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To: Education and Young People’s Cabinet Committee – 23 November 2016

Subject: Education and Young People's Services Strategic Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2017-2020

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All

Summary: The purpose of this report is to:

- (i) Provide an updated draft Education and Young People's Services (EYPS) Strategic Vision and Priorities for Improvement (formerly Education Bold Steps) 2017-2020 document, which details the headline priorities and targets for the EYPS Directorate for 2016-2017 onwards;
- (ii) Provide Members with an assessment of progress and achievements against key targets in 2015-2016, supported by key service developments and improvements.

Recommendations: The Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the refreshed draft EYPS Strategic Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2017-2020 document attached as an Appendix to this report;
- (ii) Note the progress made in delivering EYPS priorities for 2015-2016 and endorse the proposed priorities and targets for 2016-2017 and beyond, as the right focus and challenge to secure further improvements in outcomes.

1. Background

1.1 The draft EYPS Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2017-2020 (formerly Education Bold Steps) is the key strategic document for the Directorate. Significant progress has been made since the document was originally published in 2012. It is refreshed annually and sets out the priorities and targets for the Directorate services for the forthcoming year, and subsequent years to 2020, informed by new developments. The document evaluates the previous year's performance against targets and sets new priorities and challenging targets to ensure further improvements, informed by progress against current performance and new local and national developments.

1.2 The refreshed set of priorities and targets in the Appendix are underpinned by a clear ambition to see all children and young people in Kent get the best start in life by doing well in education, finding employment, leading happy and fulfilled lives, ensuring that Kent becomes one of the best places in the country to live, grow up and be educated.

1.3 Our strategic plans and targets are set out in more detail in the following key documents:

- The Early Years and Childcare Strategy
- The School Improvement Strategy
- The SEND Strategy
- The Vulnerable Learners Strategy
- The Education Commissioning Plan
- The 14-24 Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy
- The NEETs Strategy
- The Early Help Strategy and Three Year Plan
- Youth Justice Plan
- The Adult Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy

2. Financial Implications

2.1 As the financial climate becomes ever more challenging, Education and Young People's Services, in line with other service Directorates, has consistently had to meet ambitious savings targets and deliver ever greater efficiencies and improved outcomes.

2.2 The key priorities and actions that each Service within the Directorate undertakes in order to deliver improvements in performance against identified targets will be achieved within the agreed levels of resource detailed in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-2019. These priorities will be reflected in the Service and Directorate Business Plans for 2017-18.

3. The progress achieved in 2015-2016 including key Service Developments and Improvements and review of performance against targets are set out in the attached document.

In summary during 2015-16 we:

- **Refreshed** our Early Years and Childcare Strategy in April 2016, which sets out our ambitions to achieve improved outcomes for children in Early Years and Childcare settings. We have embedded the 'Kent Progress Tracker' which

enables settings to monitor all children's progress and also piloted a Children's Centre Progress Tracker for future county-wide use; introduced the 'Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning (EFICL) Toolkit for Early Years and Childcare providers to raise parental and family involvement in children's learning, a Toolkit which won the Nursery World Award 2016 for Staff Resources and has also been shortlisted for the Children and Young People Now Awards in November 2016 ; and embedded over 50 formal Early Years Collaborations (involving almost 450 settings) to work together to narrow the achievement gaps for vulnerable pupils, share best practice and utilise data to accelerate improvement in children's development and learning.

- **Improved** the quality of education in Kent schools year on year since 2011, which is reflected in Ofsted Inspection judgements. The percentage of good and outstanding schools in Kent was 55% in 2011. Overall, the latest Ofsted data (as at October 2016) for Kent shows that 90% of schools are rated good or outstanding. This includes 20.8% of schools judged to be outstanding and 69.2% judged to be good. In Kent, there are now 373 good and 112 outstanding schools, 51 schools requiring improvement (including 38 Primary schools and 12 Secondary schools) and 3 schools in a category, out of a total of 539 schools that have a current inspection result. There are now 23 more good and better schools than at the same time the previous year. We expect this positive trend to continue towards our targets of at least 95% of Primary and 90% of Secondary schools judged to be good or outstanding by 2019.
- **Continued** to improve pupil outcomes. Performance in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 continues a very good upward trend over recent years, with performance in Kent well above national averages. At Key Stage 2 outcomes continue to improve and are above the national average for all indicators, apart from Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling where Kent is in line with the national average. Outcomes at Key Stage 4 indicate Kent has performed well against the new and old headline GCSE performance measures and against national averages. Compared with 2015 GCSE results, there has been a clear improvement in attainment with 58.6% of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSE graded A*-C including English and mathematics, which is an improvement on 2015's figure of 57.4% and 1.6% above the emerging 2016 national average of 57%. Results at Post 16 are more variable with a declining trend at A level but improving outcomes in vocational qualifications. This is disappointing.
- **Further** developed the work of the Kent Association of Headteachers (KAH) and its organisation into four new Area Boards, together with the system of school to school support and collaboration. The KAH works in partnership with the Local Authority to develop a self-improving school system in the county. An important aspect of this process has been the promotion of collaboration and school-to-school support. During the past year 522 Kent schools were involved in collaborative projects for school improvement. Of the collaborating schools, 329 benefited from successful bids for funding to the KAH Area Boards. These bids were focused on raising standards, narrowing achievement gaps, improving teaching, building leadership capacity and supporting schools to improve OFSTED inspection outcomes.

