

## **Education Stakeholders consultation**

### **1. The continuing role of the Local Authority (LA)**

#### **Comments**

These included 18 comments on Survey Monkey with 13 arguing consistently that there should be a separation between the LA as a commissioner of school improvement services and a provider. Other contributions noted the changing relationships between schools and the LA, the nature/funding of traded services and the delivery of statutory services.

#### **LA response**

Many organisations including the LA, multi-academy trusts, federations, teaching school alliances, both commission and provide school improvement services. Some time ago it seemed that the LA would not be allowed to commission and provide yet others would. That is not the case.

The LA is clear that it absolutely can and will occupy the space of both commissioner and provider. It will provide a traded service designed to break even without subsidy and with individual schools free to choose whether to purchase services from the LA or not. The offer is available to LA maintained schools and academies on the website with a satisfaction survey undertaken and outcomes available. Please see below for the hyperlink to the LA offer through the Rotherham School Improvement Service (RoSIS) and the outcome of the survey undertaken in 2017. It is right that the market establishes and determines the offer and that should be so for all providers.

It may be helpful for schools if all commissioners/providers made similar information available or in an agreed format so there is a common process.

### **2. Education Priorities**

#### **Comments**

These included 24 comments on Survey Monkey. The most common observation with 10 comments was that priorities should be set by individual schools and MATs. The importance of school level analysis of data was stressed. Other broader areas were referred to including Special Education Needs and Disability and also disadvantaged groups. Reference was made to the lack of reference to education performance at special schools.

#### **LA response**

The LA agrees that priorities and targets should be set in individual schools and approved by Governors/Trustees. There would be benefit in a strategic analysis of challenges across the borough so that the constituent parts can contribute to the whole, thus potentially improving outcomes for children and young people. In some cases priorities may be set for example by central government. Resources may be better utilised by reflecting on the contribution a school or MAT or provider could make. Shortly after the

publication of the document Enabling school improvement special school Headteachers produced 'Rotherham Special Schools Outcomes-End of Year Summary 2016-2017'. This is most welcome.

### **3. Support currently provided in Rotherham**

#### **Comments**

These included 23 comments on Survey Monkey noting that schools and academies access many services from a wide range of providers. 5 comments made a similar point that the section in the report concentrates almost entirely on the LA offer.

#### **LA response**

The comments are fair. Officers highlighted that point in meetings inviting responses from other providers highlighting their offer. The responses provide clear evidence of the breadth of, but not the detail of provision accessed by schools.

### **4. Additional strengths in Rotherham**

#### **Comments**

These included 21 responses on Survey Monkey. Several responses commented that it was not clear whether this analysis of Rotherham's strengths referred to Rotherham or RoSIS. There was no specific recognition of the success and contribution of MATs within Rotherham.

#### **LA response**

It was made clear at a number of meetings that this was an LA officer view of provision across the geographic area of the borough. It was for that reason that no specific reference was made to either LA maintained schools or to MATs. Comments were invited as to whether that diagram fairly captured the strengths and again at meetings whether the opportunities, areas for development and challenges were fairly captured. A number of positive contributions were received which could be captured in a revised document to further improve the description of the education landscape.

### **5. Additional opportunities in Rotherham**

#### **Comments**

These included 10 responses on Survey Monkey. Of these responses 8 made different points. 2 responses referred to no mention of the impact of MATs work with failing schools. There was a strand around the need for partnership working.

#### **LA response**

It was made clear at a number of meetings that this was an LA officer view of provision across the geographic area of the borough. It was for that reason that no specific reference was made to either LA maintained schools or to MAT. Comments were invited as to whether that diagram fairly captured the strengths and again at meetings whether the opportunities, areas for

development and challenges were fairly captured. A number of positive contributions were received which could be captured in a revised document to further improve the description of the education landscape.

