



CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

7.30 pm

Thursday
22 September 2011

Town Hall

Members 14: Quorum 6

COUNCILLORS:

Sandra Binion (Chairman)
Gillian Ford (Vice-Chair)
Dennis Bull

Nic Dodin
Robby Misir
Pat Murray

Billy Taylor
Frederick Thompson
Linda Trew

CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

**Statutory Members
representing the Churches**

Phillip Grundy, Church of
England
Jack How, Roman Catholic
Church

**Statutory Members
representing parent
governors**

Julie Lamb, Special Schools
Anne Ling, Primary Schools
Garry Dennis, Secondary
Schools

Non-voting members representing local teacher unions and professional associations:
Margaret Cameron (NAHT), Keith Passingham (NASUWT) and Bev Whitehead (NUT)

For information about the meeting please contact:

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What is Overview & Scrutiny?

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

They have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers.
2. Driving improvement in public services.
3. Holding key local partners to account.
4. Enabling the voice and concerns of the public.

The committees consider issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations.

Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups consist of a number of Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research and site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Committee that created it and it will often suggest recommendations to the executive.

Terms of Reference

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- School Improvement (BSF)
- Pupil and Student Services (including the Youth Service)
- Children's Social Services
- Safeguarding
- Adult Education
- 14-19 Diploma
- Scrutiny of relevant aspects of the LAA
- Councillor Calls for Action
- Social Inclusion

AGENDA ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) – receive.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to declare any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

4 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 28)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on the following dates and authorise the Chairman to sign them:

- 7 June 2011
- 5 July 2011 (special)
- 28 July 2011 (joint OSC)

5 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY (Pages 29 - 40)

6 FUTURE AGENDAS

Committee Members are invited to indicate to the Chairman, items within this Committee's terms of reference they would like to see discussed at a future meeting. Note: it is not considered appropriate for issues relating to individuals to be discussed under this provision.

7 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other item in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the Minutes, that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Ian Buckmaster
Committee Administration &
Member Support Manager

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 7 June 2011 (7.30pm – 9.00pm)
Havering Town Hall, Romford

Present: Councillors Sandra Binion (Chairman), Dennis Bull, Nic Dodin, Gillian Ford (Vice-Chairman), Robby Misir, Pat Murray, Garry Pain, Billy Taylor and Frederick Thompson.

Co-opted Members: Phillip Grundy, Jack How, Julie Lamb and Anne Ling.

Apologies for absence were received from co-opted member Garry Dennis and non-voting members Margaret Cameron, Sue Kortlandt and Keith Passingham.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Nic Dodin to the Committee who had replaced Councillor John Wood. The Committee thanked Councillor Garry Pain for his contribution as he too would cease to be a member in due course.

The Chairman advised those present of action to be taken in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building becoming necessary.

25. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2011 and of the special meeting held on 14 March 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

26. CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Committee considered a report updating members of progress to date with recommendations submitted by a topic group of the Committee's predecessor, the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Topic Group, which considered the roll out of Sure Start Children's Centres in the borough, reported to the Committee on the 21st April 2009 and the approved recommendations were considered by Cabinet on 24th June 2009.

The Committee noted that the report only provided an update on those recommendations that had been endorsed by Cabinet. Of those that were being progressed, members noted the following outcomes:

Partnership working between the Council and NHS in Children's Centres

The Committee was informed that since Children's Centres became statutory, there was a renewed emphasis on partnership working with the NHS. To this end, four Centres (Collier Row, St Kilda's, Ingrebourne and Elm Park) were being used as "health hubs".

Compulsory Occupation Agreement for nurseries based at Children's Centres

It was noted that two Children's Centres had a private nursery provision and there was now a standard form of occupation agreement with Ingrebourne Nursery based at the Ingrebourne Children's Centre, with regular reviews built in.

The nursery at Collier Row Children's Centre (Abbs Cross), had still not signed an agreement and this matter was before the Court for resolution.

