

EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 27 January 2015

Present:

Councillor Nicholas Bennett J.P. (Chairman)
Councillor Neil Reddin FCCA (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Teresa Ball, Kathy Bance MBE, Alan Collins,
Mary Cooke, Judi Ellis, Alexa Michael and Keith Onslow

Mary Capon, Adil Ghani, Joan McConnell, Alison Register
and Mylene Williams

Also Present:

Councillor Stephen Wells, Portfolio Holder for Education
Councillor Michael Turner

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Darren Jenkins and Tony Wright-Jones.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Keith Onslow.

The Chairman noted that Nina Newell would shortly be leaving the Local Authority and led the Members of the Education PDS Committee in thanking her for the excellent contribution she had made to the London Borough of Bromley during her time with the Local Authority.

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the Declarations of Interest made at the meeting on 2nd July 2014 were taken as read.

Councillor Teresa Ball and Councillor Alexa Michael declared that they were Governors of Bromley Adult Education College.

Mrs Mary Capon, Church representative, declared that she was an employee of the Aquinas Trust.

46 MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH NOVEMBER 2014 AND MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2014 be agreed and matters outstanding be noted.

47 QUESTIONS TO THE PDS CHAIRMAN FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received.

48 QUESTIONS TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ATTENDING THE MEETING

Three written questions were received from Julia Wheeler and Michael Wheeler and are attached at **Appendix A**.

49 PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder gave an update to Members on work being undertaken across the Education Portfolio.

The demand for primary-level pupil places across the Borough continued to be high, and it had been identified that a significant increase in secondary provision would be required across the Borough in future years. A second planning application for Harris Primary Academy Beckenham had been considered at Plans Sub-Committee No.4 on 8th January 2015, and had been deferred. The initial planning application for Harris Primary Academy Beckenham was the subject of an appeal and would be considered by the Planning Inspector in February 2015. An open day had recently been held at Harris Academy Beckenham to showcase plans for a redevelopment of the site which would offer a new learning environment for secondary pupils and proposed to establish a two form of entry primary school.

A report on the future delivery of the museum service would be considered at the meeting of Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee on 29th January 2015. A Member underlined the value of the museum service to pupils at Bromley schools and requested that the Portfolio Holder for Education contribute to the review with a view to ensuring that Bromley pupils were not disadvantaged by any changes to the museum service.

The Portfolio Holder for Education would be meeting with the Secretary of State for Education in February 2015 to discuss the potential for more flexible use of the Dedicated Schools Grant in certain identified areas including funding for early years provision.

A significant issue had been identified with the Adult Education service which was currently showing a predicted overspend of £264k for 2014/15 and, despite work taken to reduce this, was unlikely to drop below an overspend of £220k. The market testing process for the future delivery of the Adult Education service was underway, but this process would not be completed until Autumn 2015, and it was felt that more immediate action might be needed to reduce the impact of the overspend on the Local Authority. In response, two options had been developed to prevent or minimise the

potential overspend for the Adult Education service and reduce the financial risk to the Local Authority. Option One had proposed a radical restructure and reduction of the Adult Education service under which the Local Authority would cease delivery of all provision funded under the Adult Skills grant at the end of the 2014/15 academic year and Option Two had proposed the withdrawal of the Local Authority from all involvement in the delivery of adult education, with the Skills Funding Agency responsible for reallocating grants to an alternate provider under both options.

The Portfolio Holder for Education noted that no decision on these options would be made at this time as the report on the 'Reorganisation of Bromley Adult Education College', due to be considered at the meeting of Education PDS Committee on 27th January 2015, had been withdrawn with Members' agreement.

