

<p>Minutes from meeting on 23 November 2016</p>	<p>MAJOR REVIEW - WITNESS SESSION 1 (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p><u>Witness 1 - Councillor David Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services</u></p> <p>The Committee welcomed Councillor Simmonds to the meeting, to provide the Local Authority's viewpoint on the relationship with academies and free schools.</p> <p>The following points were made by Councillor Simmonds during his presentation and in response to questions from members of the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the Major Review Scoping Report had been presented to the Committee in October 2016, the Government had withdrawn the requirement for all schools to convert to academies. The Department for Education continued to encourage schools to convert, although it was now not compulsory. • Hillingdon was the second London Borough to have an academy school and since then the vast majority of secondary schools in the Borough had become academies. The Borough had a history of secondary schools being independent in reviewing and managing their own affairs. • The Academies Act of 2010 enabled publicly-funded schools to become academies. This had the purpose of enabling high standards to flourish. Good or outstanding schools were permitted to convert of their choice. Poor schools were required to convert with a partner through a sponsorship arrangement. • In Hillingdon, schools had generally tended to provide the same level of performance whether they had converted or not. This could be attributed to the Borough's long tradition of twinning schools to help each other. • The Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) in Hillingdon were all 'homegrown' and there were none of the big national MAT chains operating in the Borough. • The local authority retained responsibility for admissions, safeguarding and special educational needs and disability (SEND) at schools that converted to academies. The local authority had a duty to ensure children had a school place, and Hillingdon had a large school place expansion programme to accommodate the growing population. The Council remained the champion of children with SEND and was responsible for arranging access and transport. The Council also retained responsibility for education welfare, when children were excluded or did not attend. • The Council was the legal employer of staff in maintain schools although governors decided who to appoint. • It was a very complicated picture with a range of relationships. • Until 2011 the local authority received a school standards fund and were responsible for improvement in schools. After 2011 this
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money went directly to schools which significantly affected the way the Council discharged its responsibilities for quality in schools. Head teachers were responsible for quality of education but usually called on the council if things went wrong.

- The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) was the responsible authority for academy performance and for managing failing academies. If an academy was failing, the RSC would identify a local sponsor to take over, although in practice the local authority would need to ensure school places for the children were available, as the LA was responsible for ensuring children have access to education.
- The LA could push the RSC to intervene if it had concerns about a school but cannot force any action.
- The LA could be a MAT. In Hillingdon, informal conversations with head teachers had found some heads would favour this, but not a majority. Hillingdon was not planning to push in that direction.
- There was a planned reduction in funding for local authority statutory education functions from September 2017, but there were no plans to amend the statutory functions that councils were required to meet. Arrangements to accommodate this would need to be in place by April 2017 unless the government changed its position significantly before then. The education budget had not been agreed yet and operational guidance was awaited. It was a bit of a mess.
- Council officers had strong relationships with schools and continued to support good education despite the uncertainty and the fall in financial resources.
- Councillor Simmonds' vision was for Hillingdon to be at or above the national average on all performance measures, have a high percentage of children with access to good or outstanding schools leading to successful access to higher education. The Council's role was to be an advocate for children, challenging schools.
- Councillor Simmonds met regularly with head teachers individually or collectively. The executive boards, such as the Schools Strategic Partnership Board (SSPB), challenged its members' performance.
- There was a need to ensure people were informed as consumers. Often parents did not want to take their children out of a school even if it was underperforming.
- Hillingdon had high numbers of children with SENDA, of which a relatively high number attended independent schools, although some of these were within the Borough. The Council was very good at supporting disabled children in schools.
- After the government announced academisation would be compulsory, schools awaited further details of the mandatory conversion. Following the more recent announcement that conversion was no longer compulsory, schools seemed to have adopted a 'wait and see' approach.
- The SSPB provided a sounding board and conduit. It encouraged schools to work together rather than compete, and find solutions to

issues before they became a problem.

The Committee thanks Councillor Simmonds for attending the meeting and informing their major review.

Witness 2 - Laurie Baker, Head of School Improvement/Education Quality and Strategy

The Committee welcomed Laurie Baker to the meeting.

