

Report to:	RESILENT COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Delyth Curtis, Director of People
Date of Meeting	1 September 2016

SCHOOL LED SYSTEM AND BLACKPOOL CHALLENGE UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To inform Scrutiny Committee of the work undertaken with regard to School Improvement and to update on the progress and implementation of developments within the Blackpool Challenge.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To determine if the content of the report is sufficient to allow the Committee to sign off Recommendations One, Two and Three of the Pupil Referral Unit Scrutiny Review Final Report.

2.2 To scrutinise the development of the school led system.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 For Members of the Scrutiny Committee to be fully informed as to the work of the Blackpool Challenge Board and have assurance that Blackpool is continuing to meet its statutory obligations for future inspection requirements. The Local Authority retains a statutory responsibility to monitor all schools in order to support improvement and raise the attainment and progress for all children in the area.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is 'Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience'.

5.0 **Report**

5.1 **Guiding Principles**

- 5.1.1 The Governance framework around schools needs to support the achievement of improved outcomes for Blackpool Children through the raising of standards and attainment and improving the performance of schools at all key stages. In the changing landscape of education and the role of the Local Authority it is important that the development of a school led system underpins the work required and progresses the work of the Blackpool Challenge Board.
- 5.1.2 The school led system needs to be transparent, challenging and collaborative; driven by data openly shared. System leaders will share best practice; provide peer to peer support and scrutiny; partner and support the strategic direction of the Blackpool Challenge Board and take collective action around improving outcomes.
- 5.1.3 The model will build on the current clusters and shape itself whilst considering cross phase working. A Blackpool School Improvement Partnership led by schools and Cluster Leads will be established to support the work at school level and address brokerage and commissioning across a wider footprint. This arrangement will support the delivery of the White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere; building capacity and sustainability into the self- improving system.

5.2 **Blackpool Challenge Board**

- 5.2.1 Established in 2015 by the Regional Schools Commissioner and Local Authority to address key concerns around the rapidly changing landscape with regard to academisation and sponsors, coupled with poor Key Stage 4 results, the Board has been chaired by Professor Sonia Blandford since May 2015. The Board has grown in strength and now incorporates Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Special and Post 16. The purpose of the Board is as follows:
- Improve pupil outcomes in reading, writing, mathematics, science and technology
 - Improve behaviour and attendance
 - Improve parent and carer engagement
 - Improve employability
- 5.2.2 Supported by an ambitious set of agreed metrics and data around Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 along with transition and inclusivity and number of good and outstanding schools, the Board has a clear vision – 100% of children progress 100% of the time. The membership of the Board is inclusive and covers all areas of the education sector including representation from the Regional Sector Improvement Team and the Regional Schools Commissioners office. Providing a very clear focus on engagement the forum has acted as a conduit across the Borough to a range of improvement initiatives in a relatively short space of time.

A set of priority subgroups underpin the work of the Board namely:

- Governance and Leadership
- Data and Evidence
- Teaching and Learning
- Inclusion and Transition

The Board has secured 2015/2016 funding to support specific pieces of work including;

- £461,000 – School Forum/Local Authority – Secondary funding
- Philanthropic funding
- National Monies – pilot(s)

Schools have accordingly produced action plans for activity and monies have been released and overseen by the Board.

There have been a number of outcomes overseen by the Independent Chair and Board members. Examples include;

- Oversight of successful joint bids
- Oversight of improvement money allocation across schools
- Development of new Inclusion Board and protocol
- Roll out of Mental Toughness Questionnaires
- Significant engagement with Business Leaders
- Influence over Teach First allocation
- Arm of governance within Ofsted Improvement Plan
- Data and assessment methodology improvements
- Year 10 curriculum audit
- Commissioned programmes of work
- Collaborative approach to CPD
- Implementation of transition pilot(s)
- National and regional link and profile raising

5.2.3 The commissioning arrangement for the Challenge and funding is now ending and it is vital that whilst reflecting on achievement(s) to date we look to the next phase and longevity of the Challenge and national changes ahead and the drive to co-create a school led improvement system. A small co-design group of system leaders has been established to transition these arrangements and formalise the governance. In line with the ambitions of the White Paper, these arrangements will be school led, and will address underperformance in this likely Achieving Excellent Area. Working with partners there will be a new structure from September 2016.

5.3 **School Led System**

5.3.1 The school led system and framework will need to work in partnership with the strategic Challenge Board and a proposed diagrammatical representation is attached

at Appendix 8(a).

The school led system should:

- Hold each other to account
- Work collectively on best practise and underperformance
- Commission and broker flexibility in a targeted way
- Make most efficient use of resources
- Develop leadership potential and succession panning
- Provide challenge and peer to peer support
- Be data driven

5.3.2 Consideration will need to be given to links with the Challenge Board, BBCL (Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Cumbria and Lancashire), North West Improvement Board and the Teaching School and Academy Chains and MATs (Multi Academy Trusts). Furthermore combined authority discussions across Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool may create a different conversation in going forward regarding role and remit and footprint(s).

5.4 Next Steps

5.4.1 In light of a substantially and rapidly changing and diverse landscape at local authority, regional and national level the Blackpool Challenge Board and Chair to be commissioned for a further 12 months in the first instance by the Local Authority to drive a town wide approach to educational attainment, skills and employability. This will secure the continuation of a track record of success. This will be subject to appropriate contractual/funding and approval processes via the Local Authority. Strategic priorities already identified include:

- Recruitment and retention
- Engagement, behaviour and attendance
- Inclusion and transition
- Employability
- Continuous Professional Development

5.4.2 The school led system and Improvement Board continues to be co-designed in conjunction with Headteachers/Local Authority/Regional Lead/Regional Schools Commissioner's office to be implemented by September 2016 subject to agreement.

5.4.3 There is a managed transition, supported by the Chair of the Challenge Board, which puts children first and ensures underperformance is addressed and improvements are accelerated.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

List of Appendices:

Appendix 8(a) Strategic Challenge Board diagram

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

12.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

