

Children and Young People Select Committee		
Title	Lewisham Education Commission Progress Report	
Contributor	Executive Director for Children and Young People	Item 7
Class	Part 1 (open)	13 April 2016

1 Summary

- 1.1. A proposal for the establishment of an Education Commission was agreed at Mayor and Cabinet on 9th December 2015.
- 1.2. This paper is a progress report outlining the key areas of focus for the Commission and the process which has been undertaken to support Commissioners to develop their recommendations for education in the London Borough of Lewisham. The Commission is still delivering on timetable but the municipal calendar brought this committee meeting forward, ahead of the Commission's recommendations being received. The recommendations of the Commission will therefore be delivered at the next Select Committee meeting.

2 Purpose of Report

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress of the Lewisham Education Commission.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 That the report be noted.

4 Policy Context

- 4.1. The proposals within this report are consistent with the Council's corporate priorities as set out in the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020. In particular, the proposals relate to the Council's priorities regarding young people's Achievement and Involvement, Protection of Children and Community Leadership and Empowerment. The proposals are also in line with the Children and Young People's Plan 2015-18 and the four outcomes of building resilience, staying safe, being healthy and active and raising achievement and attainment.
- 4.2. Lewisham Council and its partner organisations consulted during 2015 on the priorities for a new three year Children and Young People's Plan 2015 – 2018 entitled "It's Everybody's Business". The plan starts with the vision statement "Together with families, we will improve the lives and life chances of the children and young people in Lewisham".

4.3. A key priority within the Plan is “Raising the attainment of all Lewisham children and young people” and this has a number of specific outcome areas:

- AA1: Ensuring there are sufficient good quality school places for every Lewisham child.
- AA2: Ensuring all our children are ready to participate fully in school.
- AA3: Improving and maintaining attendance and engagement in school at all key stages, including at transition points.
- AA4: Raising participation in education and training, reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) at 16-19.
- AA5: Raising achievement and progress for all our children at Key Stages 1 – 4 and closing the gaps between underachieving groups at primary and secondary school.
- AA6: Raising achievement and progress for all our children and closing the gaps between under-achieving groups at Key Stage 5 and Post 16 so that all our young people are well prepared to access the best education and employment opportunities for them.
- AA7: Raising achievement and attainment for our Looked After Children at all Key Stages and Post 16.

4.4. The Education Commission was established in the context of a developing government agenda for education. On 17th March 2016, Nicky Morgan, Secretary of State for Education, published an Education White Paper: Educational Excellence Everywhere. The White Paper outlined that by the end of 2020, all remaining maintained schools will have become academies or will be in the process of conversion. Additionally, the White Paper proposed a complete overhaul of school improvement functions, traditionally delivered through local authorities.

5 Background

5.1. At the Mayor and Cabinet meeting on 9th December 2015, it was resolved that:

- Having considered an officer report, and a presentation by the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, Councillor Paul Maslin, the Mayor agreed that the establishment of an education commission to support the development of a future vision for education in Lewisham to report in April 2016 as set out be approved.

6 Education Commission: Formation

6.1. A team of three national experts was established to support the work of the Education Commission in Lewisham, supported by a fourth member to provide operational support. A biography for each member of the team is set out below:

- Christine Gilbert is chair of the Commission. She is currently visiting professor at the Institute of Education, UCL. Christine was previously a head teacher, director of education, local authority chief executive and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector at Ofsted.
- Robert Hill, a visiting senior research fellow at King's College London, is an educational consultant, researcher and writer. He was a senior policy adviser to the Labour government.
- David Woods is a visiting professor at Warwick University and chair of the London Leadership Strategy. Formerly, David was a senior education adviser at the Department for Education and chief adviser for London Schools and the London Challenge.
- Michael Pain is Director of Forum Education. He was previously at the National College and is supporting the work of the Commission.

7 Education Commission: Key Questions

7.1. The Lewisham Education Commission has considered the following key questions:

- Given the national and regional context, what is the best form of organisation for Lewisham's schools going forward?
- Is there a school-led model of school improvement which would put Lewisham's work on a more sustainable footing, given the council's financial constraints?
- Lewisham needs additional secondary and SEND places. What are the best means to achieve this, alongside ensuring all our existing schools are schools of choice?
- Given Lewisham's strong commitment to improving outcomes at KS4 and KS5, are any more radical or leading edge models or approaches that Lewisham could adopt at borough level?
- Underpinning all these questions is the central theme of how Lewisham's system serves the most vulnerable.