In considering the current position of the Adult Education service, Members were advised that the market testing process was being conducted in two stages. During the first stage, providers had been invited to submit Expressions of Interest and a pre-qualification questionnaire, which was a confidential process due to reasons of commercial sensitivity and to avoid collaboration between providers. The evaluation against the criteria would be completed in mid-February 2015. Those providers which met the set criteria would progress to the second stage of the market testing process where providers would be invited to participate in a competitive dialogue process to develop bids which was expected to be completed in Autumn 2015. The Assistant Director: Commissioning clarified that to progress to the second stage of the market testing process, there was usually a need for at least three providers to meet the set criteria. If there were fewer than three providers, agreement from the Council's Executive would normally be sought before these providers could progress to the second stage of the market testing process. The Portfolio Holder for Education confirmed that it was also possible for Bromley Adult Education service staff to submit their own proposals to deliver services but the Assistant Director: Education advised Members that they had not done so.

In discussion, Members were concerned at the lack of consultation with the Bromley Adult Education College Governing Body or other stakeholders including staff and service users on the potential redesign of the existing service, although it was noted that the Adult Education service had been invited to put staff forward to reference groups to support the evaluation of the bids. Members highlighted the impact any major change to the Adult Education service might have on the on-going market testing process, and another Member was concerned that residents in Orpington and the North West of the Borough would be disadvantaged in accessing provision if there was any redesign of the existing service which resulted in the closure of the Poverest and Kentwood Centres.

It was requested that the documents which related to the first stage of the market testing process which had been advertised on the London Tenders Portal be provided to Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder update be noted.

**A) DRAFT 2015 EDUCATION PORTFOLIO PLAN SET AGAINST
EDUCATION COMMITMENTS**

Report ED15054

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report that outlined the draft Education Portfolio Plan for 2015. The draft priority outcomes within the Education Portfolio Plan for 2015 focused on seven key activities in support of the Education Covenant and Education Commitments, and were underpinned by supporting aims for 2015.

In considering the Education Portfolio Plan for 2015, a Member noted that 98.6% of Year 11 students attending Bromley schools and 88.5% of young people in Year 12 and resident in the Borough secured the offer of a place in education, employment or training in 2013/14 and underlined the need to continue to increase levels of participation.

In response to a query from a Member, the Portfolio Holder for Education confirmed that the Education Commitment to support schools in ensuring that all teachers and other staff were competent in their role was delivered by the Local Authority through support provided to Governors. The Assistant Director: Education advised Members that the School Improvement service also worked with Local Authority Maintained schools to support and develop the quality of teaching and governance where performance issues were identified, and had developed a 'health check' tool for schools.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the draft Education Portfolio Plan for 2015.

B) EDUCATION PORTFOLIO BUDGET 2015/16

Report ED15053

The Committee considered a report setting out the draft Education Portfolio Budget for 2015/16, which incorporated future costs pressures and initial draft saving options reported to the Council's Executive on 14th January 2015. The draft Education Portfolio Budget for 2015/16 had also been considered at the meeting of Education Budget Sub-Committee on 6th January 2015, the minutes of which had been provided to Members of the Education PDS Committee for their information. Members were requested to provide their comments on the proposed savings and identify any further action to be taken to reduce cost pressures facing the Local Authority over the next four years.

The Head of Education, Care and Health Services Finance advised Members that approximately £1.1m savings had been identified across the Education Portfolio for 2015/16. This included savings in essential car users' allowances, the redesign or reorganisation of some services, including the

Youth Service and Schools and Early Years Commissioning and Quality Assurance Service, the reorganisation of contracts related to some services, and increased income generation targets for Children and Family Centres.

It was recommended that a new charge be introduced for the provision of Key Stage 2 Writing Moderation to academies. This service was currently free of charge to all Bromley schools by the School Standards team and was funded by a grant from the Department for Education, but recent guidance had clarified that the grant was intended to fund moderation services in Local Authority Maintained schools only. There was a statutory requirement to provide moderation services to academies if requested, but the Local Authority was permitted to charge for this service.

