

EDUCATION PDS COMMITTEE

Extract from the Draft Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th March 2013

72A) FUTURE ROLE OF THE LA IN EDUCATION SERVICES

Report ED13032

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report outlining the future role of the Local Authority in Education Services. On 21st January 2013, Full Council had agreed a new set of parameters for its work with schools in the form of the Education Covenant, and this was reflected in the new business plan agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Education following the Education PDS Committee meeting on 23rd January 2013. The new approach sought to encourage schools to be independent of the Local Authority, with the Local Authority adopting the role of community champion on behalf of parents and their children, holding schools to account and ensuring an adequate supply of high quality school places.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director of Education and Care Services for an excellent report.

In response to a question from a Member, the Executive Director of Education and Care Services confirmed that the Local Authority did not have a statutory role to address issues identified in maintained or academy schools, with Ofsted and the Department for Education as the respective authorities for each. The Local Authority had entered into a local agreement with maintained schools across the Borough, and the Executive Director noted that the Local Authority also had a statutory responsibility for the five outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' and could theoretically intervene in any school where these were not being met.

A Member noted the importance of ensuring that academy schools with specialist units were encouraged to maintain them and that the transfer agreements ensured that places in these units continued to be made available to Bromley pupils. Another Member queried the responsibilities academy schools had with regards to audit. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that all schools had a requirement to be audited but that academies were responsible for purchasing their own audit services. He noted that a number of academy schools currently purchased audit services from the Local Authority.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:

- 1) Endorse the new role of the Council as champions of the community and continue to expect only the highest standards from all our schools;**
- 2) Use the Education Covenant to establish this new relationship with schools and ask all governing bodies to sign it following an appropriate period of consultation;**

- 3) Agree the proposal to undertake a final review of services to schools with a view to the Local Authority only offering services of the highest quality and which represent good value for money for the Council Tax payer, with a further report to Members in Autumn 2013; and,**
- 4) Request the Executive provide ratification of these recommendations at its meeting on 3rd April 2013, and that the recommendations also be provided to the Full Council for ratification at its meeting on 1st July 2013.**