## **6. Additional areas for development in Rotherham**

### **Comments**

These included 21 responses in Survey Monkey. Of the responses 11 again focused on the role of the LA as a commissioner of services. Other comments related to additional areas for development in Rotherham and included safeguarding; involvement in Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP); working with parents and removing barriers for pupils who are low in attainment; developing a strategic regional and national profile.

### **LA response**

It was made clear at a number of meetings that this was an LA officer view of provision across the geographic area of the borough. A number of the comments in this section relating to the LA role as a commissioner were similar and again were similar to the comments made and reported in section 1 above. The LA reiterates that it absolutely can and will occupy the space of both commissioner and provider. There was a call from 8 consultees for the LA to be more open and transparent in the presentation on school improvement and that was what the document 'Enabling school improvement' sought to do. Details of the RoSIS provision and response from schools appears in section 1 above. The LA would argue that it is for all commissioners and providers to be open and transparent as to their offer and with feedback from users.

Reference is made to the need to recognise that responsibility for school improvement is first and foremost for schools to lead themselves. The LA absolutely agrees. Section 1 Context on page 3 helps confirm the role of schools. Indeed in section 9 page 57 of the document 'Enabling school improvement' comment is made that: "The dedication of early years settings, schools, Headteachers, staff and governors in supporting the development of children and young people is acknowledged by all. The triangular relationship between settings/school and children/young people and parents is so important to improving life chances." The LA agrees that the best school and academy leaders can turn around failure. School improvement agencies whether RoSIS, Learners First, MATs can create partnerships that spread best practice.

## **7. Additional challenges in Rotherham**

### **Comments**

These included 17 comments on Survey Monkey with 7 using virtually identical language "To ensure the LA supports the development of a school-led system rather than act as a barrier to its development'. Other comments related to the need for better partnership working, safeguarding procedures, engagement with health and social care and need to improve SEND outcomes.

## **LA response**

There is no suggestion from those referring to the development of a school-led system as to what they feel the LA should do to support this development. The LA view is that the proposed Rotherham Strategic Education Partnership could provide a vehicle to support the school led system, chaired by a school leader overseeing the whole school system. Membership could include representation of maintained schools, academies, MATs through CEO, Chair of Governors, Teaching School Alliances, Diocesan Authorities, LA officers and the Lead Member. Further reference is made to this in section 8 below.

## **8. Rotherham Strategic Education Partnership Board suggested representation**

### **Comments**

These included 20 comments on Survey Monkey. There was a recurring theme in the responses that the suggested Board representation of 10 members so:

- 2 Primary Headteacher (1 maintained sector, 1 academy Headteacher or Chief Executive of a MAT).
- 1 Special School/Pupil Referral Unit.
- 2 Secondary Headteachers or Chief Executives for a MAT or a combination.
- 1 Teaching School Alliance.
- 1 Chair of Governors.
- 3 Local Authority Representatives (1 Cabinet Member, 2 Officers).

does not afford a correct balance with 30% LA representative on the Board as too high. 8 consultees made this point.

Other consultees suggested there should be a place for a Diocesan representative, early years/nursery, alternative provision provider and employer.

Reference was made to the need for a school leader to chair the Board and not an LA officer.

It was suggested that the LA will be able to determine who the members are.

One respondent comments that a fundamental commitment should be to leave no leader, no professional and certainly no child or young person in a position in which they fail on a continual and consistent basis.

Another respondent commented that the Board needs to be made up of individuals who can look beyond their own organisation and recognise at times what is right for Rotherham is more important than what is right for the school, LA, teaching school, MAT.

A suggestion was made that there should be a second small free standing Challenge Board with colleagues having independence from the strategic Education Partnership Board.

### **LA response**

The LA would agree that the suggested Board representation be changed, and suggests 13 members.

- 2 Primary Headteachers (1 maintained sector, 1 academy Headteacher or Chief Executive of a MAT).
- 1 Special School Headteacher.
- 1 Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher.
- 2 Secondary Headteachers or Chief Executives of a MAT or a combination.
- 2 Teaching School Alliance representatives.
- 1 Chair of Governors.
- 1 Diocesan Authority representative.
- 3 Local Authority Representatives (1 Cabinet Member, 2 Officers).