A Co-opted Member was concerned at high level of savings related to the proposed reorganisation of the Youth Service and how this would impact service provision.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The financial forecast for 2016/17 to 2018/19 be noted;**
- 2) Members' comments on the initial draft saving options proposed by the Executive for 2015/16 be noted;**
- 3) Members' comments on the initial draft 2015/16 Education Portfolio Budget be provided to the meeting of the Council's Executive on 11th February 2015; and,**
- 4) The Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the implementation of a new charge for moderation services to academy schools.**

C) UPDATE ON UNDER PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Report ED15045

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report that provided an update of recent Ofsted and school improvement activity across the Borough. Since October 2014, there had been Ofsted Inspections of Blenheim Primary School, The Glebe School and Riverside School. In their Ofsted Inspections, Blenheim Primary had been rated as 'Good' and The Glebe School had been rated as 'Outstanding'. The result of the Ofsted Inspection of Riverside School had not yet been published. There had been an Ofsted monitoring visit of Burwood School on 23rd October 2014.

A meeting had recently been held with the Regional Schools Inspector who had responsibility for academies across South East region. The initial priority of the Regional Schools Inspector would be to drive school improvement in those open academies whose performance was in the bottom 10% of the region. Following discussion around academies in the Borough, the Regional

Schools Inspector and the Local Authority would work closely to ensure that any concerns with academies in the Borough were highlighted and that action taken to address any issues was reported.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Schools, Early Years Commissioning and Quality Assurance confirmed that Ravens Wood School, which had been rated as 'Requires Improvement' in June 2013, had recently received an Ofsted monitoring visit and that the Regional Schools Inspector had responsibility to ensure that issues identified at the school continued to be addressed.

RESOLVED that recent Ofsted and school improvement activity in the Borough be noted.

50 PORTFOLIO HOLDER PROPOSED DECISIONS

A) PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Report ED13089

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report providing details of the outcomes and recommendations of the School Places Working Group which had met on 13th November 2014 to consider the strategic planning of primary and secondary school places and school organisation in the Borough for future years.

For the 2014/15 academic year, applicants for reception class places exceeded previous forecasts and it had been necessary to supplement the agreed changes by 225 places to ensure that every on-time applicant received a valid offer. The total number of places originally available for 2014/15 had been 4023. This was subsequently increased to 4204 places by the addition of eight bulge classes, with 76% of on-time applicants securing their first preference of school in Bromley, which was unchanged from the previous year.

Increased demand for primary places was expected to continue in the long term, with the Greater London Authority forecast projecting a rise of the total number of places in the Borough to 4041 by 2018, and remaining at that level to 2031. This was due to a higher level of birth rate than expected, as well as through migration to the Borough and increased occupancy levels of existing homes. In response to this, it was recommended that a margin of 5% be agreed above the Greater London Authority projection for primary place planning to provide for local variations in need and to meet parental preferences. To support the expected increase in demand for pupil places, the overall strategy was to meet forecast growth through a combination of existing surplus capacity, permanent expansion of existing provision, new schools and bulge classes. Work would also be undertaken around secondary place planning to ensure that there were sufficient secondary places across the Borough as the increasing number of pupils at Bromley primary schools moved towards Key Stage 3.

In considering the report, a Member noted that legal advice was being sought to clarify the position with regard to conditions being placed on the number of classes or pupils at a school for any future school planning applications, and this advice would be provided to Members when it was available.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the recommendations of the School Places Working Group, taking into account the views of the Education PDS Committee, that:

- 1) The projections for primary need be noted;**
- 2) A margin of 5% be agreed above the Greater London Authority projection for primary place planning to provide for local variations in need and to meet parental preferences;**
- 3) Discussions be undertaken with primary schools identified for expansion with a view to reporting the outcome to a future meeting of Education PDS Committee;**
- 4) Where primary school expansion is agreed, implementation be funded through the Education Capital Programme, subject to availability of funds;**
- 5) The Secondary School Place Planning report be recommended to the Education PDS Committee as the basis for secondary school place planning to 2031;**
- 6) The proposals for the expansion of existing secondary schools be brought forward to the Council's Executive for approval; and,**
- 7) Feasibility studies be undertaken in consultation with identified schools to assess the scope and cost of school enlargement as set out below:**

Planning Area 1 - Wards: Crystal Palace, Penge and Cator, Clock House

- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 3 FE at James Dixon Primary School.**
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of a further bulge class for 2015/16 and of increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 3 FE at The Pioneer Academy, Stewart Fleming Primary School.**
- To consider scope for other schools to expand as needed following consultation and feasibility studies.**

Planning Area 2 - Wards: Copers Cope, Kelsey and Eden Park

- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 3 FE at Worsley Bridge Primary School.
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at Clare House Primary School.
- To await the outcome of the free school submission proposed by Langley Park Boys and Girls School.

