

EDUCATION PDS COMMITTEE
2nd July 2014

WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO THE EDUCATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Written Question for the Education Portfolio Holder received from Malcolm Wood, on behalf of Bromley Mencap

1. Bromley Mencap has been contacted by parents who know about the planned market testing of SEN services. Parents have asked if they will be kept informed of changes and if their views will be sought directly. Therefore, will the Local Authority be engaging directly with parents or via membership and/or representative organisations?

Reply:

As stated in the report, the Council will engage with all staff and relevant stakeholders as appropriate throughout the process.

The market testing of Education Services covers a wide range of services and service users and so it is likely that engagement will take different forms, including directly with parents and via membership and/or representative organisations.

I would like to emphasise that the market testing process itself does not have any effect on the services currently provided to parents and other service users. Should the recommended outcome of market testing involve changes to a service or service provider, then appropriate engagement will take place prior to a decision being made.

Written Questions for the Education Portfolio Holder received from Roger Vincent-Townend, Bromley Chain

In relation to Item 13 (Update on Market Testing) Report No. ED15073:

For your information, Bromley Chain has noted Recommendation 2.1(ii) regarding the HIU at the Darrick Wood Schools' site.

1. Please could you confirm that the 'Savings' (i.e. VFM) under the 'Financial' heading would be the difference between the Estimated Costs and the current budget?

Reply:

Value for money would include proposed costs against current budget expenditure but may include other factors.

Value for money does not necessarily mean cashable savings . The majority of Education Services are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant – any reduction in Dedicated Schools Grant expenditure achieved through the

delivery of more efficient and effective services is not retained by the Council but is reinvested in schools and education services.

2. The report refers in Background 3.2 halfway down, to Market Testing of a 'single bundle'. What happens if a 'function' is removed from the 'single bundle', particularly as paragraph 3.47 (Soft Market Testing) Point 3 states that "..... all the providers have a track record...of delivering all or most of the services"?

Reply:

Providers will be asked to submit proposals for the delivery of education services as a single 'bundle, with the exception of Adult Education which will be arranged as a separate 'lot'. If providers submit proposals that omit a service or a function, then this may affect the evaluation of their proposal. Conversely, we will want to retain the flexibility to add or remove services or functions from the 'bundle' as appropriate. In such an event, suitable alternative delivery options for that function will be considered.

3. In paragraph 3.14 the report states that "...Overall, senior managers...". How does this square with paragraphs 3.39 - 41 which make reference to "...expressed concern..." at the Darrick Wood site?

Reply:

Paragraph 3.14 refers to Education Services overall and the senior managers within Education, Care & Health Services.

Paragraphs 3.39 to 3.41 refers to the the Sensory Support Service and the managers within that service.