Self-contained buildings to be used for Children's Centre accommodation

The majority of Children's Centres were in self contained buildings. South Hornchurch Library Children's Centre had recently moved to the converted portacabin on the library site.

Establishing a Parents Forum for each Children's Centre

There were Parents Forums at each Children's Centre. The governance arrangements were agreed by the Children's Trust and were in place. Currently, there were discussions with the School Governor Service of the Local Authority for that service to manage children centre governance.

Transport to Centres to be reviewed and good corporate signage to be installed at each Centre

There had been a review of signage and consistency of approach adopted. There were new signs that clearly mark the buildings and signs on the main highways indicating the location from major junctions.

N3 connectivity to be installed in all existing and future Centres

NHS Havering had supplied their staff with mobile working 3g solutions or at some hubs; health staff had direct access to their database. This matter was no longer an issue.

Provision of sexual health services at Centres to be developed

Children's Centres had continued to provide some sexual health services. Services had also been developed for teenage parents with an emphasis on preventing a second pregnancy.

Improved promotion of centres

There continues to be a communication strategy to promote Children's Centres. There had been articles in Living and also invites to the local papers to key events. There had been close working with local radio stations and there was a website and staff were being trained to update this regularly.

Continued good relationships between the Council and partners

The existing strong working relationship with partners in Health, Job Centre Plus and with the third sector had continued. All of the old and new centres were linked to partner agencies.

Finalising locations for centres in central Romford and Rainham Village

Work had continued with a centre developed in Pinewood School and Rainham Village School. Both had a Children's Centre offer in place. The plans were well advanced for the self contained Children's Centre at Rainham Village.

The plans for Wykeham and Mawney School received strong local opposition and therefore the plans were withdrawn. Instead, the plans had been adapted for St Kilda's to increase its capacity and there was an offer for parenting groups to local schools in the Romford area. Health Services were moving their staff from Romford Clinic to St Kilda's.

Continued outreach services from centres with the use of mobile solutions where necessary

There was an outreach service from centres. The outreach service worked with the most vulnerable; providing parenting classes and one to one parenting programmes to parents whose parenting required support

Continued good relationships between schools and centres

There were excellent relationships with a large number of schools, particularly schools which had a Children's Centre on site.

The Committee **noted** the report.

27. CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES

The Committee received a report, presented by the Manager of Inclusion, Assessment and Support, regarding the borough's legal requirement to provide services for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). The report outlined the key areas of service and support being provided with particular focus upon early years, school and post-16 education.

The Committee acknowledged that Havering had a long history of commitment to inclusion, which was reflected in its policy and arrangements for special educational needs (SEN). As a consequence of this the large majority of young people with LDD were catered for within mainstream settings and support services had developed to assist schools, early years settings and young people to support themselves to participate alongside their peers.

The provision of services for young people in early years with LDD was robust and incorporated services jointly-delivered with the charity First Step. The Under Fives Inclusion Service was a means of tackling the most extreme needs such as autism. This service consisted of the Learning Support Service, the Social Communication Service, the Child and Community Psychology Service and the SEN section. The Foundation Stage Funding Panel consisted of representatives from various organisations and provided funding to areas of need.

Measures to ensure that children and young people with LDD attended school were continuing and included rigorous assessment to ensure that the right support and the right school catered for individual needs. OFSTED inspection reports indicated that the large majority of schools ensured that children and young people with LDD achieved well. Progress was being made on improving practice in monitoring the achievement of pupils with LDD in special schools through an ICT system, CASPA, and on the use of provision management and mapping to assist in ensuring special educational needs were effectively met within mainstream schools. In June 2010 guidance was issued to all schools in Havering on appropriate identification of young people with SEN who may go on to be placed at School Action of the Code of Practice.

The Committee noted the post-16 provision for young people with LDD. Members were informed that transition arrangements for Year 9 pupils with LDD were robust and that the young people were involved in planning for KS4 to ensure their eventual progression into education, employment or training. Havering's Parents in Partnership Service held an annual meeting with parents to explain the transition process in collaboration with colleagues from Learning Support and Connexions.