Planning Area 3 - Wards: Shortlands, West Wickham, Hayes and Coney Hall

- To keep school organisation and size in the area under review and to consider medium term options for enlargements.
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity by 1 FE to 3 FE at St Mark's C.E. Primary School to meet the needs in the medium term.

Planning Area 4 - Wards: Bromley Town, Plaistow and Sundridge, Bickley

- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 3 FE at Scotts Park Primary School.
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of consolidating the PAN (Pupil Admission Number) for St George's C.E. Primary School to 2 FE.

Planning Area 5 - Wards: Bromley Common and Keston, Petts Wood and Knoll, Farnborough and Crofton

- To keep school organisation and size in the area under review and to consider medium term options for enlargements.

Planning Area 6 - Wards: Chislehurst, Mottingham, Chislehurst North

- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of relocating and increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at Chislehurst C.E. Primary School.

- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at Edgebury Primary School.

Planning Area 7 - Wards: Cray Valley West and Cray Valley East

- To move towards the expansion on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at Midfield Primary School, which had been agreed in principle by Governors, subject to planning approval and consultation.
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a temporary basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at St Paul's Cray C.E. Primary School.
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a temporary basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at Leeson's Primary School.
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a temporary basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at Poverest Primary School.
- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a temporary basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at St Mary Cray Primary School.

Planning Area 8 - Wards: Orpington, Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom

- To investigate, with Governors, the feasibility of increasing capacity on a permanent basis by 1 FE to 2 FE at Blenheim Primary School.
- To consider scope for other schools to temporarily expand as needed following consultation and feasibility studies.

Planning Area 9 - Wards: Biggin Hill and Darwin

- No current changes to school organisation or size in this planning area.

B) BASIC NEED UPDATE REPORT 9

Report ED15038

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report providing an update on progress in delivering the Basic Need Programme, which supported the provision of sufficient school places through improvements to and the expansion of

Bromley schools, and to set out the forward programme for the period 2014-18.

The updated list of schemes within the Basic Needs Programme had been developed to meet the estimated increase in the number of reception age pupils in the Borough. 'Bulge years' and permanent expansions were planned at a number of existing local schools to provide the required pupil places, which would be delivered through a combination of modular build and internal refurbishment.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) Approve the updated list of schemes within the Basic Need Capital Programme;**
- 2) Agree the procurement and award of contract of schemes within the Basic Need Programme through traditional procurement, the Lewisham Modular Buildings Framework or through devolution of the Basic Need Capital Grant to schools;**
- 3) Authorise the Executive Director: Education, Care and Health Services to submit planning applications at the appropriate time in respect of the list of scheme.**

**C) BROMLEY SEED CHALLENGE SCHEME 2014/15
ALLOCATION OF FUND**

Report ED15044

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report setting out the proposed allocation of £300,000 that was available through the Bromley Seed Challenge Programme to support school-led capital projects at Local Authority maintained schools in the Borough. In line with local and national policy, in-year Seed Challenge allocations would be honoured at schools that subsequently converted to academy status. The Seed Challenge Programme was fully funded by the Department for Education Capital Maintenance Grant.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) Approve the list of schemes set out in Appendix 1 to Report ED15044;**
- 2) Note the historical bidding patterns and allocations of Seed Challenge Grant set out in Appendix 2 to Report ED15044; and,**
- 3) Authorise the Executive Director: Education, Care and Health Services to submit planning applications at the appropriate time in respect of the schemes set out in Report ED15044 where required.**

D) DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2015/16

Report ED15037

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report detailing the allocation for the Dedicated Schools Grant 2015/16 for the Schools Block and the Early Years Block, with the final allocation for the High Needs Block to be released in January 2015. It was projected that the Dedicated Schools Grant 2015/16 would total approximately £251,733,734, which included estimated figures for the High Needs Block adjustment and funding for two year olds.

