

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Member

Date: 12 June 2017

ITEM 7(e)

**Title: Cabinet Response to
Overview, Scrutiny and
Policy Development Report
on Elective Home Education**

**Portfolio(s): Children Young People &
Learning**

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Ian Grayson

**Report from Service
Area:**

Attendance & Placement Service

Responsible Officer:

**Mark Longstaff
Head of Commissioning and Investment**

Tel : 0191 643 8089

**Report from Service
Area:**

Commissioning and Investment

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to the proposed response to the recommendations included in the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Report into Elective Home Education.

In accordance with Section 21B of the Local Government Act 2000, Cabinet is required to provide a response to the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Report into Elective Home Education within two months.

In providing this response, Cabinet is asked to state whether or not it accepts each of the recommendations and the reasons for this decision. Cabinet must also indicate what action, if any, it proposes to take.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet agree the proposed responses to the recommendations from the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Sub Group in relation to its study into Elective Home Education Report, as shown in Appendix 1 of this report.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 12th May 2017.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The report supports the 'Our People' theme in the 'Our North Tyneside Plan' in particular

Be ready for work and life – with the skills and abilities to achieve their full potential economic independence and meet the needs of local businesses.

1.5 Information:

- 1.5.1 At a meeting in July 2016, the Children, Education and Skills Sub Committee received a report which set out background information in relation to Elective Home Education.
- 1.5.2 Members of the Sub Committee had expressed some concerns as to the Authority's ability to check the quality of education being received by those outside of the formal school process. As the Attendance and Placement Team was due to review North Tyneside's policy on Elective Home Education, it was agreed that a review be undertaken to look at the current practices and Local Authority role in relation to home educating.
- 1.5.3 Following consideration of background information in relation to Elective Home Education, the Sub Group agreed the following remit at the beginning of the study:
- What are the key motivations for parents wanting to home educate their children?
 - Is the increased demand on school places impacting on the number of parents that choose to home school?
 - Do parents feel supported by the local authority in their choice? Do they require additional assistance?
 - Should the government be lobbied to change the law to permit local authority's access to elective home educated children?
 - To advise the officer team on the Authority's policy statement on home education and what networks could be established to reassure Members that all children being home educated were known about.
- 1.5.4 The Sub Group met with officers in the Attendance and Placement Team to gather information on the role that the Authority has in relation to Elective Home Education and the powers available to the Authority in ensuring an appropriate education is provided. The Sub Group also obtained information relating to why parents choose home education and the latest figures.
- 1.5.5 Cabinet has a statutory duty to respond to the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Report into Elective Home Education within two months. In providing this response, Cabinet is asked to state whether or not it accepts each of the recommendations and the reasons for this decision. Cabinet must also indicate what action, if any, it proposes to take.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet accepts the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2

Option 2

Cabinet does not accept the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2, and provides an alternative response to the report at the meeting.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended in order to improve and develop support for those families who are currently or are considering home educating their children.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Cabinet Response to Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee Recommendations, Completed Action Plan

1.9 Contact officers:

Barbara Patterson, Senior Manager (Facilities and Fair Access) 0191 643 8340
Rob Moffatt, Operational Manager, (Attendance & Placement) 0191 643 8387

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Report: Elective Home Education March 2017

http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=568584

- (2) Elective Home Education – Guidelines for Local Authorities

http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/attachment_data/file/288135/guidelines_for_las_on_elective_home_educationsecondrevise2_0.pdf

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

It is anticipated that actions can be completed within existing resources.

2.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications for the Authority arising from this report.

In accordance with Section 21B of the Local Government Act 2000, Cabinet is required to provide a response to the recommendations of the Elective Home Education Sub Group in relation to its study into Elective Home Education with in North Tyneside within two months. In providing this response Cabinet is asked to state whether or not it accepts each recommendation and the reasons for this decision. Cabinet must also indicate what action, if any, it proposes to take.

Currently, Local Authorities have no statutory duties in relation to the monitoring of the quality of home education on a routinely basis, and also in regards to current legislation, parents are under no legal duty to respond to informal enquires into the education they are providing. However under Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996 the Local Authority can intervene if it appears suitable education is not being provided, but there is no clear definition of what constitutes 'suitable' education.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The Sub Group consulted with officers of the Authority as follows:

Barbara Patterson, Senior Manager (Facilities and Fair Access)

Rob Moffatt, Operational Manager, (Attendance & Placement)

Linda Sadler, Attendance Officer (Attendance & Placement)

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

In preparation of the report the Sub Group consulted with the Elective Home Education community, although only one family responded to the opportunity to participate with the study however they did provide a valuable insight into home education.

2.4 Human rights

There are no specific human rights implications arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no specific equalities and diversity implications arising from this report

2.6 Risk management

There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive x
- Head(s) of Service x
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) x
- Chief Finance Officer x
- Monitoring Officer x
- Head of Corporate Strategy x