8 Education Commission: Process

- 8.1. Particularly over the first two weeks of the Commission, significant desktop analysis was undertaken. Commissioners have considered a number of key strategies and plans, including the School Improvement Framework published in November 2015, and details of current school structures and working arrangements.
- 8.2. Commissioners have conducted an analysis of recent school Ofsted reports, with particular focus on the secondary sector, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses, themes and issues.
- 8.3. Extensive data analysis at both school and local authority level has been undertaken supported by the Policy, Service Design and Analysis hub.
- 8.4. Throughout the course of the Education Commission, Commissioners have attended a number of existing fora and have hosted a number of bespoke events as part of a comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement.
- 8.5. Commissioners have attended a number of existing meetings, including Children and Young People Select Committee and meetings of primary, secondary and special school head teachers.
- 8.6. Christine Gilbert has met with the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to ascertain their vision for Education in Lewisham. Additionally, Commissioners have met with a number of other Councillors, including the Chair of Children and Young People Select Committee and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 8.7. In order to develop a full understanding of the role that the local authority plays, Commissioners have had discussions with a number of officers including those responsible for school improvement and place planning.
- 8.8. In addition to existing fora, headteachers were invited to arrange meetings with Commissioners. Throughout the project, Commissioners have met with a number of executive headteachers, headteachers and chairs of governors of early years settings, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and academies.
- 8.9. Two bespoke evening governors' events have taken place, led by Christine Gilbert; these sessions provided an outline of the work of the Education Commission followed by discussion around the key questions which the Commission seeks to address.
- 8.10. Children and Young People have been given the opportunity to present their thoughts to the Commission through the Young Advisers group in addition to a separate meeting of a smaller focus group of students who are educated within the Borough.
- 8.11. Residents and other stakeholders were offered the opportunity to meet with Christine Gilbert for a bespoke 30 minute meeting as part of the 'open sessions' held by the Commission; these sessions consisted of 24 separate

meetings including a number of sessions held on a Saturday. The sessions were advertised on the Lewisham Council website, through the Headteachers' Weekly Bulletin, to all Councillors, and directly to other stakeholders. During the 'open sessions', Christine Gilbert met with, among others, residents groups, voluntary and community sector representatives, union representatives, parent groups and individual parents.

- 8.12. Christine Gilbert has contacted Local MPs and the Regional Schools Commissioner and will be meeting with representatives from the Diocese towards the end of the Commission's programme of engagement.
- 8.13. A number of written submissions have been received and considered by Commissioners. Written submissions have been made by, among others, individual parents, residents groups, voluntary and community sector representatives, and providers.
- 8.14. Throughout the course of the Education Commission, visits have been made to 17 schools (1 nursery school, 6 maintained primary schools, 5 maintained secondary schools, 2 maintained 'all-through' schools, 1 academy, 1 special school and 1 pupil referral unit).

9 Education Commission: Next Steps

- 9.1. There will be triangulation with key stakeholders before the draft report of the Education Commission will be sent to the Executive Director for Children and Young People on 22nd April (the original timescale)
- 9.2. The report of the Education Commission will be presented to the next Children and Young People Select Committee on 8th June to enable comments and proposals ahead of a report to Mayor and Cabinet on 29th June.

10 Financial Implications

- 10.1 The cost of the Education Commission has been contained within the sum identified in the existing Children and Young People's budget..

11 Legal Implications

- 11.1 Local authorities are required to provide primary, secondary and further education for 16 to 18 year and for people aged 20 or over who have an Education Health and Care Plan.(EHCPlan).
- 11.2 Section 13A of the Education Act 1996 specifically requires local authorities to exercise their education and training functions in relation to those young people for whom they have assumed responsibility so as to promote high standards, fulfilment of potential and fair access to opportunity for education and training. It applies in relation to persons aged 20 or over for whom an EHC Plan is maintained.
- 11.3 Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to secure the provision of 'sufficient' schools (as amplified in sub-ss (2), (3) and (4)) for their areas. This function must be exercised with a view to securing diversity and parental choice. Local authorities must have regard to the need to secure primary and secondary education in separate schools, provision for children with special educational needs and boarding provision for those for whom it is desirable. The local authority is not itself obliged to provide all the schools required, but to secure that they are available. Section 18 enables an LEA to make arrangements for the provision of education at non-maintained schools.
- 11.4 The establishment of an education commission with specific term of references assists the local authority in complying with its general statutory responsibilities especially so in the light of the changes to school improvement and education provision proposed in the Education and Adoptions Act 2016 and the proposals set out in the recently published White Paper entitled "Education Excellence Everywhere."

12 Equalities Implications

- 12.1 The Commission has made every effort to draw views and ideas from across the community, including black and ethnic minority groups and parents of children with disabilities. Visits have included special schools.

13 Environmental Implications

- 13.1 No specific environmental implications have been identified as arising from this report.

14 Crime and Disorder Implications

- 14.1 No specific crime and disorder implications have been identified as arising from this report.

15 Background Documents and Report Author

- 15.1 There are no background documents attached to this report.

15.2 If you require further information about this report please contact Sara Williams (sara.williams@lewisham.gov.uk).