The proposed allocation had been considered at the meeting of the Schools' Forum on 15th January 2015, and had been agreed.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to approve the Dedicated Schools Grant allocation and the changes to the funding formula for 2015/16.

E) SEN TRANSPORT: ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Report ED15052

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report outlining work undertaken to develop alternative options for the delivery of a special educational needs transport service to eligible children and young people across the Borough.

At the meeting of Education PDS Committee on 30th September 2015, Members had considered a report outlining the results of a review of the Special Educational Needs Transport Policy, which had been undertaken to ensure that service provision continued to be fit for purpose following a range of reforms recently made to education and special education and the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans through the Children and Families Act 2014. A wide menu of transport assistance service offers had been identified as part of the review which aimed to support the individual assessed needs of children and young people, whilst meeting the Local Authority's statutory duties to provide suitable travel arrangements for eligible children and young people resident in Bromley to access their education or special education provision.

In discussion of the draft Special Educational Needs Transport Policy, the Education PDS Committee had requested that the potential to trial a muster point scheme be explored with a view to establishing if there was a robust business case for a muster point scheme to be provided across the Borough which would reduce the number of door-to-door collections for children and young people with special educational needs and provide them with a similar travel to school experience as their non-SEN peers. Members had also requested that Officers explore how parents and carers could become more engaged in supporting their child's transport needs through volunteering or car sharing schemes.

Work to develop a pilot muster point scheme in which children and young people with special educational needs would be picked up and dropped off from muster points that were a maximum of two miles from their family home had now been undertaken. It was proposed that a trial would start for certain identified areas and routes from the Summer Term 2015 for a period of one year. It was expected that the trial would focus on one or two special schools and that the results of the trial would be used to inform the business case to establish whether a muster point scheme should be rolled out Borough-wide from the 2016/17 academic year. The Local Authority would undertake risk assessments as part of the introduction of muster points in accordance with statutory requirements. Parents and schools would be required to work in partnership to support children and young people with special educational needs to gain the necessary 'pedestrian and independence skills' to ensure their safety whilst using the muster point scheme.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director: Commissioning confirmed that two miles would be the maximum distance a muster point could be located from a child or young person's family home, but that an individual risk assessment would be undertaken for each child or young person with special educational needs to ensure their particular needs were considered in accessing the scheme.

A Co-opted Member underlined the need to consult with children and young people with special educational needs and their parents and carers on the proposed scheme. The Assistant Director: Commissioning noted that if the Portfolio Holder was minded to recommend the pilot muster point scheme, consultation would be undertaken with a range of stakeholders including children and young people with special educational needs and their parents and carers and special schools to identify the appropriate schools prior to the start of any pilot scheme.

In considering the proposed scheme, a Member emphasised the potential to introduce an app or other electronic notification which monitored transport movements and supported children and young people with special educational needs and their parents and carers to feel secure in using the service.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) Agree to pilot the implementation of a muster point scheme at one or two special schools in the Borough; and,**
- 2) Agree that a maximum of £16k expenditure from the Special Educational Needs Transport budget in support of the pilot scheme.**

F) REFURBISHMENT OF BEACON HOUSE

Report ED15055

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report providing an update on feasibility work undertaken at Beacon House to identify the range of works required to

deliver the proposed Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 alternative provision, and outlining the timetable for refurbishment.

Burwood School was a school for male pupils aged 11-16 years who had been identified as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The Local Authority had purchased Beacon House, a light office and manufacturing facility in central Bromley that had previously been used to deliver an alternative education provision in July 2014. It was proposed to relocate part of Burwood School's offer to a new high quality in-Borough alternative provision at Beacon House which would deliver a wide variety of vocational courses at Key Stage 4 and 5 to both male and female pupils identified as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties. In Autumn 2014, the Local Authority had commissioned consultants to review the facilities at Beacon House. This review had identified a range of works needed to deliver the proposed alternative provision to the required standard, and set out a draft timetable for the refurbishment, which was expected to be completed for the start of the 2016/17 academic year.

