

Subject:	Brighton & Hove Education Partnership Proposal		
Date of Meeting:	6 March 2017		
Report of:	Executive Director, Families Children and Learning		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposal for the next stage in the development of the Brighton & Hove Education Partnership. Following approval from Committee in summer 2016, there has been an engagement period with headteachers and governors from July to December 2016. The attached document gives more details of the engagement. This paper proposes a pilot phase of the Brighton & Hove Education Partnership to begin in April 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the feedback from the engagement phase on developing the Brighton and Hove Educational Partnership.
- 2.2 That the Committee approves the proposed approach and timeline for development of the partnership.

3. LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 3.1 There is already strong and effective partnership working in Brighton & Hove. This is seen in all areas of education in the city and has contributed to improved outcomes for pupils at all key stages and a higher than national percentage of schools judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted (December 2016).
- 3.2 There is committed and excellent leadership and a great deal of high quality teaching, learning and assessment practice in schools and colleges and wider partners. School to school support is growing, both informally and formally and there is a strong cadre of National Leaders of Education and National Leaders of Governance. Since the last committee meeting four of the city secondary schools have been awarded teaching school status on a national pilot and there is also an application for teaching school status from a group of schools in Portslade and Hove, led by Benfield Primary School.
- 3.3 The further development of citywide partnership working could bring this together to accelerate the pace of improvement, maintain and develop partnership working and keep the Brighton & Hove education 'family' together. This would

avoid fragmentation and give a strategic voice to school and college leaders and education partners in creating a strong future for learners and promote effective and efficient ways of working for partners.

- 3.4 Nationally the education landscape is changing at rapid pace. There is a drive for the development of a self-improving schools led system, the growth of teaching schools and in some parts of the country significant structural change with free schools and multi academy trusts. The White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' (March 2016) proposed further changes in this area. However in May 2016 the government acknowledged that this approach was not appropriate for all and further legislation was not pursued to force schools to become academies. The statutory role of Local Authorities (LA) in relation to school improvement also remained and there was an acknowledgement that there would be a dual system operating with trusts and LAs responsible for schools in different areas

4 The Brighton & Hove Education Partnership: the recommended approach

- 4.1 It is recommended that there is further development of partnership working, through the Brighton & Hove Education Partnership. The main aim will be to focus on continuing improvement of outcomes for all young people across the city. The approach proposes the coming together of the different partners in the city, initially through a memorandum of understanding.

More detailed proposals are in the attached paper as appendix one. It is proposed that the Brighton & Hove Education Partnership will work to improve outcomes in the city through:

- the identification and addressing of agreed citywide priorities: where there are areas that everyone is seeking to improve, everyone can work together,
 - Building a self-improving school improvement system: ensuring every school is on track for success
 - supporting and facilitating further partnership working through the sharing and brokering of best practice. The partnerships have a range of different strengths but this is not always shared across the city. This is limiting possible development and the pace of change could be faster if there was a pooling of the intelligence and practice. The Brighton & Hove Education Partnership will bring this together.
- 4.2 All education partners in the city will be invited to join the partnership. There is a wide range of providers in the city. In addition to the two universities and three Further Education colleges, there are also maintained schools, academies and their sponsors and a standalone Bi lingual Free School. There are Church of England and Catholic schools and we would also wish the two dioceses to be partners as we move forward.
- 4.3 It is proposed that initially there will be no cost to join the partnership. The Council will contribute continued advice, coordination and facilitation through the Senior Advisor Education Partnership and clerking and administration. We will also endeavour where appropriate to direct any council funding that is available

linked to the agreed priorities with an expectation there is match funding or resource provided from the partnership. Financial arrangements will be reported to Schools Forum and considered by the Schools Block Working Group.