The following points were made by Ms Baker during her presentation and in response to questions from members of the Committee:

- The Committee had received with their agenda for the meeting some data showing performance in maintained and academy schools by key stages. This showed that KS2 was strong in maintained, and KS1 was better in academies.
- The data did not show comparison with other London Boroughs, however it was confirmed that Hillingdon had improved its ranking against other London Boroughs.
- The expected outcomes for children with SENDA and Looked After Children (LAC) was protected through legislation. The provision and intended outcomes for these groups of children was the same no matter what type of school they attended.
- There was a clear statutory requirement for schools to admit LAC within 10 days following a referral. Ideally the placement was agreed in advance so that the child could start at the new school on day 1. Most schools were very cooperative.

Witness 3 - Peter Malewicz - Finance Manager, Children and Young People

- Free schools were fully funded by the Department for Education. The school could be approved even if the land had not been fully identified.
- Hillingdon spent approximately £160million on primary school expansion, however and the grant it received was nowhere near this, leaving a shortfall in capital funding, the cost of which fell on the local council taxpayer.
- Pupil place planning is a statutory responsibility so the local authority had to identify schools where children could be placed.
- Free schools had a different model.
- With respect to revenue, the Council received a Dedicated School Grant (DSG) for early years, schools and high needs. This funding was received in funding blocks but was not ringfenced between them, although the DSG was ringfenced in its entirety.
- The LA was responsible for signing off the DSG budget and in simple terms could only be used to fund educational outcomes of children. The LA had and would retain a number of statutory

responsibilities but it was not that clear where funding for these services sat as the way in which educational support services were funded was complex and varied. For example, the work of the SENDA team was funded from the base budget and not the DSG, whereas the Admissions Team were funded from the DSG. The cost of Home to School Transport for SENDA children was met from the base budget, whereas the Educational Psychologists Service was funded from both DSG and base budget.

- For early years funding, the LA had to create a formula to distribute resources to any provider which could include childminders, Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Nursery providers, academies and maintained schools.
- High needs children were funded in all schools, no matter what the status of the school. Furthermore, a number of independent special schools, such as Pield Heath used the Council's model for their funding.
- All schools could access the Council's support where funds were centrally retained from the DSG. The Procurement Service for Schools for example was used by academies more than maintained schools.
- If all schools converted to academy status, the Council would still retain the responsibility for determining the Individual Schools Budget and funding model but all funding would be recouped by the Education Funding Agency and paid to the schools directly by them. However, the Council would still be responsible for funding Early Years and High Needs.
- The academisation of schools changed little unless statute also changed, and there were no indications that this would happen in the foreseeable future.
- The Council could not force a school to expand but could ask the RSC to intervene. Generally schools had been cooperative and aware of the pressure on school places.
- The Government had recently changed the rules on funding of faith schools and removed the cap on faith-based admissions.

Witness 4 - Laura Palmer, School Placement and Admissions Team Manager

- All schools had to use the LA for admissions which presented a few challenges around academies which could set their own admissions criteria. There was a Fair Access Protocol which was chaired by academy heads. Hillingdon's Admissions Team held open days to help parents understand they could apply to send their children to any school. The LA retained responsibility for managing school admissions appeals.
- The proposal to increase selective schools could impact on the LA in terms of place planning, finding places for siblings, the impact on local parents and equal distribution of school places.
- There were instances where a child moving into an area found

difficulty securing a school place particularly if they had challenging behaviour or ESOL needs. The Admissions Team was visiting schools to encourage them to be more flexible. The number of children in this category was rising.

Witness 5 - Jackie Wright, Head of Disability Services

It was noted that Jackie Wright was unable to attend the meeting and had sent her apologies.

RESOLVED: That (1) the witness sessions be noted and recorded for collating into the Major Review Draft Report;

(2) the Regional Schools Commissioner be invited to attend one of the witness sessions;

(3) the Chairman and Labour Lead liaise with officers to agree further arrangements for the major review including devising a questionnaire for head teachers.