The LA referred in section 9 of 'Enabling school improvement' to its view that the Strategic Education Partnership Board should be chaired by a school leader. It would be for the different sectors referred to in the LA response to determine who the representatives would be. Key stakeholders may wish to consider the need to establish an appropriate balance of views and representation across the age phase sector so no one area dominates. It would be for the Strategic Education Partnership Board to determine its terms of reference.

The suggestion of establishing a free standing Challenge Board has considerable merit and could operate in a similar way to a Members Board in a MAT.

### **Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) Staff consultation**

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services initiated a consultation with all staff in children and young people's services on 15 March 2018 to run concurrently with the 'Enabling school improvement' consultation.

The Strategic Director noted that following a number of recent staffing changes, budget challenges and our unwavering ambition to achieve the best educational outcomes for all our children, we were consulting on a new strategy, 'Enabling school improvement' which aligns to other key strategies and ambitions in Rotherham to 2025. To deliver our goals the Directorate needs to review structures accordingly and a paper was issued setting out our thinking thus far.

The views of colleagues were sought. The consultation began on 15 March and ended on 23 March 2018. An apology was offered for the tight turn around but this was necessary so that the new leadership arrangements could be in place by 1 September 2018. There were 5 individual responses and a single response on behalf of 4 members of staff. There were 4 broad themes and

these are captured briefly below with a response on behalf of the Strategic Director and the Directorate Leadership Team (DLT).

## **1. Rotherham Youth Enterprise (RYE)**

### **Comments**

Five colleagues in total made comments. One response on behalf of 4 colleagues related to this consultation paper and also to a separate consultation specific to individual members of staff in Rotherham Youth Enterprise. Another response related to the personal role of a member of staff.

### **Response**

A written response was sent by the Consultant Assistant Director (Education) to the four colleagues on 22 March 2018. The separate communication relating to a professional role has been noted.

## **2. The recruitment to the post of Assistant Director Education**

### **Comment**

Two comments were submitted expressing the view that the Council should seek to appoint a permanent full-time Assistant Director (Education).

### **Response**

Recruitment to similar posts in other Local Authorities has been difficult partly because salary levels do not compare favourably for school leaders. It would be very helpful if the postholder had Headship experience and other wider leadership experience. Secondment on School teachers pay and conditions for two/three days per week could be an attractive option. Means of ensuring effective delivery of wider corporate responsibilities would need to be addressed. Any colleague appointed to an Assistant Director role whether substantive or secondment would be expected to demonstrate impact and ensure effective handover arrangements to a successor so the service area has continuity.

## **3. Refocus Rotherham School Improvement Service and service structure**

### **Comments**

One comment was received which questioned whether an observation in the consultation paper implied a lack of current focus on core business.

### **Response**

The current structure relating to the Head of Education means that there is responsibility and accountability for the Rotherham School Improvement Service (RoSIS) both core and Associate Headteachers/Senior leaders; the Rotherham School Music Service (RSMS) and Rotherham Youth Enterprise (RYE). Depending upon the outcome of separate consultations, an outcome may be that the service would have a single focus relating to the work of RoSIS and directly on school improvement.

#### **4. The need for inter-directorate links**

##### **Comments**

Three colleagues in the Inclusion area raised similar points namely that if the area moves under the leadership of the Joint Assistant Director (Commissioning, Performance and Quality), there could be risk of drift from Education.

##### **Response**

The need for Inclusion to retain strong links with Education is accepted without reservation. The Assistant Director (Education) and the Assistant Director (Commissioning, Performance and Quality) are members of the Directorate Leadership Team. Close working between these colleagues is required. The structure of Heads of Service meetings should allow for the voice and arguments of the Inclusion team to be clearly heard. So responsibility for ensuring effective links rests with the respective teams, Heads of Service and Assistant Directors.