

Report of Head of Democratic Services
Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)
Date: 25th September 2019
Subject: Post-16 Meadows Park partnership

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 At the request of the Chair, the Director of Children and Families will be briefing the Scrutiny Board during today’s meeting on the Council’s understanding and position in relation to a decision to cease the Post-16 Meadows Park partnership arrangement made between the North West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) and Benton Park High School.

2. Background information

2.1 The North West SILC has partnerships with four mainstream schools across the north west of Leeds (Brudenell Primary; Rawdon St Peters Primary; Allerton High School; and Benton Park High School). Pupils in these settings are on the roll of the North West SILC and work with specialist teaching and support staff who are also part of the SILC. Dependant on the setting and the individual needs of the pupils, they will access a range of mainstream lessons. This access is to ensure that the pupil can progress and develop in academic areas as well as socially with age related peers.

2.2 The North West SILC partnership with Benton Park High School – Meadows Park – was the first secondary school inclusive partnership to be developed in Leeds. It was established to give those children based at the Rawdon St Peter’s Primary School partnership the opportunity to transition into a secondary school so that they could continue and enjoy mainstream opportunities.

- 2.3 The Meadows Park partnership is housed in 3 classrooms at Benton Park High School, all in different buildings within the school to promote inclusion within the mainstream school. Each class currently has pupils from one key stage in it, including Key Stage 5, although originally the partnership did not include Post-16 pupils.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 A decision has now been made by the North West SILC and Benton Park High School to cease the Post-16 Meadows Park partnership arrangement. Whilst the partnership arrangement for Key Stages 3 and 4 is to remain, the Post-16 Meadows Park partnership will not continue beyond the summer term, July 2020.
- 3.2 This decision was brought to the attention of the Chair of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board by a member of the public acting on behalf of some of the families affected in relaying their concern about the decision and also the level of consultation undertaken with the families and young people affected by the decision.
- 3.3 The Chair has therefore asked the Director of Children and Families to provide a verbal briefing at today's meeting on the Council's understanding and position in relation to the decision to cease the Post-16 Meadows Park partnership arrangement.

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 A particular issue has been raised regarding the level of consultation undertaken with the families and young people affected by the decision to cease the Post-16 Meadows Park partnership arrangement. As such, the Director of Children and Families will brief the Scrutiny Board on the Council's own position in this regard. In the meantime, details of a letter dated 22nd March 2019 that was issued by the Executive Principal of the North West SILC to relevant parents and carers has been appended for the Scrutiny Board's information.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 The Equality Improvement Priorities have been developed to ensure our legal duties are met under the Equality Act 2010. The priorities will help the council to achieve its ambition to be the best city in the UK and ensure that as a city work takes place to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity
- 4.2.2 Improving learning outcomes is a priority in the Children and Young People's plan, raising attendance, achievement and attainment for all while closing the gaps that exist.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 Learning is central to improving future outcomes for citizens and the city and is a priority reflected in all city strategies, including the Best Council Plan 2018/19 – 2020/21, in terms of contributing to a strong economy and compassionate city.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 There are no specific climate change implications arising from this report.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 Any specific resource implications to the Council will be explained as part of the briefing provided by the Director of Children and Families.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 This report has no specific legal implications.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 Any specific risk management implications to the Council will be explained as part of the briefing provided by the Director of Children and Families.

5 Conclusions

5.1 A decision has been made by the North West SILC and Benton Park High School to cease the Post-16 Meadows Park partnership arrangement. This was brought to the attention of the Chair of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board by a member of the public acting on behalf of some of the affected families to relay their concerns regarding this decision and the level of consultation undertaken with the families and young people affected by the decision.

5.2 At the request of the Chair, the Director of Children and Families will be providing a verbal briefing at today's meeting on the Council's understanding and position in relation to the decision to cease the Post-16 Meadows Park partnership arrangement.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Further to the Board's discussion during this item, Members are asked to determine what, if any, further Scrutiny action it may wish to undertake.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.