- **Developed** a new Leadership Strategy for Kent schools, which was launched in October 2015 with a 3 year implementation plan which is being delivered and monitored through the Kent Association of Headteachers. The strategy was co-produced in partnership by the Local Authority, Kent Association of Headteachers, the Dioceses, Kent and Medway Teaching School Network and the Kent Association of Governors.
- **Reviewed and reorganised** the provision for children and young people with medical needs, including mental health. New management led by an Executive Headteacher is now in place to focus on continuous improvement of the Kent Health Needs Education Service (KHNES). All six resource hubs have been established with five already open and the remaining one to be opened in January 2017. The new model of service delivery enables the provision of an outreach service to schools and young people.
- **Developed** support to manage challenging behaviour in Primary schools and reduce rates of exclusion. We have put in place better quality assurance and monitoring systems to ensure that the eight Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Primary school hubs deliver the support that meets local needs and results in a reduction in permanent exclusions. In February 2016, we piloted a single digital point of access for PRU, inclusion and attendance providing information about prevention and statutory support. We have had particular success in reducing permanent primary school exclusions by 38% (47 in 2014-15 to 29 in 2015-16).
- **Delivered more effective** Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) and a new way of working in Kent. There has been good progress since introducing the new model of working in each district. The services which came together in April 2014 now deliver integrated ways of working and provide a firm foundation to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families in Kent. We set out our priorities and targets in the new Early Help Strategy and Three Year Plan 2015-2018. In the past year the percentage of Early Help cases closed with a positive outcome is 84%.
- **Refreshed** the 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy to ensure a clearer focus on employer engagement, linking the curriculum to the world of work, collaborating on the delivery of English and Mathematics post 16 and more effective partnership work in providing improved curriculum pathways for 14 to 19 year olds. Twelve new District data packs have been produced with detailed information on labour market intelligence and student performance to inform curriculum planning. The refreshed document outlines the key actions that we are taking to achieve further progress and improvement, including ensuring there is a more joined up approach between schools, FE colleges and training providers to develop 14-19 progression pathways. Work with employers has significantly increased through the development of 8 Sector Guilds and the increased involvement of employers in the Kent and Medway Skills Commission.
- **Delivered** the new the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014 so that, by January 2016, over 3,000 Kent children and young people were benefiting from Kent's SEND Strategy. This means that significantly more children and young people are receiving a better quality education and

provision to meet their needs. We have firmly embedded the new 20 week assessment for education, health and care plans.

- **Developed** our Fair Access services to achieve better integration of activity to support admissions, in year fair access, elective home education and children missing education. Collaborative working with the PRU Inclusion and Attendance team has resulted in identifying and securing provision for those not in receipt of education, more quickly. There has been significant improvement to our published materials and website content to help parents take informed school choices and the Admissions team met all its legal timeframes and duties in relation to administering the admissions process.
- **Developed** a more integrated approach to manage demand for home to school transport and reduce the financial pressure arising from SEN transport and out of county placements. We introduced Personal Transport Budgets (PTB) for families as an alternative to the existing service and almost 270 families are participating in the scheme. Compound savings since the inception of PTB are now in the region of £1m.
- **Continued** to develop EduKent and expand our traded services so that it is supported by more effective business planning, marketing and tailor made procurement of services for schools. Income has exceeded £36m and over 40 services are provided to schools. There are now 1600 customers with 23,000 contracts.
- **Succeeded** in commissioning and delivering the planned number of new school places overall for September 2016. The majority of these new school places were within the Primary sector. We expanded 36 Primary schools, including 16.5 new forms of entry added to schools for Reception year classes and 150 temporary Reception places that will not be needed in the long term. In addition, we opened two new Primary schools. Over 120 places have also been added to Secondary schools.
- **Provided** a Community Learning and Skills programme which was recognised by Ofsted as Good in all key aspects in its June 2016 inspection of the Service, including its provision for 16-18 and 19+ Apprentices and Adult Education.
- **Developed** the Adult Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy with partners, established four Adult Skills forums, eight Sector Guilds are developing clear action plans between employers and training providers, colleges and schools to promote opportunities within the priority employment sectors in Kent. The Strategy continues to inform the service specification for CLS commissioned services.

