working Group