- 4.4 Governance will be through a strategic group of education leaders from across the city. They will agree priorities and set direction. Priority Task and Finish groups from across the city will form to address the priorities and Ongoing Development Groups will be in place to lead on areas, such as school improvement and leadership.
- 4.5 One of the main elements to develop is an effective communication system, so different partners can access easily what is happening in the city and for the growing body of knowledge and development opportunities. The proposal is that is developed by a working group of school leaders in partnership with the Sussex Learning Trust who have the funding, capacity and expertise to do this.
- 4.6 It is not proposed at this stage to make the partnership into a formal legal entity. Leaders will sign up to a memorandum of understanding.
- 4.7 It is proposed that pilot arrangements start in the summer term 2017. Feedback from the engagement period made it clear that school leaders and governors wanted to understand better what the Brighton & Hove Education Partnership would add. It is proposed that the partnership is reviewed in spring 2018 to assess progress and to explore whether the informal status is still appropriate.

5 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1 The engagement paper included a number of options within it, such as the development of a formal entity and exploring trust status. The response from the engagement was at this time this was not the avenue they wished to explore. The full analysis of the engagement phase is in the attached paper.

6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The engagement phase had two main elements. There was an online portal open to all school and college leaders and governors. This was to ascertain whether there was an appetite to create the partnership along the lines of principles and values suggested by headteachers and to suggest different ways forward to enable the co- construction of the approach the partnership will adopt.
- 6.2 The second element was through face to face meetings carried out by the Senior Adviser, Education Partnerships. She attended over forty meetings including meetings with individual headteachers and principals, school partnerships, the university staff, Diocesan Directors of Education and governors' meetings. A full list is in the attached paper, but the main themes were:
 - That there is a commitment to partnership working, but that the advantages of this approach need to be made clear.
 - Clear benefits for membership without replicating or duplicating existing work.
 - A preference to see the partnership in action first, before formally committing

- Little interest in making this a formal entity at this stage, but an interest in knowing more about what this entails.
- 6.3. The attached document gives more detail about the reasons why we think the partnership is a good approach, the engagement process and the suggested structure of the Brighton & Hove Education Partnership that arose from the engagement. It also identifies some practice from other parts of the country and some reasons why we may want to explore the idea of a legal entity in the future.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The engagement phase showed that there is commitment to the development of a Brighton & Hove Education Partnership. In the rapidly changing education landscape it has the potential to further improve outcomes for young people and strengthen and cement the existing partnerships. It gives the opportunity for a city voice in education. It also addresses the research that shows that school to school support and development is a positive way forward.
- 7.2 The engagement gave the message that school leaders would like to see the proposed model before finally agreeing to it and this paper recommends that Committee approve a pilot phase, starting in the summer term 2017 and a review and consultation about the future form in 2018. Committee is asked to support the recommendations.

8. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 8.1 Given the changing landscape in relationship with schools and the local authority, the relationship will need to change. The initial plan is not to charge schools to join the partnership, however where there are specific projects, contributions from schools will be required. Officer time to support the partnership will be met from existing resources.

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore

Date: 19/01/17

Legal Implications:

- 8.2 The setting up of an Education Partnership will assist the Local authority in fulfilling its statutory duty in relation to promoting high standards in schools and among other providers so that children and young people achieve well and fulfil their potential as defined by section 13A of the Education Act 1996.

Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston

Date: 21/02/17

- 8.3 Equalities Implications:

The proposed Brighton & Hove Education Partnership is committed to improving outcomes for all pupils, particularly those in vulnerable groups. It is underpinned by strong moral purpose for the good of all.

- 8.4 Sustainability Implications:
Improving outcomes for young people will contribute to improved health and happiness. Giving opportunities for staff will improve the workplace
- 8.5 Any Other Significant Implications:
The Brighton & Hove Education Partnership will be committed to the development of a self-improving schools system which reflects the potential changing responsibilities of the Local Authority for school improvement.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Brighton & Hove Education Partnership: The Proposed Approach

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. none

Background Documents

Appendix 1

- 1.1 Crime & Disorder Implications:
By improving outcomes for children and young people in the city this may lead to greater engagement in the community.
- 1.2 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:
If nothing is done there is a risk that there may be a fragmentation of the education providers in Brighton & Hove which could lead to a drop in outcomes and a slowing of the pace of improvement.
- 1.3 Public Health Implications:
Improving outcomes for children and young people could lead to better health and well-being.
- 1.4 Corporate / Citywide Implications:
The Brighton & Hove Education Partnership would support the priorities of a good life and a vibrant economy.