4. Priorities for the Year Ahead (2016-2017)

The priorities and targets for 2017 and beyond are set out in the attached document.

In summary, by 2017, we aim to:

- **Improve** educational outcomes and reduce achievement gaps at all Key Stages
- **Increase** the percentage of good and better schools to at least 92%.
- **Reduce** the number of schools in an Ofsted category to 0.
- **Increase** the percentage of good and better early years settings to 96%.
- **Increase** the percentage of good and better Children's Centres to 80%, and ensure at least 70% of needy families engage with, and benefit from, support by Children's Centres.
- **Reduce** NEETS to 1% or below.
- **Reduce** permanent exclusions to no more than 55.
- **Continue to deliver the targets in the 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy**, including priorities to improve the vocational, technical and training offer so that there is further improvement in the employability skills of young people and in the number taking up and successfully completing apprenticeships (7,900), resulting in a further reduction in youth unemployment to no more than 2% by summer 2017.
- **Deliver 7,900 apprenticeships** for 16-24 year olds, including 3,600 for 16-18 year olds and ensure at least 88% successfully complete their apprenticeships.
- **Deliver the NEETs Strategy to ensure there is a significant reduction in NEET numbers** for Children in Care, children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, young offenders, pupils attending PRUs and alternative provision and other vulnerable groups such as young carers and those who are home educated.
- **Make a significant improvement to outcomes for Children in Care** and markedly reduce the number of CiC who are NEET and in the Youth Justice system.
- **Deliver** the priorities in the SEND Strategy to increase provision and pupil outcomes in Kent, so that there is improved attendance, attainment and progress for SEN learners, a reduction in out of county places and their cost, and a reduction in SEN transport costs.
- **Reduce out of county SEND placements** to no more than 495 and ensure 90% of new Education, Health and Care Plans are completed within 20 weeks.
- **Deliver the new Kent Health Needs Education Service (KHNES) and improve outcomes for pupils** with mental health needs, with good re-integration rates (90%) for pupils back into mainstream schools. The rate of

re-integration is steady but not at the expected level yet. This is in no small part due to the high numbers on home tuition.

- **Champion school leadership in Kent** through supporting the implementation of the 'Kent Leaders in Leadership' strategy co-produced with the Kent Association of Headteachers and other relevant stakeholders, which aims to ensure that school leaders in Kent are supported and developed for the future and that system leadership continues to grow across the county.
- **Continue to deliver the School Improvement Strategy** to ensure all schools requiring improvement become good and outstanding schools within the next 18 months and there are no Kent schools providing an inadequate quality of education. By summer 2017 we expect no schools to be inadequate.
- **Work with schools and early years settings to deliver a more focused approach** to narrowing achievement gaps and achieve better outcomes for all vulnerable groups with a specific focus on the Pupil Premium, SEN and Children in Care.
- **Continue to implement the Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2016 - 2019** to ensure there continues to be sufficient high quality free places for two year olds, robust plans are in place to deliver the 30 hours of free childcare for the eligible working parents of three and four year old children with effect from September 2017, more good early years settings achieving positives outcomes, more children are well developed to start school and there is better integration of the work of Children's Centres, Early Years settings and schools.
- **Deliver the Education Commissioning Plan** so that the needed growth in good quality school places is delivered on time for September 2017, and ensure that improved parental choice and planned improvements for September 2017 are on target.
- **Reduce the rising cost of SEN Transport** and make more efficient use of SEN funding by reducing the increasing costs of SEN pupils placed out of county, as well as working with schools at risk of deficit budgets to ensure there are clear improvements by 2017.
- **Ensure the Community Learning and Skills Service is** delivering the improved outcomes in the Business Plan for adults and young people, especially the more vulnerable.
- **Deliver the Early Help Three Year Plan**, and further integrate Early Help and Preventative Services so that at least 90% of intensive support cases are closed with outcomes achieved, and work with Specialist Children's Services so that at least 30% of closed children in need cases are stepped down to Early Help.
- **Improve the attendance of children and young people by supporting the reduction of persistent absence** and focusing on the new 10% threshold for persistent absence. The percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from Primary schools is currently 9.3%. This will reduce to 7% by 2020. Similarly,

