

**Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee
24 January 2014**

**Working Group on the Ofsted Inspection of School Improvement Arrangements
Final Report**

Recommendation of the Working Group

That the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee consider the final report of their Working Group on the Ofsted Inspection of School Improvement Arrangements, with a view to endorsing its submission for Executive Response and forwarding to the appropriate Cabinet Member.

Report of Scrutiny and Support Manager

Reason for recommendation

The investigation by the Working Group into the likelihood of Staffordshire receiving an inspection under the new regime on school improvement arrangements and Staffordshire's readiness for any such inspection is now complete and the Working Group has produced a final report and recommendations. The Select Committee are asked to consider the report and determine whether they endorse it for submission to the Cabinet for the provision of an Executive Response. If forwarding the report the Committee are invited to consider if they wish to make any accompanying comments.

Report

Background

On 1 June 2013 Ofsted introduced a new inspection regime focusing on how Local Authorities (LAs) support schools to improve. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee received a report at their 6 September 2013 meeting outlining details of this new inspection process and Staffordshire's preparation for any such inspection. At that meeting the Select Committee agreed to establish a working group to look in more detail at the school improvement arrangements within Staffordshire.

Summary

The Working Group considered the range of factors that would trigger an inspection of Staffordshire's school improvement arrangements and the likelihood of Staffordshire receiving an inspection within the first twelve months of this new regime.

Considerable work has been undertaken in preparation for such an inspection, including re-writing a number of key documents to address the nine key aspects highlighted in the

Ofsted inspection framework document. A Framework document for Staffordshire's school improvement had been produced to ensure consistency and transparency across the County. A number of monitoring tools are available to help support school improvement and the Working Group were particularly impressed with the Staffordshire data dashboard which gave a range of school specific data, allowing comparisons across school type and district.

There have been a number of changes to personnel over a prolonged period, including staff changes resulting from the Entrust joint venture and more recently in the change to Commissioner for Education as well as changes within the school improvement team. This period of flux has been admirably managed by key staff members such as Anna Halliday, County Commissioner for Education and Wellbeing, Anne Newton, Interim County Commissioner for Quality Assurance and Tim Moss, County Improvement Manager.

Next Steps

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 the provision of an Executive Response to the conclusions and recommendations and to the relevant Select Committee for their further consideration.

The Committee is reminded that if recommendations do not require any Cabinet decisions - in other words they can be dealt with through delegated decision making powers - then final reports are submitted to the relevant Cabinet Member only.

Link to the Strategic Plan

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

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

- Final Report of the Working Group