

Committee:	Children's Services Scrutiny Committee
Date:	13 July 2009
Title of Report:	School Improvement Service (SIS) Transition
By:	Director of Children's Services
Purpose of Report:	To provide an update on the transition of the SIS into the County Council

Recommendation: The committee is recommended to note the progress on the transition

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The costs of the transition are, in the main, related to project management, ICT and personnel issues. All transition costs will be met from the core budget which currently funds the contract with CfBT.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The SIS is currently provided by CfBT Education Trust. The contract with CfBT is due to expire on 31 August 2009. The County Council agreed, on 14 October 2008, to bring the SIS back within Children's Services Department (in house). This will take effect from 1 September 2009. This move follows a seven year partnership with CfBT that has seen good improvements in key stage results across the county and successful involvement in ground-breaking national pilots such as Making Good Progress. The transition is a positive step towards ensuring integration of school improvement professionals with all the services and agencies that are focused on improving outcomes for children and young people.

2.2 A Transition Board has been set up which is chaired by Penny Gaunt, Deputy Director of Children's Services. The Board meets monthly and the work of the project has been divided into eight work streams. An update on each of the work streams is set out below.

3. ICT

3.1 The ICT work stream has several key areas of focus:

3.2 Ensuring that the teacher and training database, which is used for the management of training events and conferences and by delegates to book a place on a course, continues to work well. A third party supplier has been chosen to provide support for the teacher and training database. They have proposed a resilient interim solution which will provide the security for this business critical database. The next milestone is to have the test system set up for the end of June 2009. Over the next twelve months the Council will be developing an alternative system which will be compatible with County Council systems. The test version of the Governor Services system will be installed by the end of June.

3.3 Ensuring the appropriate support for staff to ensure seamless continuity of high quality services. All SIS staff will receive a new laptop/computer and CfBT home broadband connections will be transferred to the County Council and maintained for a year pending a long term corporate solution to nomadic (flexible) working. A separate ICT project is investigating the use of 3G connectivity as a long term solution to nomadic working. Mobile telephone numbers will be transferred.

3.4 It has been agreed that all data, other than traded services data and other data identified as commercially sensitive to CfBT, will be returned to the County Council. SIS staff will send any 'work in progress' emails to their new county council email account and all remaining emails will be archived by CfBT.

4 Human Resources (HR)

4.1 The Council's HR team is working closely with CfBT HR to ensure a smooth transfer of CfBT staff back within Children's Services. The consultation process is ongoing and the Council are

answering any questions raised about the transition and the TUPE (transfer of undertakings and the protection of the employment act) process. Another aspect of this work stream is to collect the required information to ensure that all staff are on the Council's HR system for 1 September and personnel surgeries were held for CfBT staff in May to begin this process.

5 Accommodation

5.1 The accommodation work stream is focused on ensuring that the accommodation at St Mark's is fit for purpose. Some small building modifications have been recommended to the transition board.

6 Structure

6.1 On 1 September all CfBT staff will transfer in their current role. From 1 October ESCC will be consulting on a new, more integrated structure that is future proofed, fit for purpose and meets local, national and individual school needs.

7 Finance

7.1 Work is ongoing on the 2009/10 budget for September to March and on the 2010/11 budget.

8 Marketing and Communication

8.1 A communications strategy has been agreed for the transition. The key areas of communication are with CfBT staff, service users and internal communication with County Council staff and Members. Key areas of communication include:

- a monthly transition newsletter which is sent to all CfBT staff;
- a headteacher liaison group has been set up with good representation from primary, secondary and special schools to discuss the transition, as well as the Monitoring, Challenge, Intervention and Support Policy and the Raising Achievement Strategy;
- a monthly update on the transition in the Virtual School Bag;

8.2 On 6 July a consultation report on the transition will be presented to the County Forum meeting which is attended by East Sussex Governors' Representative Group (ESGRG).

9. Induction/Training

9.1 To ensure business continuity training has been arranged for SIS staff prior to the transition, this includes:

- MS Outlook training which will include the email/internet policy e-learning training which all staff must complete before they can send external emails or use the internet;
- SAP training, for the Council's financial systems;
- super user training for the NGN telephones; and

9.2 On the 7 and 8 September 2009 a two day conference will be held for all SIS and 14 – 19 staff, which will focus on our future improvement agenda and include an introduction to Children's Services and key council policies and procedures.

10 Legal

10.1 Appropriate legal advice has been sought from the Council's legal team as and when required.

11 14-19 MOG

11.1 A sub group has been set up, reporting into the Transition Board, which will look at specific areas of work related to the transfer of Learning and Skills Council (LSC) staff as part of the 14–19 Machinery of Government (MOG) proposals. These staff will be integrated with the SIS staff and be part of the revised structure we consult on in October 2009.

12 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

12.1 Members are recommended to note progress on the transition.

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Local Members: All