

By: Leyland Ridings, Cabinet Member, Children Families & Education & Sarah Hohler, Chair of the PSHE Member Advisory Group

To: Children, Families and Education Policy Overview Committee  
– 27<sup>th</sup> March 09

Subject: PSHE Members Advisory Group

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**Summary:** This report presents an update on the activities, progress and future development of the cross party Members Advisory Group on PSHE.

For information and approval of recommendations.

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## **Introduction**

### **Background to PSHE Members Advisory Group (MAG)**

1. In October 2007, the Leader of the Council requested that an informal member advisory group (MAG) was set up and chaired by Mrs Sarah Hohler. This MAG was to focus on Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), in particular it was to oversee the implementation of certain recommendations of the previous PSHE select committee, chaired by Ms Jane Cribbon.
2. The PSHE Select Committee's report had been published in March 2007 and presented eighteen recommendations (see Appendix 2). Recommendation ten of this report states that a strategy for a more systematic Personal, Social and Health Education delivery, coupled with more robust assessment and monitoring methods, be written and adopted in all the primary and secondary schools in Kent. This strategy is to be supported by a developmental action plan to be implemented by 2011.
3. The Terms of Reference of this informal member group were as follows: -
  - To oversee the development of the Kent PSHE Strategy.
  - To oversee the development of a Kent PSHE curriculum which emphasises responsibility and relationships.
  - To identify opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of PSHE in Kent.
  - To promote the role of PSHE as a key driver for ensuring the wellbeing of young people.
  - To ensure young people are involved at every stage with the design and delivery PSHE.

4. In addition and in recognition of the different levels of provision in schools, every member of PSHE MAG was asked to champion PSHE and to convey the significance of PSHE.

### **Activities of MAG**

5. The Committee has been very proactive and is clearly very committed to this important agenda. It has met on nine separate occasions to receive oral and written evidence from several witnesses working for the Children, Families and Education Directorate and other partner agencies. The Committee has also visited three schools.
6. Evidence from these meetings has formed the basis of the Group's report, which includes additional recommendations for action. This report can be found at Appendix 1.

### **Developments**

7. There have been many developments in the field of PSHE since the initial meeting of PSHE MAG.
8. The members of the Group have worked with officers to produce the PSHE Strategy, which was launched at the Secondary Headteachers Conference in November 2008. This has been distributed to all schools and stakeholder partners.
9. In October 2008, the Government announced that PSHE will become a statutory part of the school curriculum from Key Stage 1 to 4 (ages 5 to 16). This is likely to take effect from 2011.
10. The announcement comes in response to the principal findings of both the National Review of Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in Schools and the report by the National Advisory Group on Drug and Alcohol Education, which both recommended that good PSHE was vital to providing a healthy, rounded education. In addition, PSHE MAG lobbied Rt Hon Ed Balls MP by letter asking for PSHE to become a statutory subject.
11. It was also announced that Sir Alasdair MacDonald, will lead a review into how best to make PSHE statutory, ensuring that there is a place in the timetable and flexibility in the curriculum to take schools' ethos, pupils' needs and parents' values into account. Updated guidance will also be produced covering the content of the curriculum, based on the existing non-statutory programme of study. Sir Jim Rose is currently undertaking a review of The Primary Curriculum. His final report and guidance for all aspects of the principles and content for PSHE will not be known until summer 2009. The Committee wait expectantly for these developments.

### **Recommendations**

- 1) In light of the progress made, and the future developments that are expected, the Members Advisory Group feel that there is an ongoing role for them to play in supporting the further development of PSHE and the implementation of the Kent PSHE Strategy. The group would recommend that it continues to support PSHE through monitoring the progress of the Kent PSHE Strategy action plan by lead officers reporting three times a year.
- 2) That officers be commended for their ongoing support.

### **Action**

That this report is received and the recommendation regarding the future continuation of the Members Advisory Group be approved.

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