

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of the Corporate Director for People

to
Cabinet
on
20th Sept 2016

Report prepared by: Brin Martin,
Head of Learning

Agenda
Item No.

'Our Ambition for your child's education' – an Education Policy for Southend

People Scrutiny Committee
Executive Councillor: Councillor James Courtenay
A Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report introduced the proposed education policy document "Our ambitions for your child's education in Southend" as set out in appendix one. The report is intended to inform Cabinet of the reasons behind the policy, indicate the purpose that it hopes to serve and outline the consultation process that will help shape it further.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note, approve and adopt the draft policy, and the finalisation of the policy be delegated to the Director of People in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

3. Background

- 3.1 Currently there is no education policy or vision that exists for Schools in Southend owned by the Council. As such, it would be difficult for parents, careers and indeed learners to understand the purpose of the Council's education services and functions.
- 3.2 The education climate has and will continue to change significantly over the next few years. Council has already recognised the need to ensure coherence influence and governance of this mixed economy of maintained schools and academies through the establishment of the Southend Education Board from 1st September 2016.
- 3.3 It is therefore even more important that the Council sets out clearly and unambiguously its education intentions and ambitions, based upon its statutory obligations to residents.
- 3.4 Education of children and young people is a relationship between three parties, parents, schools and the Council. This ambitions policy articulates the Councils

obligations and services that it is required to deliver to learners and their families. It recognises that Families and schools are in fact the prime educators of learners, and does not attempt to cover that relationship.

- 3.5 In making it clear its ambitions for children and young people, it bravely articulates what the Council aspires to do for them, in measurable outcomes, and further sets out in simple terms what services they can expect from us, the Council. However, it goes further to outline what it is the Council can expect in return from families to support us in delivering these duties.
- 3.6 The document has been derived through the Learning Service teams within People Directorate following significant consultation and engagement. It therefore has the ownership of the Council teams.
- 3.7 Following consultation, the document will be formatted to make it attractive and easy reading for parents and young people. It will then be formally launched as the Education Policy for Southend Borough Council.

4. Summary of benefits of the proposal

- 4.1 The policy will form the basis of the educational ambitions for families and young people in Southend.
- 4.2 It will allow them to see clearly what it is that the Council aspires to deliver on their behalf, and be able to hold us to account for those achievements.
- 4.3 It will allow far greater clarity when parents and families communicate with the Council on Education matters.
- 4.4 Importantly it will allow the Council to set out its own expectations of how parents and families can support the work of the Council and schools in educating their children.

5. Other Options

No other options were considered. (Please see reasons for recommendations below).

6. Reasons for Recommendations

The absence of any policy documentation on behalf of Southend Borough Council at the time of considerable uncertainty does not allow the Council to coalesce its statutory services with its ambitions for young people. This absence would ask questions concerning what is it that the Council does and wants for children, young people and their families in education terms.

7. Corporate Implications

The ambitions support the priorities identified by the Council for Education and school outcomes.

8.1 Financial Implications

The resource implications arising from the key priorities for each of the ambitions within the policy will be contained within the existing resources of the Service.

8.2 Legal Implications

The ambitions articulate the statutory duties and obligations that reside with the Local Authority.

8.3 People Implications

None

8.4 Property Implications

None

8.5 Consultation

Following Cabinet scrutiny, the policy will be the subject of further consultation. It will be shared with parental and young people's groups to secure their support, including Parent forum, Family Voice, parent Information Advice and Support Service and youth cabinet.

Secondly, the document will be made available to schools for comment via the Southend Learning Network. However, it should be remembered that this document is about the Council and its services ambitions rather than the work of schools.

8.6 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The ambitions support the Council's policy on supporting vulnerable groups, in particular disadvantaged learners.

8.7 Risk Assessment

None required

8.8 Value for Money

None

8.9 Community Safety Implications

None

8.10 Environmental Impact

None

9. Background Papers

None

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 'Our Ambition for your child's education' – an Education Policy for Southend