A report outlining proposals for the use of unspent Dedicated Schools Grant had been considered at the meeting of the Schools' Forum on 15th January 2015, and the Schools' Forum had supported proposals to utilise a proportion of unspent Dedicated Schools Grant towards the purchase and refurbishment of Beacon House.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) Agree the outline scheme proposals and cost estimate and recommend the scheme to the Council's Executive and Full Council for admission to the Local Authority's Capital Programme;**
- 2) Agree the continuation of design development to the stage where a planning application can be submitted for approval whilst the Council's Executive and Full Council approval is obtained; and,**
- 3) Authorise the Executive Director: Education, Care and Health Services to submit a planning application for the scheme at the appropriate time.**

51 EDUCATION INFORMATION ITEMS

The Education Briefing comprised four reports:

- Minutes of the Education Budget Sub-Committee meeting held on 6th January 2015
- Minutes of the Effectiveness of Children's Centres Working Group meeting held on 1st December 2014
- Update from Executive Working Group for Special Educational Needs
- Bromley Academy Programme Update

RESOLVED that the Information Briefing be noted.

52 REORGANISATION OF BROMLEY ADULT EDUCATION COLLEGE

This item was withdrawn.

53 COMMISSIONING OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

Report ED15039

The Committee considered a report outlining proposed future commissioning arrangements for Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy for children and young people in the Borough.

Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy for children and young people was currently commissioned from Bromley Healthcare CIC through two separate contracts with the Local Authority and Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group. Under the Children and Families Act 2014, the Local Authority and Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group were required to develop robust joint commissioning arrangements where services were provided to the same cohort of children and young people to support a more consistent and collaborating approach to service delivery. It was proposed that the funding for commissioning of Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy provision historically commissioned by the Local Authority be included in the current Section 75 agreement with Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and for the Local Authority to pass lead commission responsibility to Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group.

In considering the future commissioning arrangements for Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy for children and young people in the Borough, a Member underlined the value of training teaching staff in the provision of speech and language support and requested that this be included in any future commissioning of Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Members' comments on the report be noted; and,**
- 2) The Council's Executive be recommended to agree that the funding for commissioning of Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy provision historically commissioned by the Local Authority be included in the current Section 75 agreement with Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and for the Local Authority to pass lead commission responsibility to Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group.**

54 CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

Report ED15043

The Committee considered a report outlining the legal framework and the Local Authority's processes regarding truancy and children missing education.

The Education Welfare Service discharged the Local Authority's statutory duties in relation to children missing education and holding parents to account for ensuring the regular attendance of their children at school. Children missing education was defined as all children of compulsory school age who were not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise, and who had been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time. When undertaking inspection of local authorities, Ofsted had broadened this definition to include those young people who were attending alternative provision, been permanently excluded, in receipt of home tuition due to medical needs, receiving elective home education or were looked after by the Local Authority. In Bromley there were currently 74 children and young people accessing alternative provision, 40 permanently excluded, 59 receiving home tuition, 111 receiving elective home education, and 197 looked after children.

To support the identification and monitoring of this cohort on a regular basis, the Local Authority had developed a Children Missing Education Policy which had been provided to all schools and partner agencies. As part of this policy, schools were expected to notify the Local Authority of any pupil that they intended to remove from their school roll prior to removal, as well as notifying the Local Authority of any pupil that had failed to attend school for 10 days and that they had been unable to trace. Partner agencies, health and voluntary organisations were also able to refer any child they believed to be out of education to an Officer within the Education Welfare Service who was dedicated to receiving Children Missing Education referrals. On receipt of a referral, this Officer would undertake all relevant enquires, including making contact with the family in order to support the child to re-engage with education, liaising with supporting agencies as necessary. Families and children who could not be traced were placed on a national database which was used by other local authorities to confirm if children reported missing had been identified within their authority.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director: Education advised that children and young people in receipt of elective home education or who had been receiving home tuition due to medical needs were included in the definition of those at risk of being children missing education as these children and young people were considered to be at a higher risk of becoming children missing education.

