

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 3rd November 2015

Agenda item:

Subject: Online Strategies in Schools – Executive Response and Action Plan

Lead officer: Jane McSherry, Assistant Director for Education/Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director for Commissioning, Strategy and Performance

Lead member: Cllr Martin Whelton

Forward Plan reference number:

Contact officer: Paul Ballatt

Reason for urgency: The chair has agreed the submission of this report as a matter of urgency, to enable its consideration at the panel's meeting on 3rd November 2015, to avoid delay in the implementation of the action plan attached to the report.

Recommendations:

A. That the Panel notes the executive response and action plan.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. The report provides details of the executive response to recommendations made by a task group of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel into the issue of online strategies in Merton schools to safeguard pupils accessing the internet. The report also contains the action plan drawn up by officers to address the recommendations.

2 DETAILS

2.1. In September 2015, Cabinet received the final report and recommendations of the scrutiny task group established to examine the issue of the risks to young people accessing the internet and the role of schools in minimising and mitigating these risks.

2.2. Cabinet members agreed that the online safety of children and young people was of great concern and noted and endorsed recommendations made by the task group. The executive response to the recommendations and an action plan is contained at **Appendix One**.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. None for the purposes of this report.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. The task group's work involved significant consultation with young people and professionals which informed the report's findings and recommendations.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. The action plan will be taken forward over the course of 2015-16.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The report of the task group was informed by statutory and regulatory safeguarding responsibilities of local authorities and schools.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are no specific implications arising from this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The focus of the task group report and the action plan put in place to address the recommendations is to minimise and mitigate risk to children and young people accessing the internet and other forms of digital technology.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Executive Response and Action Plan

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A