the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from Secondary schools currently stands at 13.2% and this will reduce to 9.5% by 2020.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Good progress is being made by the Directorate in reviewing and redesigning services, whilst maintaining and driving improvements in standards and outcomes for children and young people. Similarly, we are strengthening our relationship with all partners who provide support for children and young people within Kent, particularly Schools (including academies and free schools), early years providers, Specialist Children's Services, FE and HE, employers, work-based training providers, the Regional Schools Commissioner, Health and other key stakeholders.
- 5.2 We shall continue to build upon the priority actions detailed in the document appended to this report, reflecting upon what we learn through implementing changes and use this learning to inform the future configuration and practice of the Directorate in order to better support Kent's children and young people in the achievement of their ambitions.
- 5.3 Many aspects of education in Kent continue to improve, including more good and outstanding schools and better standards of achievement at the end of Primary education and at GCSE. The system as a whole has moved on significantly but some groups of children and young people are still being left behind, and these are our **biggest challenges**.
 - Our achievement gaps for Pupil Premium pupils, Children in Care and learners with Special Educational Needs are still too wide and their outcomes are not good enough.
 - Our NEET figures are still too high and too many 16-18 years are either not participating in education or training or they do not have the right options, support and provision to ensure they achieve success.
 - Too many 16-18 year olds and some older students with learning difficulties and disabilities do not have the right educational provision available for them in their locality, including the support they need to access training and employment.
 - We still have 10% of schools (15% of Secondary schools) that are not yet good or outstanding, which limits the opportunities for the children and young people attending those schools.
 - Like many parts of this country our educational success is put at risk by the challenges of recruiting the right teachers, headteachers and other staff in key services.
 - As more schools become academies, and form multi-academy trusts, there is a big challenge in the system to develop the kinds of leadership and governance that will deliver success in the future.

- And as the system changes there is a challenge for the local authority to adapt its services and to work in even more robust partnership with schools to ensure the right services are available and all children are supported, with a sense of shared responsibility for the needs of all children and young people.
- 5.4 In light of continued financial pressures and reforms to the shape and structure of education in recent years, KCC is looking at the shape of education services in Kent for the future. As you know, the main provisions of the 2016 Education White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere', has been dropped and there will no longer be an Education for All Bill. This means that both the forced academisation of schools in areas considered to be "unviable", and the removal of the council role in school improvement, will not now happen, at least in the immediate future.
- 5.5 In this changing environment the local authority will retain a number of important responsibilities but will need to continue to change the way it delivers and funds its services and the way it works with the education sector.
- 5.6 A key strategic aim is to continue to have a coherent and sustainable approach to working in close partnership with schools and to delivering services that are fundamental to supporting schools, children, young people and families. Against a backdrop of future reductions in funding and the development of Local Authorities as commissioning bodies we have been considering the options available to KCC to meet its statutory duties for education whilst furthering its aspirations for the schools, and children and young people of Kent.
- 5.7 As the education landscape continues to evolve, KCC needs to ensure that it maintains the capacity, local knowledge, understanding and expertise to provide essential support services that schools rely upon to function effectively, enabling school leaders to concentrate on raising standards and ensuring the best outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.8 Education support services will still be required by schools, so KCC is developing proposals to create an Education Services Company to deliver a range of education functions and services to schools.
- 5.9 A report will be brought to this Cabinet Committee later in the year about this development when a full business case has been approved.
- 5.10 Our ambition remains to provide a sustainable model of services for the future that enables schools to maintain their trajectory of improving school standards in all phases, ensures the maintenance of a strong relationship between KCC and schools and increases the pace of improvements to transform services and improve outcomes for children and young people.

6. Recommendations:

Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the refreshed draft EYPS Strategic Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2017-2020 document attached as an Appendix to this report;
- (ii) Note the progress made in delivering EYPS priorities for 2015-2016 and endorse the proposed priorities and targets for 2016-2017 and beyond, to provide sufficient focus and challenge to secure further improvements in outcomes.

7. Background Document

7.1 Education and Young People's Services Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2016-2019.

8. Contact details

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