

Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Warwickshire Education Strategy Annual Review 2019

14 July 2020

Recommendation

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee are invited to note and comment on the progress and impact made with the Warwickshire Education (WE) Strategy to date in the 2019/20 school year, as summarised in this Mid-Year Review.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 During the Autumn Term 2019, an internal annual review of the Warwickshire Education (WE) Strategy 2018-2023 was undertaken to take stock of the progress made in the first year since it was released.
- 1.2 The first annual review presented an opportunity for Warwickshire's education system leaders and the Education Strategy Board to reflect on the strategy's achievements to date and to identify priority areas of focus for its development moving forward.
- 1.3 The findings of the review identified many causes for celebration in the strategy's key priority areas with evidence of successful collaboration with partners. It was demonstrated that the work of the Warwickshire Education Strategy continues to operate as a vehicle for supporting and challenging local schools and settings and helping them to play a leading role in shaping and leading the work of the local area education system.
- 1.4 Subsidiary strategies have been produced since the initial launch to support these priority areas including an Integrated Early Years Strategy 2020-2025 and Careers Strategy to address, in detail, the pre-school and employability and skills elements of the strategy that were previously identified as underdeveloped and in need of greater attention.
- 1.5 Whilst a number of positive developments were identified from the progress made, it is clear that more work is required to understand the true extent of the impact of the strategy in relation to its objectives and performance measures and whether it is making a positive impact on its stakeholders.

- 1.6 It should be recognised that the Warwickshire Education system, in the main, performs above national average standards on most fronts, this should be kept in perspective when taking account of the Warwickshire demographic and the need for us to compare more favourably amongst the leading local areas nationally, to ensure we are setting the expectations and standards bar high enough.
- 1.7 Therefore, as part of this first annual review, the Warwickshire Education Strategy delivery plan has been refreshed to include measurable targets that raise the aspirations of the strategy to achieve more for Warwickshire with statistical neighbours a common benchmark. This action will provide a clearer and more certain picture of impact and help to inform future target setting.
- 1.8 The annual review has also reintroduced the concept of an annual 'plan, do, review, analysis cycle' for our education strategy as a means of growing stakeholder engagement through a consistent communication methodology, targeting feedback and enabling more inclusivity in future reviews.
- 1.9 The language of the strategy was identified as a barrier to engagement and as a result external updates on the strategy are to be communicated in future in a clear and easily understood manner, avoiding the overuse of acronyms and the 'WE' abbreviations that were formerly used throughout the strategy's communications. Common educational abbreviations included in daily practice will continue to be used and explained.

2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 Achievements and next steps in these areas are summarised in the Annual Review Autumn 2019 (see Appendix 1).
- 2.2 An annual cycle of end of year review (Autumn) and mid-year review (Spring) will provide monitoring of progress of the strategy for each of the future years of the 2018-2023 timeline.
- 2.3 Monitoring will include stakeholder analysis in future reports to the Education Strategy Board.
- 2.4 A mid-strategy evaluation report is proposed for Autumn 2021 to include progress against performance measures, special achievements, stakeholder perspectives and priority setting for the remaining duration of the 2018-2023 strategy.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The funding of Education Services resource capacity to enable the delivery of the Warwickshire Education Strategy is dependent on both an annual budget setting process and inclusion in the WCC MTFs 2020-2025.

4. Environmental Implications

- 4.1 Sustainability initiatives will be encouraged where appropriate within the Education Strategy.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 Following the conclusions of the review, Education stakeholders in Warwickshire were given the opportunity to contribute feedback and share ideas for developing the strategy.
- 5.2 A proposal to refresh the strategy following this feedback has been approved by Corporate Board on 3rd June and will be presented to the Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 14th July.
- 5.3 Approval will enable the relaunch of the refreshed strategy at the start of the new school year in September 2020.

Appendices

1. [Warwickshire Education Strategy Annual Review Autumn 2019](#)
2. [Warwickshire Education Strategy Delivery Plan 2020](#)

Background Papers

None

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

Local Member(s): none

Other members: none