CYPOC NOVEMBER 2016 - COMMENTS ON THE AVAILABLE DATA

SUMMARY:

EYFSP - LBH pupils achieving "Good Level of Development" improved year on year - 2014 to 2016 (from a low base) 52.5% to 69.7% - first time above the national average of 69.3% in 2016.

Key Stage 1 - Across the borough in general the Hillingdon average is higher than national average in all subjects.

Key Stage 2 - With the exception of Writing, Hillingdon is above the national average in all other key subjects.

Key Stage 4 - Since 2014 LBH has achieved higher than the national average in the percentage achieving 5 A* - C (including English and Maths).

CYPOC COMPARISONS - November 2016

EYFSP			
PRIMARY SCHOOLS	EYFSP		
MAINTAINED TOTAL SCHOOLS	2014 (40 schools)	2015 (40 schools)	2016 (40 Schools)
HILLINGDON SCORE ⇄	GLD* (52.5)	GLD* (65.3)	GLD* (69.7)
NATIONAL SCORE ⇄	GLD* (60)	GLD* (66.3)	GLD* (69.3)
SCHOOLS ABOVE HILLINGDON AVERAGE	23	23	21
SCHOOLS ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE	16	23	21 & 1 equal

EYFSP			
ACADEMY TOTAL SCHOOLS	2014 (15 schools)	2015 (17 schools**)	2016 (17 schools**)
HILLINGDON SCORE ⇄	GLD* (52.5)	GLD* (65.3)	GLD* (69.7)
NATIONAL SCORE ⇄	GLD* (60)	GLD* (66.3)	GLD* (69.3)
SCHOOLS ABOVE HILLINGDON AVERAGE	10	11	11
SCHOOLS ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE	7 & 1 equal	11	11

* GLD = Good Level of Development

**Nanaksar = no intake in 2016, total includes Lake Farm, John Locke (2015 & 2016) and St Martins (2016 only).

KEY STAGE 1

PRIMARY SCHOOLS	KEY STAGE 1 2016 (40 schools)			
MAINTAINED TOTAL SCHOOLS				
HILLINGDON SCORE ⇄	Reading = 75%	Writing = 66%	Maths = 75%	RWM = 62%
NATIONAL SCORE ⇄	74%	65%	73%	Not available
SCHOOLS ABOVE HILLINGDON AVERAGE	27	26	25	27
SCHOOLS ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE	29	28 & 3 equal	29	Not available

ACADEMY TOTAL SCHOOLS	KEY STAGE 1 2016 (15)			
HILLINGDON SCORE ⇄	Reading = 75%	Writing = 66%	Maths = 75%	RWM*** = 62%
NATIONAL SCORE ⇄	74%	65%	73%	Not available
SCHOOLS ABOVE HILLINGDON AVERAGE	6	8	8	8
SCHOOLS ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE	6 & 1 equal	8 and 1 equal	8 and 1 equal	Not available

*** RWM = Reading, Writing and Maths combined

NB Pupils at the new schools Lake Farm and John Locke have not yet reached Key Stage 1

KEY STAGE 2

PRIMARY SCHOOLS	KEY STAGE 2 2016 (40 schools)				
MAINTAINED TOTAL SCHOOLS					
HILLINGDON SCORE ⇄	Reading = 69%	Writing = 72%	Maths = 76%	RWM*** = 55%	GPS**** = 79%
NATIONAL SCORE ⇄	66%	74%	70%	53%	72%
SCHOOLS ABOVE HILLINGDON AVERAGE	24	22	22	24	23
SCHOOLS ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE	27	21	28	25	32

ACADEMY TOTAL SCHOOLS	KEY STAGE 2 2016 (14)				
HILLINGDON SCORE ⇄	Reading = 69%	Writing = 72%	Maths = 76%	RWM*** = 55%	GPS**** = 79%
NATIONAL SCORE ⇄	66%	74%	70%	53%	72%
SCHOOLS ABOVE HILLINGDON AVERAGE	6	11	6	7	5
SCHOOLS ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE	6	8	8 & 1 equal	8	11

*** RWM = Reading, Writing and Maths combined

**** GPS = Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling