

# Agenda



**AGENDA for a meeting of ATTAINMENT OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN  
TOPIC GROUP on WEDNESDAY, 23 MAY 2018 in the MIMRAM ROOM, County  
Hall, Hertford at 10.00 AM**

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## **MEMBERS OF THE TOPIC GROUP (7) - QUORUM (3)**

J Billing, S Gordon, D Hart, T Howard (*Chairman*), J Jones, M A Watkin

## **Church Representatives (1)**

\*J Sloan

*\* denotes members appointed for education scrutiny matters only.*

## **AGENDA**

The meeting of the Topic Group is open to the public (this includes the press) and attendance is welcomed. However, there may be occasions when the public are excluded from the meeting for particular items of business. Any such items would be taken at the end of the public part of the meeting and listed under "Part Two ('closed') agenda".

The meeting room is fitted with an audio system to assist those with hearing impairment. Anyone who wishes to use this should contact main (front) reception.

## **Members are reminded that:**

- (1) if they consider that they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting they must declare that interest and must not participate in or vote on that matter unless a dispensation has been granted by the Standards Committee;**
  
- (2) if they consider that they have a Declarable Interest (as defined in paragraph 5.3 of the Code of Conduct for Members) in any matter to be considered at the meeting they must declare the existence and nature of that interest. If a member has a Declarable Interest they should consider whether they should participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it.**

## **PART I (PUBLIC) AGENDA**

### **1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

To note that Tina Howard has been appointed Chairman of the Topic Group for the duration of its work.

### **2. GENERIC TOPIC GROUP INFORMATION**

Report of the Head of Scrutiny

### **3. REMIT OF THE TOPIC GROUP**

Report of the Head of Scrutiny

### **4. ATTAINMENT OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS**

Report of the Head of Scrutiny

This report includes:-

- (a) Programme for the scrutiny
- (b) Background information

### **5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

To agree the conclusions and recommendations of the Topic Group and note the process for taking these forward.

If you require further information about this agenda please contact Michelle Diprose, Democratic Services Officer on telephone no. 01992 555566 or email [michelle.diprose@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.diprose@hertfordshire.gov.uk). Agenda documents are also available on the internet at <https://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings.aspx>

The Scrutiny Lead Officer for this Topic Group is Charles Lambert, Scrutiny Officer, on telephone no. 01438 843630 or email [charles.lambert@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:charles.lambert@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**KATHRYN PETTITT  
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

## Work of a Topic Group

1. All scrutiny meetings in Hertfordshire are 'meetings held in public' (not 'Public Meetings')
2. Topic groups in Hertfordshire normally run for one, or occasionally, two days
3. All topic groups work to a pre-prepared scoping document. The scoping document sets out what the topic group is going to do i.e. questions to be answered, any constraints on its work and who will be attending as witnesses. The scope will have been reviewed and agreed by the commissioning committee prior to issuance.
4. There should normally be no more than 4 questions for the scrutiny to address
5. Constraints identify areas that will not be covered by the scrutiny and it is the responsibility of the chairman to ensure that the scrutiny does not digress into areas that are not covered by the scoping document.
6. It is vital to keep the scrutiny focused on the questions (see 4 above). Should members believe a constraint warrants further consideration the topic group report should draw this to the attention of the commissioning committee.
7. The scoping document is drafted by the service lead officer in consultation with the assigned scrutiny officer. The commissioning committee consider the scope and amend, if necessary, and agree the questions (see 3 above).
8. Witnesses can be internal and external to the County Council.
9. Topic group members are appointed by the commissioning committee. Membership can be drawn from the entire council; however, executive members and deputy executive members are excluded from undertaking scrutiny
10. Topic groups usually have 5 members with the exception of Education related items where a schools representative may be included (i.e. parent governor representatives (PGRs) or diocesan representatives) when the topic group will have 7 members. Both Scrutiny Committees have waived political proportionality.
11. Each scrutiny has a designated chairman. The role of the chairman is to ensure that all the questions on the scope are covered. The chairman will ensure that all members are engaged and have the opportunity to raise questions. The chairman will encourage the discussion to move on if he or she believes a point has been addressed or is not relevant to this scrutiny.
12. A pre scrutiny briefing is held for the topic group members in advance of the meeting.

