

Report to: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **22 January 2019**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title: **Scrutiny Review of Schools Coping with Change – the Way Forward**

Purpose: **To provide the Cabinet with the opportunity to comment on the report of the Scrutiny Committee Review of Schools Coping with Change – the Way Forward**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1. note the report of the Scrutiny Committee; and**
 - 2. advise the County Council that, in considering the report of the Scrutiny Committee, the Council be recommended to welcome the report of the Scrutiny Committee and to agree the response of the Director of Children's Services to the recommendations and their implementation as set out in the action plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report.**
-
-

1. Background

1.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee agreed on 27 November 2017 to appoint a 'Schools Coping with Change – the Way Forward' Scrutiny Review Board. Subsequent to this, and following the Council's review of its scrutiny arrangements, the People Scrutiny Committee reaffirmed its commitment to the review at its meeting on 25 June 2018.

1.2 Members were particularly keen that the review should have a forward-looking nature. The goal therefore was to develop recommendations that would ultimately help schools and academies be better placed to cope with change. More specifically, and following its initial discussions, the Board decided to focus on issues relating to school partnerships, small schools and the role of strategic bodies.

1.3 At the People Scrutiny Committee on the 27 November 2018, a report of the Review Board and recommendations to Cabinet for comment and Council for approval was presented.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Scrutiny Review Board was comprised of Councillors Roy Galley, Kathryn Field, Laurie Loe, Francis Whetstone and Matthew Jones, Parent Governor Representative. Councillor Galley was elected as the Chair of the Review Board. Following earlier changes to the membership of the committee, Councillors Stephen Shing and Alan Shuttleworth and Nicola Boulter, Parent Governor Representative also contributed to the work of the Review.

2.2 The Department's response to the Board's recommendations and action plan are set out at Appendix 1.

2.3 The Department would like to thank the Review Board for its work and recommendations. The Department's responses highlight our current and proposed plans to address the recommendations. For example, our existing strategy *Excellence for All* and our 2018/19 priorities deal with the issues of securing high quality leadership and governance across all our schools, colleges and settings and building a coherent and sustainable self-improving school system. In 2019 the Department will be preparing a refreshed *Excellence for All* strategy for publication in September 2019. This will take account of the core offer proposals and the areas of work we plan to reduce subject to the outcome of the core offer consultation.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Scrutiny Review has provided a useful insight into some of the current challenges for schools and potential for further change in relation to their organisation, funding and governance. It is recommended that Cabinet agree to the implementation of the action plan detailed in Appendix 1.

STUART GALLIMORE
Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: ELIZABETH FUNGE
Telephone Number: 01273 336879
Email: Elizabeth.funge@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS

ALL

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None