

By:	Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning & Skills Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning & Skills
To:	Education Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2013
Subject	Education, Learning & Skills Bold Steps Business Plan 2013-14
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary:	<p>The purpose of this report is to enable Members to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Consider an updated Education, Learning & Skills Bold Steps Priorities for Improvement 2013-2016 document (Appendix A). This paper details progress made since the publication of the original document and provides the headline business planning priorities for the ELS Directorate for 2013/14 and beyond. (ii) Consider and comment upon the proposed priorities and targets in the draft 2013/14 ELS Service Business Plans (Appendix B), which have been informed by Education Bold Steps and other legislative, policy and financial constraints. (iii) Consider and comment upon the ELS draft Directorate Risk Register (Appendix C).
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1. Introduction

1.1 Effective strategic planning for improvement is a pre-requisite for any organisation to ensure a clear focus on delivering agreed organisational priorities and outcomes. Education Cabinet Committee plays an important role in shaping and influencing business plans, before they are formally approved by Cabinet in March 2013.

2 Education Bold Steps Business Planning 2013-14

2.1 A revised Education Bold Steps document (attached as Appendix A) sets out Kent County Council's (KCC), Education, Learning and Skills (ELS) vision, priorities and improvement targets from 2013 - 2016. This refreshed set of priorities and targets to promote and champion education excellence and support the drive towards ensuring that Kent becomes one of the best places in the country to be educated, builds upon the progress that has been made since the document was published in May 2012.

2.2 There are positive indicators that the situation is improving. Schools' and early years settings' results continue to improve at each key stage, with significant improvement at key Stage 2 in 2012. Performance in the Early Years Foundation Stage and GCSE is above the national average and improving. There have been 45 inspections since the beginning of this school year, 30 schools (66%) were rated as good and among these 25 schools improved from a previous satisfactory judgement. This is very encouraging. Other indicators, such as the the narrowing of the FSM achievement gap, suggest we are going in the right direction. We also know that many 'satisfactory' or 'requires improvement' schools are well led and making good progress, and a good number of these schools significantly improved their Key Stage 2 results in 2012, so that we can be more confident of a future good inspection outcome. It is expected that this positive trend will continue and gather pace.

2.3 As a result of this progress and to ensure appropriate stretch and challenge, Education Bold Steps priorities and targets have been reviewed and revised, in light of progress to date. Accordingly, Education Cabinet Committee is invited to consider the updated Education Bold Steps priorities and targets document, attached to this report.

2.4 The Bold Steps for Education plan sets a series of ambitious targets for 2016 to help ensure a significant improvement in education in Kent. Good or outstanding leadership and teaching are at the heart of the plan, which aims for at least 85% of primary and secondary schools and 100% of special schools to be judged good or outstanding by Ofsted by 2015. This is deliberately ambitious in order to challenge ourselves to do much better very soon.

2.5 KCC's approach is driven by moral purpose. Good education is life enhancing but poor provision is damaging to children's life chances, and where poor provision is made for disadvantaged children the damage to their progress is greater. We are taking a very systematic approach, therefore, to school improvement in Kent focusing greatest effort where most improvement is needed. All schools currently rated as inadequate (19 schools) and as 'requires improvement' are working closely with the Kent Challenge programme. There are 194 schools requiring improvement, including 165 Primary schools, 20 Secondary schools, 5 Special schools and 4 Pupil Referral Units.

2.6 More importantly, good practice, greater consistency of expectations and increased capacity in leadership and teaching will spread more rapidly across the education system in Kent through effective school collaboration and well designed partnerships. We are doing this to make sure that the best schools, teachers and leaders share their skills across the county and there is stronger commitment to schools working together to focus on improvement. This work has made rapid progress, which is very encouraging. There are now nearly 50 collaborative improvement hubs of schools with clear partnership agreements funded by the grant from the Schools Forum. In some cases improvement is being delivered through hard federations and sponsored academy arrangements but the common factor across all the models of collaboration we are seeing develop is the commitment of headteachers and other senior leaders to the improvement of other schools beyond their own school. School to school support works well when brokered helpfully by the local authority, and it is our strong commitment to do this properly in Kent working closely with all partner schools, including academies, teaching schools and the headteachers who are our National and Local Leaders of Education.

3. Business Planning, Performance Management and Risk

3.1 The Bold Steps document is the overarching strategic plan for Education, Learning and Skills. It is supported by more detailed business plans for each service area. There are seven strategic services in ELS: Standards and School Improvement; Skills and Employability; Inclusion (formerly Advocacy and Entitlement); Fair Access; Educational Psychology; Provision Planning and Operations and Special Educational Needs and Placement. Each service area's draft Business Plan is attached as Appendix B of this report.

3.2 The emphasis for the 2013/14 draft business plans is identifying clear, tangible actions. Actions are underpinned by annual milestones to check activity progress. They are further complemented by meaningful Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Activity Indicators that enable the organisation to monitor and manage performance, and to demonstrate progress against the delivery of Education Bold Steps for Kent. High level risks relating to the delivery of the actions are set out in the business plans, supported by a Directorate Risk Register (Appendix C).

3.3 Key risks and mitigating actions faced by each service in ELS in delivering their 2013/14 business plans are outlined in Section E of each Business Plan. In addition, the key risks from across the Directorate that threaten the achievement of business objectives are listed in the Directorate Risk Register

3.4 It is important that the business planning process closely complements and supports the work already underway to improve the quality and consistency of performance and risk management across the organisation. As such, the draft business plans draw on the existing work to develop the Directorate Performance Scorecard and Divisional Risk Registers. This will enable business planning to become a meaningful tool to influence day to day business whilst ensuring that KCC's strategic priorities are met. Cabinet Committees play an important role in

providing oversight and assurance through the bi-annual business plan outturn monitoring process and regular oversight of the scorecard performance data.

4. Business Planning Timetable 2013/14

4.1 Business plans are approved by Cabinet. From 2013/14 business plans will be made as an annual Key Decision, with Cabinet Committees playing a key role in considering and shaping the draft plans prior to approval as part of pre-scrutiny.

4.2 As a result the timetable for the development of business plans has been brought forward so Committees have an earlier opportunity to comment on draft plans. As such, this will be the last opportunity for Cabinet Committees to formally consider draft plans before approval by Cabinet in March 2013.

4.3 It is not possible to include detailed financial information, as the 2013/14 budget has not yet been approved by County Council. As such, the plans have some incomplete sections and will require further development and refinement.

4.4 Following feedback from the Cabinet Committee, the ELS Corporate Director, Directors and Cabinet Member will further develop and refine the draft plans.

4.5 The approved plans will go live and be published online in April 2013.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Education Cabinet Committee is invited to:

- (i) Note and comment upon the updated Education Bold Steps 2013-16 document, attached as Appendix A which sets out the priorities and targets, with more detailed actions and milestones in the draft 2013/14 ELS service area business plans.
- (ii) Consider and comment on the draft ELS service area business plans set out in Appendix B.
- (iii) Note the key headline Directorate risks set out in Appendix C.

Appendices

Appendix A: Updated ELS Bold Steps for Kent Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2013-16

Appendix B: ELS service draft business plans 2013-14

Appendix C: ELS Directorate draft Risk Register 2013-14

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