13. Topic group members are expected to have read all the papers in advance of the meeting.
14. Topic group members are expected to attend for the duration of the scrutiny.
15. The scrutinies run to the agenda programme and it is the responsibility of the chairman to ensure that the scrutiny keep to the agreed timetable.
16. At the end of the scrutiny the scrutiny officer summarises the conclusions and recommendations in order to obtain broad agreement as to what they should be.
17. A draft report, concentrating on the evidence and recommendations is prepared by the scrutiny officer. The details of the discussion and papers received at the scrutiny are available via [Hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://Hertfordshire.gov.uk)
18. Reports follow a set structure of
  - Introduction
  - Recommendations
  - Evidence
  - Conclusions
  - Members & Witnesses
  - Appendix 1: Scoping Document
  - Appendix 2: Glossary
19. The draft report is produced within 10 working days of the meeting ending. The draft is sent to the lead officer for factual checking; then onto all topic group members for comment. Deadlines are set by the scrutiny officer for receipt of comments from the lead officer and topic group members.
20. The final report is published within 15 working days of the scrutiny.
21. The final report is sent to the executive member and chief officer and copied to all participants in the scrutiny and the commissioning committee chairman and vice chairman/men.
22. It is a statutory requirement that the executive member responds to the report and its recommendations within two calendar months. A template for the executive response is provided to the executive member and lead officer on publication of the final report.
23. The response is returned to the scrutiny officer and then circulated to members of the topic group and the chairman and vice chairmen of the commissioning committee for their information. It is also placed on the next commissioning committee's agenda so all members of the committee are informed of the response.
24. At the point at which the two month executive response form is returned, the lead officer and the chairman of the topic group are given a date, approximately

six months after the scrutiny, to attend the relevant Impact of Scrutiny Sub Committee.

25. The executive member has responsibility for ensuring the template is completed for the relevant Impact of Scrutiny Sub Committee explaining what steps have been taken regarding each and every recommendation.
26. The Impact of Scrutiny Sub Committees have the responsibility for 'signing off' the recommendations as complete and/or agreeing further actions.
27. The lead officer and executive member attend the Impact of Scrutiny Sub Committee to explain what progress has been made in implementing the recommendations.
28. The chairman of the topic group will be invited to the Impact of Scrutiny Sub Committee.
29. The chairman of each Impact of Scrutiny Sub Committee will be invited to attend the next meeting of its parent committee to give comment on its findings

**SCRUTINY REMIT: CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
ATTAINMENT OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS TOPIC GROUP**

Agenda Item

No

**3**

**DATE DUE AT OSC: DECEMBER 2017**  
**OSC COMMITTEE APPROVED: DECEMBER 2017**  
**WORK PROGRAMME: 2017/18 Q4**

**OBJECTIVE:**

To examine educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils relative to their peers at Key Stage 4, and the steps being taken by various agencies in Hertfordshire to improve this.

**BACKGROUND:**

Narrowing the gap between the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils at Key Stage 4 and their peers has been a long-standing objective of the Council. The Council has a responsibility for standards at maintained schools. Educational attainment in Academies is the responsibility of the Regional Schools Commissioner.

**QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED:**

1. Is the Council satisfactorily discharging its responsibilities towards maintained schools as regards attainment of disadvantaged pupils?
2. Is the performance of disadvantaged pupils at Academies satisfactory?
3. Are there further steps the council could take in this regard

**OUTCOME/S:**

That elected members are confident that within the resources and powers available, appropriate steps are being taken to support and improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils at KS4.

**CONSTRAINTS:**

The scrutiny is not intended to address attainment or provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs, or at Key Stages 2 or 5.

**RISK & MITIGATION AFFECTING THIS SCRUTINY:** i.e. how confident are members that the department/organisation has identified risks, impact to services, the budget proposals and has mitigation in place.

**RISK/S:** None identified

**EVIDENCE:**

Simon Newland Operations Director	
HfL Disadvantage lead	
Representative from Maintained School	
Representative from Academy School	
Invitee from office of the RSC	

**METHOD:** 1 day Topic Group      **DATE:** 23 May 2018

**SCRUTINY REMIT: CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
ATTAINMENT OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS TOPIC GROUP**

**MEMBERSHIP:** Judi Billing, Dee Hart, Tina Howard (Chairman), Susie Gordon, Jeff Jones, John Sloan (PGR), Mark Watkin

**SUPPORT:**

**Scrutiny Officer:** Charles Lambert

**Lead Officer/s:** Simon Newland, Operations Director: Education

**Democratic Services Officer:** Michelle Diprose

**HCC Priorities for Action: how this item helps deliver the Priorities *delete as appropriate***

1. Opportunity To Thrive ✓
2. Opportunity To Prosper ✓
3. Opportunity To Be Healthy And Safe ✓
4. Opportunity To Take Part ✓