Havering College of Further and Higher Education provided some Post-16 provision, principally at Quarles Campus and dealt with some complex learners with learning difficulties although the majority of its LDD had moderate to mild learning difficulties. Barking and Dagenham College also hosted a significant population of Havering post -16 LDD. Both FE Colleges' provision was delivered in mainstream settings, which were currently considered unsuitable for a proportion of vulnerable youngsters with high support needs.

Of the 3 special schools in Havering only Ravensbourne had a sixth form and this catered for up to 18 young people with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. It predominately catered for its own students but occasionally took students from Corbets Tey and Dycorts. This had meant that other students from Corbets Tey and Dycorts whose parents wanted them to continue in a school sixth form had to go to out of borough schools.

In 2009-10 there was an unprecedented rise in the number of requests for sixth form places in special schools mainly from parents of pupils at Corbets Tey. This was associated with requests that Corbets Tey develop a sixth form, concern expressed by parents that they would prefer local provision and that the proposed developments at Dycorts would not come on stream until 2014.

The Local Authority commissioned an independent review of Post-16 Special Education in Havering, which reported in July 2010. It recommended development of special sixth forms at both Corbets Tey and Dycorts as a matter of urgency. However the report contained no detail as to funding and its completion coincided with the Government's withdrawal of funding for Havering's Building Schools for the Future Programme and the arrival of the current period of financial constraint.

In the absence of significant capital or revenue funding any local development would have to tap into external funding sourced through the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA). Currently there were three main routes for funding learners aged 16 to 25 with LDD:

- The SEN block grant, which Local Authorities received to discharge their statutory duties towards those with SEN in special schools.
- Additional Learning Support (ALS) funding allocated to colleges and independent providers for learners aged 16 to 25 in local provision.
- Provision funded for individual learners with LDD aged 16 to 25 as part of the specialist placement budget, which included provision at independent specialist providers where their needs could not be met locally. This budget was managed by the YPLA.

While it was anticipated that these three funding streams would pass to Local Authority control in 2013-14 this did not help with the immediate pressure of securing Post-16 provision especially as much of this funding was only accessible through further education providers and not special school sixth forms i.e. students benefiting from YPLA funding in FE colleges cannot have Statements. The 14 to 19 Strategy Manager had worked with the Havering College of Further and Higher Education and Havering Sixth Form College to establish pilot schemes proposed to run from September 2011 in which students were on the roll of the colleges and so able to access participation funding and Additional Learner Support funding through the YPLA but received their education through provision at Corbets Tey and Hall Mead respectively.

Members, whilst pleased with the programmes in place for pupils with LDD, did express concern that the pilot schemes were too limited or did not extend far enough. There was considerable concern amongst some members that the recommendations about post-16 provision had not been acted upon despite being accepted by the Council.

The two schemes in question, one of which centred around a provision at Havering College of Further and Higher Education and Corbets Tey School involved around 6/7 pupils whilst the Havering Sixth Form College provision involved around 4 pupils. The cost per pupil was said to be approximately £21,000.

Members discussed the role of the Post-16 Strategy Group, which had been established to steer the pilot schemes and to manage the provision offered to post-16 pupils with LDD. There was concern that the role of the group was being diluted by the focus upon the pilot programmes, with not enough focus upon the wider issues of examining the educational offer to the 19 to 25 age group with LDD. Further, it was imperative that the group offered a platform for parents. In response, officers stated that the Strategy Group did comprise two members of parents in partnerships, and more places were available, but places had not been taken. It was agreed that better advertising of the group be provided for parents.

Members considered the drop-off in the number of statemented pupils in the borough and were informed that a statement lasted up to age 19 at which point, if a child with LDD remained in education, a separate, post 16 version of a statement came into effect. There was a level of concern that the intensity of the SEN provision provided could at times be too intense and not equip young people for independence as they would develop a reliance on support.

The Committee noted the report.

28. ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

The Committee received its Annual Report for the 2010/11 Council Year. It was planned for the report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

The Committee approved the report subject to some minor amendments and agreed that it should be referred to full Council.

29. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

The Committee considered the Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel for the 2010/11 Council Year. As a Sub-Committee of the Children & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee, practice had been for the Corporate Parenting Panel's Annual Report to also be referred to Council.

The Committee noted the work of the Panel, which had included work with the Children in Care Council and meetings with young people both in and that had left care. Members stated that much positive work had been undertaken, particularly around ensuring that satisfactory accommodation was provided for those young people moving to semi or fully independent living. Members stated that as a result of visits by members of the Panel much improvement had been made in the standard of accommodation.

The Committee approved the report subject to some minor amendments.

30. FUTURE AGENDAS

The Committee agreed the following items for future meetings:

- Youth Support Services for SEN pupils
- Budget Variance Report (across learning and social care)
- Update on how the SEN and Disability Green Paper will impact upon support for SEN pupils in schools.

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**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND LEARNING
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday 5 July 2011 (7.30pm – 9.00pm)
Havering Town Hall, Romford**

Present:

Councillors Sandra Binion (Chairman), Dennis Bull, Nic Dodin, Gillian Ford (Vice-Chairman), Robby Misir, Pat Murray, Billy Taylor, Lynden Thorpe (substitute for Frederick Thompson) and Linda Trew.

Co-opted Members: Phillip Grundy and Anne Ling.

Also present was Councillor Paul Rochford and 25 members of the public.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keith Darvill and Frederick Thompson, and non-voting members Margaret Cameron, Sue Kortlandt and Keith Passingham.

The Chairman advised those present of action to be taken in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building becoming necessary.

**31. PROPOSALS FOR THE PROVISION OF TRAVEL ASSISTANCE TO
SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH SEN – REQUISITION OF CABINET
DECISION**

The Committee considered a requisition of a Cabinet Decision made on 15 June 2011, regarding changes to the travel assistance offered to children with special educational needs to and from school.

The decision had been called-in in accordance with paragraph 17 of the Overview and Scrutiny rules by Councillors Keith Darvill and Gillian Ford.

The Committee was informed that the changes to the travel scheme sought to ensure that a high quality service could continue whilst making efficiency savings, broadly through an end to the assumption that SEN pupils would receive assistance to and from school only from a de facto taxi service.

Specific changes to the service were outlined as follows:

- The adoption of the revised policy on travel assistance (provided as an appendix to the Committee)

- The introduction of a requirement that parents must apply for travel assistance for their child in respect of each academic year.
- The introduction of safe meeting points for children currently transported by PTS bus to Corbets Tey and Dycorts schools (subject to a full independent assessment of need).
- That children who are eligible for and given travel assistance in the form of door to door transport, will only be taken to and from the child's home address. New requests for travel assistance to school from an address other than the child's home will not be accommodated. Existing arrangements for a small number of families will continue while the children concerned remain eligible for door to door travel assistance to school.
- The expansion of the existing travel training scheme to all children and young people with SEN who are assessed as being suitable and likely to benefit from such training.
- The introduction of a mandatory assessment of suitability for travel training for all students with SEN:
 - on receipt of any new requests for assistance to get to school or college
 - at the end of Key Stage 3 (approximately age 14), if already receiving Council assistance in getting to school, and;
 - at age 21 for those in Further Education establishments and already receiving Council assistance in getting to College.

The Committee noted the reasons for the decision as follows:

1. The adoption of the revised policy will clearly set out the Council's aim of increasing independence and reducing reliance on Council-organised transport solutions.
2. An annual application for travel assistance will:
 - Ensure that only those who are eligible for help will receive it year-on-year;
 - Avoid transport solutions being paid for by the Council indefinitely where the student no longer meets the eligibility requirements; and
 - Enable the Council to identify where a student's circumstances have changed, so that the assistance offered can be tailored to suit their needs best.
3. The introduction of safe meeting points for pupils at Corbets Tey and Dycorts schools will reduce bus journey times for many children, as journeys will follow a more direct route with fewer stops.

4. Where door-to-door transport to school is provided, stipulating that for new applicants this will only be to and from the child's home address will enable the Council to carry out efficient route planning and make the best use of its resources, whilst meeting its statutory obligations.
5. Extending the travel training scheme to children with SEN who are assessed as suitable will:
 - Give increased freedom and quality of life;
 - Be an enabling process for future employment and social life; and
 - Develop social skills and increased self-confidence.
6. The introduction of mandatory assessments of suitability for travel training will enable the Council to identify as early as possible any children who would benefit from personalised travel training. By assessing children at Key Stage 3, the focus will not only be on helping them to be independent on their journey to school but also looking to their potential future journeys to college. For those in Further Education, training will improve their future employment prospects as they would be better prepared for travel to work.
7. Increased use of voluntary sector organisations will create a mixed economy and facilitate the smooth implementation of travel training and safe meeting point proposals in a cost-effective manner. This would be necessary for timely execution as the Council does not have sufficient staff resources to dedicate to this.

The Committee considered the other options considered as detailed in the report. Officers then explained the changes and the process by which the decision had been made in response to the reasons for the requisition detailed in the report presented to the Committee.

Officers began by detailing the detailed and extensive consultation that had been undertaken with regards the change in policy. 385 questionnaires were sent to parents. Officers further explained that the LA did have a statutory duty to ensure travel assistance for SEN pupils and that the changes would cement that duty, whilst delivering £600,000 of savings.

There were a number of questions surrounding the proposed independent assessment of travel needs that would be undertaken for those parents relying on travel assistance. Officers made it clear that the judgement of the independent charity would be final and the LA would go with their recommendation. This would include continuing to provide to the current provision to those families judged to be in the most need. The independent assessor was a charity that had expertise

in the needs of SEN pupils; this organisation was selected not only for its expertise in this area, but also to guarantee independent judgements.

Officers explained that other boroughs had adopted similar proposals to reduce costs and that these schemes had largely been successful, this was based on best practice from Barking and Dagenham, Hackney and Tower Hamlets which were being used to inform the Havering model.

Members questioned as to the feasibility studies that had been carried out to assess specific and nuanced complexities for SEN parents and how changes would affect them. Officers reaffirmed that the independent assessment was being established for the very reason of ensuring that individual and specific needs would be catered for.

The Committee noted that the new regime would bring a fresh emphasis on travel training for SEN pupils to make them confident and able to access and use public transport safely, this would be part of a wider process of helping them obtain independence later in life. All children would be encouraged to achieve maximum independence and this would mean a high percentage of children would be travel-trained than at present. Leading LAs had been researched in the area of travel training to help inform Havering's policy.

In order to best facilitate an effective and robust travel training provision Havering was looking at possible joint-procurement with neighbouring boroughs, whereby the voluntary and private sector could play a role in delivering the service. The finalised scheme would be in place by December. There were concerns that some children who were not ready would be forced into undertaking travel training; this might also be against the wishes of the family. However, officers stated that they would judge each case by the verdict of the independent assessment.

The Committee moved on to consider the proposed central locality points that would replace the de facto taxi service. Pupils would now be collected from these central locations, which were guaranteed to never be more than a ten minute walk from the child's home. The Committee looked at maps which showed where the central points would be located and members were informed that these points would be constantly reviewed to keep in line with demographic changes. It was also explained that if a parent picked a school for their child that was further than an alternative nearer school then the parent would be responsible for transport and they would be able to rely on the travel service.

Members queried the reasons for many parents being against the re-introduction of central travel points (this model having been used in the

past). It was stated that there were myriad factors for this, largely concerning concerns of marshalling the children to the central location, fear of them standing in the rain. Ultimately, convenience was the biggest argument against.