The Chairman noted that a further report on Children Missing Education would be provided to the joint meeting of Care Services and Education PDS Committees on 25th February 2015.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

55 EDUCATION PROGRAMME 2014/15

Report ED15117

The Committee considered the forward rolling work programme for the year ahead based on items scheduled for decision by the Portfolio Holder for Education and items for consideration by the Education PDS Committee.

The Chairman requested that a report on home education be provided to the meeting of Education PDS Committee on 10th March 2015.

The schedule of Member visits to care homes and schools and colleges across the Borough for Spring 2015 would be provided to Members and Co-opted Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED that the Education Programme 2014/15 be noted.

The Meeting ended at 8.44 pm

Chairman

EDUCATION PDS COMMITTEE 27th January 2015

WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO THE EDUCATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Written Questions for the Education Portfolio Holder received from Julia Wheeler

1. Why does the report Agenda Item 9 paragraph 5.7 risks & disadvantages fail to highlight the **loss** of **high level** literacy & numeracy **GCSE English & Maths** which are a mandatory level of qualification required by the Government for jobs and courses?

Reply:

The report provides an overview of the information required by members to help them understand the scope of the reduction of service. To include a list of specific qualifications risked overloading the report with detail that detracted from the strategic overview being communicated at this stage of the process. Within Bromley Adult Education College (BAEC) the GCSE English and Maths forms part of the discrete English and maths provision which is mentioned under section 5.7 of the report. If the Council proceeds to consultation on either of the options in this report, it would be at that stage that more detailed and specific information would be communicated as part of the wider process.

2. Why does BAEC have to bear the excessive burden of high central administration charges of £1,021,000, which are equivalent to 34.7% of the direct cost of running BAEC? (Agenda Item 9 Financial Implications 10.5)

Reply:

Of that £1,021k, £409k relates to depreciation charges and should not be considered an administration charge. Whilst depreciation charges aren't an immediate cost to the council, it is a measure of the economic value of using the three adult education sites, and is required to be allocation to the service in line with CIPFA's Total Cost Accounting principle.

The £612k of recharges to the Adult Education Service are therefore equivalent to 20.8% of the direct running costs, which is one of the lowest percentages of the in-house provided Council services.

These recharges are made up of a variety of costs including IT, departmental Commissioning and Strategic/Business support, and interdepartmental Support Service costs which include Finance (including payments and income services), Legal, Property and Human Resources.

Recharges are allocated to services on different bases e.g. number of computers, floor space, number of staff as well as direct estimates from support services managers. The allocation methods and bases are reviewed and updated every year to ensure that they remain relevant and accurate.

Written Question for the Education Portfolio Holder received from Michael Wheeler

1. Why are the council proposing to cancel accredited qualification courses, like GCSE English and Maths, which are government funded, free to students and for which there is a waiting list? (Agenda Item 9 paragraph 5.1)

Reply:

Although qualifications approved for public funding are free to some students and partially funded for others, they require a high level of investment from providers to implement all of the necessary procedures that support the learning activity. For example, where students access these courses free, the College is required to cover all the registration, exam and assessments costs for that learner. Due to the importance of placing students on the right course at the right level, providers now need to interview and undertake pre-course assessments for all applicants for qualification courses. Required processes such as eligibility checking and evidence gathering, registration with the Learner Record Service and monthly data returns to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) all place additional infrastructure costs on colleges. Furthermore, qualification reform over the past few years has reduced the amount of funding the College receives from the SFA, and the College has to provide more courses for less money, and this has ceased to be sustainable.

Although GCSE English and maths were oversubscribed in September 2014 and BAEC was unable to place everyone, the numbers of unplaced students were insufficient to make a financially viable class in either subject. In direct costs alone, it would have cost the adult education service more to run the course than it would have received in funding from the SFA. Whilst the Council recognises the importance of key qualifications, such as GCSE Maths and English, it is not in a position to subsidise a non-statutory service, which is now underfunded as a result of a reduction in national grants for adult education.