

Appendix 1 - Update on previous review of the Committee - Major Review of the Council's Current and Future Relationship with Academies and Free Schools

	RECOMMENDATIONS	UPDATES
<p>Major Review of the Council's Current and Future Relationship with Academies and Free Schools</p>	<p>RECOMMENDATION 1</p> <p>That the Council provides clear contact details for all school enquiries, including giving consideration to providing a single point of contact to all schools.</p>	<p>All new Head Teachers in the borough were invited to attend a Council orientation event on 14th September 2017 where named officers were provided for all key education and school enquiries, along with overviews of team support offers, routes to access support, advice and guidance and email and telephone contact information. 11 out of 20 new Head Teachers in the borough for 2017/18 attended this event. Slides used at the event were shared with all new Head Teachers, including non-attendees.</p> <p>In addition, a new and dedicated email address was made available to all Head Teachers in the borough on 5th September 2017, for use where colleagues remained uncertain of appropriate education teams or officers with responsibility for the query. This email address is overseen by senior administration support in the Residents' Services Business Support Unit and the School Improvement Team. This email address has been used by 5 schools (10 emails altogether) to date.</p>
	<p>RECOMMENDATION 2</p> <p>That Officers look at further ways to build on the good relationship between the Council and the Regional Schools Commissioner.</p>	<p>The Head of School Improvement works closely with the Regional Schools' Commissioner and both the DfE and Education and Skills Funding Agency teams. The Head of School Improvement has regular telephone/email contact with the Regional Schools' Commissioner's office via the project link for the borough and meets with the Regional Schools' Commissioner's team at their Watford office on a six-weekly basis.</p>

		<p>In addition, the Head of School Improvement and key senior officers with responsibility for education in the Council including the Deputy Director of Housing, Environment, Education, Health & Wellbeing and the Corporate Director of Adults and Children's Services (with DCS responsibility) meet with the Regional Schools Commissioner and / or his team twice per year.</p> <p>The Head of School Improvement is a member of the Regional Schools' Commissioner's Sub-Regional Improvement Board and attends meetings to review the improvement offer across the region and to recommend schools for support within Hillingdon using resources from local and regional school-to-school support providers.</p> <p>The Regional Schools Commissioner's office worked closely with the Council's School Improvement Team to provide appropriate academy systems-leadership representation at the annual Hillingdon School Improvement Conference 2017/18.</p> <p>All school complaints - including those referred to the Council by Ofsted and those received directly from Residents or Members - relating to academy schools in Hillingdon are shared with the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Education Skills Funding Agency and, wherever possible, ongoing consultation between the Council and these partners results in appropriate action being taken and clear communication between the Council and the DfE.</p>
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RECOMMENDATION 3

That where there are specific attainment and progress concerns at various Key Stages, the Children Young People & Learning Policy Overview Committee advises that the Council and schools work together to continue to ensure that there are clear and accountable plans in place.

The Council's School Improvement Team follows the agreed Hillingdon School Improvement Plan to implement a challenge and support model to affect school improvement in settings where there are specific progress or attainment concerns or where there is other evidence that a school may be at risk of underperforming.

Where these schools are academies, the Council works closely with the responsible bodies at the Regional Schools Commissioner's office to highlight local concerns and ensures that, where these concerns fall into the Council's statutory remit for safeguarding and/or ensuring best outcomes for vulnerable children and young people, the correct Council teams across the directorates act swiftly to intervene and address any weaknesses in academy practice. In the case of maintained schools, including those aligned with a Diocese, the Council's School Improvement Team allocates School Improvement Link officer resource to provide bespoke support and challenge including brokerage of services from local and national leaders of learning and governance and Teaching Schools.

All maintained schools identified to be at risk receive School Improvement Link support and are expected to demonstrate to their School Improvement Link officer that they have a clear plan for rapid improvement which appropriately addresses known weaknesses. In cases where a school has received a downgrading in their Ofsted judgement, the school's post-inspection plan is the central document to evidence the actions that the school has taken and to promote necessary accountability. This is subject to regular review, challenge and support where required.

RECOMMENDATION 4

That the Council strongly encourages all school governing bodies to have in place satisfactory induction and continuous professional development arrangements for new and existing governors/trustees.

Following the publication of the Committee's recommendations relating to this major review, the report and its findings were shared with Hillingdon's Schools' Strategic Partnership Board (SSPB) for further highlighting to all governors via the Hillingdon Governors Executive Committee.

In addition, School Improvement Link officers routinely challenge governing bodies and Head Teachers regarding governance skills and the impact of their practice in supporting school leaders to improve. This includes brokering specific governor training from local providers where skills or knowledge gaps are evident.

The Council ensures that the fortnightly Head Teacher's briefing, written by education team officers and highlighting important information and training opportunities for all schools and governors, is shared with the independent Governor Support Service which operates in Hillingdon.

Senior officers from the Council's education teams attend and support the termly Hillingdon Governors' Meeting which is held at The Civic Centre. This forum is used to provide updates to all Hillingdon governors regarding Council activities that affect governance and to regularly highlight expectations regarding the quality of governance that the Council would like to see in all schools in the borough.

RECOMMENDATION 5

That the Council continues to assist schools with the conversion transition to an Academy school and continues to support existing Academy Trusts where new schools join their Trust.

Where a maintained school wishes to convert to academy status or where a maintained school is required to convert to support rapid improvement, the Council continues to work closely with the school and the academy trust to facilitate the smooth transfer of legal duties, land and buildings. The Council's School Improvement Team provides the oversight link to this work through the Council's Education Policy Manager.

The Council continues to honour commitment to expansion or improvement works where a school which is already part of the agreed programme chooses to convert to academy status.

The School Improvement Team is available to liaise between schools and governing bodies interested in conversion and provides a link between these school and the Regional Schools Commissioner and local academy trusts.

The Council has provided an independent Academy Conversion Exploration event for all maintained school Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors and liaised with the CEOs of a number of local and national academy trusts who are interested in expansion within the borough by facilitating an academy marketplace activity at the end of the Hillingdon School Improvement Conference 2017/18.

	<p>RECOMMENDATION 6</p> <p>That the Council works with Hillingdon Schools to revise the school improvement framework effective from September 2017 in light of the changing role of the Local Authority in education.</p>	<p>The Hillingdon School Improvement Plan is due for review in 2018 and has recently been presented to Members of the Committee as an update report on School Improvement in the borough.</p> <p>The Council's currently has a BID Review of Education Services underway which will be used to present the best ways to deliver statutory and strategic priorities for school improvement in the borough, in light of the significant funding changes to these areas.</p>