**CfPS ACCOUNTABILITY OBJECTIVES: *delete as appropriate***

1. Transparent – opening up data, information and governance ✓
2. Inclusive – listening, understanding and changing ✓
3. Accountable – demonstrating credibility ✓

**TOPIC GROUP TITLE:  
ATTAINMENT OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN  
AT KEY STAGE 4**

Wednesday, 23 May 2018

Programme

<b>Time*</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Officers</b>
10.00	Welcome and introductions  Scrutiny objective, questions and constraints.	Chairman: Tina Howard  Charles Lambert
10.10	<b>Background information and outline of programme –</b>	LEAD OFFICER: Simon Newland, Operations Director: Education
10:40	<b>Partnerships</b>	PRESENTER: Simon Newland, Operations Director: Education
11:10	<b>Attainment data</b>	PRESENTER: TBC
11.40	<b>Break</b>	
11.55	<b>HfL approach and contribution</b>	PRESENTER: TBC
12.25	<b>Lunch</b>	
1.25	Summary of the morning's scrutiny	Charles Lambert
1.40	<b>Multi-academy trust or maintained school - Their approach</b>	PRESENTER: Either Alan Gray, Head Teacher, Sandringham or Beth Honour, Head Teacher, Marriotts
2.10	<b>Multi-academy trust or maintained school - Their approach</b>	PRESENTER: Either Head Teacher, Sandringham or Head Teacher, Marriotts
2.40	<b>Hertfordshire County Council Future Work</b>	PRESENTER: Simon Newland, Operations Director: Education
3.10 pm	Summary and Recommendations	Members & Charles Lambert
4.00pm	Conclusion	



**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ATTAINMENT OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN TOPIC GROUP  
WENESDAY, 23 MAY 2018 10.00AM**

**BACKGROUND PAPER FOR ATTAINMENT OF DISADVANTAGED PUPILS AT  
KEY STAGE 4 TOPIC GROUP**

Author: Simon Newland, Operations Director, Education, 01992 555738

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with information in relation to the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils relative to their peers at Key Stage 4
- 1.2 To describe the context within which strategies are being adopted and steps being taken by schools and various agencies in Hertfordshire to improve outcomes.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The scrutiny was agreed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 29 September 2017. The scrutiny's objective is *'to examine educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils relative to their peers at Key Stage 4, and the steps being taken by various agencies in Hertfordshire to improve this'*.
- 2.2 Members will be seeking information to address the following:
  1. *Is the Council satisfactorily discharging its responsibilities towards maintained schools as regards attainment of disadvantaged pupils?*
  2. *Is the performance of disadvantaged pupils at Academies satisfactory?*
  3. *Are there further steps the Council could take in this regard*

Definition of disadvantage

- 2.3 The term 'disadvantaged pupils' is used by the Department for Education (DfE) to refer to pupils who are:
  - Eligible for free schools meals (FSM) in the last six years; or
  - Looked after continuously for 1 day or more; or
  - Adopted from care on or after 30 December 2005, or left in care under a special guardianship order or a residence order
- 2.4 For the purposes of this scrutiny we have followed the same definition to ensure comparability and availability of data, and because this is the measure used by DfE when discussing social mobility and educational attainment. However, it is the case that eligibility for FSM does not wholly capture

“disadvantage” and relates back to how eligibility is defined, and how it changes over time as the recent debate round the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit indicates. Disadvantaged pupils are supported by Government funding called the Pupil Premium Grant, and schools are required to set out publicly how they use this grant and the pupil impact.

### Measures of educational attainment

- 2.5 There have been considerable changes in recent years to measures of educational attainment, both as far as pupils and concerned, and as applied to assessing the performance of institutions.
- 2.6 The central measures used by Government at Key Stage 4 (KS4) are Attainment 8 (A8) and Progress 8 (P8), alongside the percentage of pupils achieving grade 4 (a standard pass) and grade 5 (a strong pass) in both English and Mathematics at GCSE-level, and the proportion of pupils gaining the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).
- 2.7 Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications including English (double weighted if the combined English qualification, or both language and literature are taken), maths (double weighted), three further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and three further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.
- 2.8 4.11 GCSE scores are now linear (all assessments are normally taken at the end of the course) with a grading scale from 1 to 9. Due to the reforms it is not possible to compare test and examination results from 2016 onwards with previous years.
- 2.9 Progress 8 aims to capture the progress pupils make from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils’ achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or ‘prior attainment’), calculated using assessment results from the end of primary school. Progress 8 is a relative measure; therefore the national average Progress 8 score for mainstream schools is zero. When including pupils at special schools the national average is not zero as Progress 8 scores for special schools are calculated using Attainment 8 estimates based on pupils in mainstream schools.
- 2.10 Further detail on changes to the assessment system can be viewed here [\(LINK\)](#) in a paper prepared for the House of Commons Library.
- 2.11 Further information on performance across Hertfordshire against various attainment and progress measures can be viewed in a recent report to Education Panel here [\(LINK\)](#). However, highlights are described below and will be covered in more detail in presentation and Q&A format to the Scrutiny Panel.

- 2.12 It should be noted that the main measures by DfE for schools – A8 and P8 – are not particularly meaningful to individual pupils, who are concerned with actual results in key subjects. However, they bring together in a manageable and comprehensible form a wide range of performance and contextual information so as to support discussion of how schools and authorities’ perform in the round.

### The “Attainment Gap”

- 2.13 A concern of the County Council and the DfE is the gap in attainment and progress between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. Some data on this will be considered at the Scrutiny. However, from the perspective of individual disadvantaged pupils what matters most is the absolute level of their performance. This is considered below. Data on the “Gap” can be seen in Section 10 of the report referred to in para 2.11.

### Summary data: Attainment 8

- 2.14 In Summer 2016 approximately 12,400 Hertfordshire pupils sat their GCSEs. Of these, 16% (1961) were “disadvantaged”, using the DfE’s terminology and 84% (10,400) were not.
- 2.15 It can be seen from the summary data below that there is a clear difference in the relative performance of dis-advantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. This has been the case, using various different ways of assessing performance, for many years. In summary, non-disadvantaged pupils in Hertfordshire do very well, better than in any other large authority. However, dis-advantaged pupils do slightly worse than the national average.

Attainment 8, non-disadvantaged – 10,400 pupils/ 84%

- National rank 23 out of 150 local authorities, Quartile A
- Improving relative to national and stat neighbours

Attainment 8, for 1961 pupils/16%

- National Rank 84, marginal decline

- 2.16 A similar pattern applies for attainment of the EBacc – 27<sup>th</sup> nationally for non-disadvantaged pupils and 52<sup>nd</sup> for disadvantaged – though on that measure disadvantaged pupils in Hertfordshire do better on average than their counterparts elsewhere.

### Responsibilities of the County Council for standards in schools

- 2.17 This is an area where responsibilities are not clear, and have changed over time. At the highest, most general level, a local authority “must exercise its education functions with a view to promoting high standards”. This

responsibility derives from the 1996 Education Act. However, when it comes to what this means in practice the situation is less clear.

- 2.18 So far as Maintained Schools are concerned, LAs retain considerable responsibilities in terms of standards. Two years ago, the direction of government policy was towards local authorities “stepping back” from any responsibility for school improvement for their schools and funding related to this was withdrawn by DfE. Since then, however, there appears to be a greater recognition of a continuing role. In Hertfordshire, we have continued to take very seriously our responsibility for standards in maintained schools, and have organised activity and resources in support of that through our continuing arrangements with HfL (Herts for Learning). This activity, though, is no longer funded by the Council itself but through “de-delegated” funding from maintained schools’ own budgets.
- 2.19 As far as Academies are concerned, the Government’s position as set out in the Schools Causing Concern guidance is that *“Local authorities should focus their activity on the schools they maintain rather than academies which are accountable to the Secretary of State. However, should a local authority have any concerns about an academy’s standards, leadership or governance, they should raise these directly with the relevant RSC”*.
- 2.20 However, in Hertfordshire as with other local authorities we have chosen to seek to continue to support and promote the quality of education in Hertfordshire Academies, through sustaining and enhancing strong relationships with a range of local partners, and working with HfL to ensure strong local school improvement capacity is available both from HfL itself and from local schools.

#### Location of disadvantaged pupils

- 2.21 Most secondary schools in Hertfordshire are now Academies. Whilst a relatively-higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils attend maintained schools than attend academies, the large majority 71% of disadvantaged pupils undergo their secondary education in Academies, as set out in the data below.

Academies: 71%

Maintained schools: 29%

- 2.22 Within those totals, most disadvantaged pupils attend Good or Outstanding schools, and more than half attend Good or Outstanding Academies. Our work to improve the attainment of those pupils needs to reflect this:

Academies: Good or outstanding: 57%

Academies: RI/Inadequate 14%

Maintained: Good or outstanding 17%

Maintained RI/Inadequate: 12%

### **3. SUMMARY**

- 3.1 Set out above is contextual information to allow the Scrutiny Panel to consider and challenge the approaches which will be set out by council officers, schools and other partners on the day.