

Cabinet

11 April 2024

Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024-2029

Recommendation

That Cabinet:

- 1) endorses the Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 and recommends it for approval to full Council; and
- 2) subject to Council approval of the Warwickshire Education Strategy, endorses the Delivery Plan appended at Appendix 3.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Council has a general duty under section 13 of the Education Act 1996 to secure that efficient education is available to meet the needs of the population of Warwickshire and the Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 sets out how the Council will do this. The Council's Constitution includes the Education Strategy in its Policy Framework and any changes to the Policy Framework are reserved to full Council to approve.

1.2 The Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 (**Appendix 1 – Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029**) will be the primary strategic driver for the Council in relation to its Education Service over the next five years. It will provide the foundation for all current and future work, facilitating a unified approach towards addressing its four priorities.

1.3 The four priorities include:

Priority one: Best Start - To secure the very best start for all children in the county.

Priority two: SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and Inclusion - To encourage ambition, create opportunity, and support all learners to be the best they can be.

Priority three: Sufficiency and Admissions - To ensure that Early Years, school and post 16 places are provided in the right place at the right time.

Priority four: Strong System - To operate as strong systems leader across the county to strengthen, influence and develop high quality, inclusive education provision that is accessible to all.

- 1.4 The implementation of the Strategy will be supported by:
- A Strategic Pipeline, whereby additional, supporting strategies will be developed. (**Appendix 2 – Education Strategy and Pipeline on a page**).
 - A Delivery Plan which will be monitored quarterly and updated annually. (**Appendix 3 – Education Strategy Delivery Plan 2024-2025**).
 - An emerging Education Transformation Programme (ETP).
- 1.5 The success of the Strategy will be measured via a range of performance indicators which will complement the Council Plan 2022 – 2027.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The Council has a number of funding sources available to support the implementation of the Education Strategy, the associated Delivery Plan and the emerging Education Transformation Programme. These include the core funding allocated to the Education Service, the £1m grant from the Department for Education to support the Delivering Best Value programme in relation to SEND, the commitment in the capital budget resolution to support a programme of capital investment to expand resource provision in schools to reduce the deficit on the DSG High Needs block and the funding allocated from the Revenue Investment Fund to support the SEND and Inclusion Change Plan.
- 2.2 There will be a need to prioritise the use of resources to support both the Delivery Plan and the Education Transformation Programme once it is finalised and brought to Cabinet for approval. This later report will demonstrate how the available resources will be used to support the delivery of the Education Strategy.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct environmental implications associated with the Education Strategy. However, the Strategic Pipeline does encompass the current Outdoor Education Strategy 2022, the ambitions of which impact on the environment, in that.
- *All children and young people should have access to and enjoy high-quality outdoor education and learning, appropriate for their age, ability, and experience.*
 - *Educators need to consider the value of and embed outdoor education and learning in their curriculum planning.*
 - *Education settings provide regular, frequent, enjoyable, and challenging opportunities for all children and young people to learn outdoors.*

- *A culture of outdoor education and learning is being developed within all education settings, raising awareness of the importance of the outdoors for leisure and learning for both children and their families.*

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The education landscape within Warwickshire is both varied and diverse. The county is host to some 250 schools ranging from those that are maintained, selective, single, or multi academy trusts. Accountability for these settings is complex, with our Council retaining the responsibility for maintained schools, and academy trusts accountable to the Department for Education (DfE). Irrespective of the governance structures and accountability, when it comes to the provision of Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), School Admissions and Attendance, Children in Care (CiC) and Early Years the Council has a range of statutory responsibilities and a leading role in ensuring delivery.
- 4.2 Our role in education has changed significantly over the years, and the Council performs a myriad of different functions within an increasingly complex system. We operate as a key delivery partner, facilitator, and system leader; seeking to do this within the realms of continued challenges regarding internal and external financial constraints and the continuing requirement to pursue both value for money and positive, inclusive outcomes for all children.
- 4.3 The Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 provides the high-level strategic direction for all future work across the Education Service. It will be underpinned by a comprehensive, cross cutting Education Transformation Programme and supported via several new and emerging strategies, plans and approaches which are outlined in our Strategic Pipeline.
- 4.4 The Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 has been evolving since early 2023. During this time, it has been informed and developed by wide stakeholder engagement, which has included insight from children, young people, parents, schools, Early Years and Post 16 providers.
- 4.5 Its purpose is to provide a firm foundation for all current and future work across the Education Service over the next three years by nurturing a unified approach and firmly placing the Council as a strong, influential leader within the wider Warwickshire Education system.
- 4.6 A Delivery Plan is being developed to accompany the Strategy. The current draft is at Appendix 3. The Delivery Plan will be monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis. Alongside this, our Education Transformation Programme activity will see the development of a new performance dashboard that will enable us to effectively track our progress and the impact of our actions.
- 4.7 The key deliverables from the Strategy will be incorporated into the Council Delivery Plan with progress reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. Regular updates will also be provided to the Council's Children and Young People's

Overview and Scrutiny Committee alongside the established reporting on educational outcomes. In addition, the SEND Member Panel will monitor progress against the SEND elements of the Strategy.

4.8 The Strategy and its accompanying Delivery Plan will be further bolstered by a Strategic Pipeline whereby additional, supporting strategies and plans will be implemented, developed, and delivered. These include:

- Outdoor Education and Learning Strategy 2022
- Early Years Integrated Plan 2024- 2027
- SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 2029
- Education Sufficiency Strategy 2024 – 2029
- School Effectiveness Strategy 2024 - 2029

4.9 In addition to this, the emerging Education Transformation Programme will aim to inject sustainable change across the breadth of the Education Service.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps.

5.1 Once endorsed by Cabinet, the Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029 will go to full Council for approval and if approved will be published and implementation and delivery will immediately follow.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1: Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029
2. Appendix 2: Education Strategy and Strategic Pipeline on a page
3. Appendix 3: Education Strategy Delivery Plan 2024-2025

Background Papers

1. N/A

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): None – this is a County wide report

Other members: Councillors Brown, M Humphreys and Roodhouse