In response to queries regarding drop-off points, officers explained that multiple addresses would now not be applicable and the current practice whereby some children could be dropped off to a different address from their home would cease. However, it would continue for those currently having this service. All drop-off points would be the same as the child's home address. If there would no one to meet a child then the child would be taken to a place of safety, such as a children's centre, council offices or a school and the parent would need to arrive at that location with photo id to collect the child.

Finally, members questioned the financial impact the changes would have on the Passenger Transport Service (PTS), which provided the service. It was stated that a business model had been drawn up the PTS and that this did not include any planned redundancies. The PTS had been fully involved in the process. In the first 3 weeks of the schemes introduction the service would provide a higher level of marshalls and support staff to ease the transition.

The Chairman asked the Committee to vote on whether to uphold the requisition.

The Committee voted not to uphold the requisition by 8 votes to 3 with 2 abstentions.

The voting was as follows:

For: Councillors Dodin, Ford and Murray
Against: Councillors Binion, Bull, Misir, Thorpe, Taylor and Trew. Co-opted Members Phillip Grundy and Anne Ling

The meeting was concluded.

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**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
Havering Town Hall, Romford
Thursday 28 July 2011 (7.30pm – 10.50pm)**

Present:

Children & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Councillors Sandra Binion (chairman), Clarence Barrett (substituting for Gillian Ford – vice-chairman), Dennis Bull, Robby Misir, Linda Trew, Billy Taylor, Frederick Thompson, Nic Dodin and Pat Murray.

Co-opted Member present (non-voting) – Margaret Cameron

Crime & Disorder Committee –

Councillors Ted Eden (chairman)*, John Wood (vice-chairman), Rebecca Bennett, Roger Evans, Frederick Osborne, Linda Van den Hende*, Keith Darvill (substituting for Denis Breading) and Jeff Tucker* (substituting for David Durant).

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Councillors Jeff Brace (chairman), John Mylod (vice-chairman)*, Dennis Bull, Peter Gardner, Robby Misir (substituting for Garry Pain) Barbara Matthews* and Jeff Tucker (substituting for David Durant).

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Councillors Pam Light (chairman)*, Clarence Barrett (substituting for Brian Eagling – vice-chairman), Wendy Brice-Thompson, Fred Osborne, Linda Trew and Nic Dodin.

Individuals Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Wendy Brice-Thompson (chairman), Linda Van den Hende (vice-chairman)*, Jeff Brace, Pam Light*, Keith Wells and Clarence Barrett (substituting for June Alexander).

Towns and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Fred Osborne (chairman), Linda Hawthorn (vice-chairman)*, Wendy Brice-Thompson, Osman Dervish, Robby Misir (substituting for Garry Pain) Keith Wells, Ray Morgon, Paul McGeary and Michael Deon Burton.

Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Robby Misir (chairman), Ray Morgon (vice-chairman), Ted Eden*, Billy Taylor, Damian White and Clarence Barrett (substituting for Ron Ower).

Members of the Cabinet

Councillors Michael White (Leader of the Council), Lesley Kelly*, Steven Kelly, Roger Ramsey and Paul Rochford* were present.

Other Members

Councillor Denis O’Flynn

* - for part of meeting

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors June Alexander, Denis Breeding, David Durant, Brian Eagling, Gillian Ford, Georgina Galpin and Ron Ower.

There were no declarations of interest.

1. CHAIRMAN OF MEETING

With the agreement of all Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members, the Chair was taken at this special joint meeting by Councillor Sandra Binion.

The Chairman advised all present of action to be taken in the event of emergency evacuation of the Town Hall becoming necessary.

2. THE COUNCIL’S FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael White explained that the Council’s financial strategy had sensible financial planning as its bedrock. Investment had continued and could be seen in initiatives such as the My Place youth centre in Harold Hill and the recently announced new leisure facilities in Romford. There remained however an overall funding gap of £40 million and this report brought forward a series of balanced and focussed measures to meet the remainder of this deficit.

Services valued most by residents by residents would be protected under the proposals and there were be no closures of libraries or parks (indeed Havering’s parks has recently won eight green flag awards) nor would there be any change to refuse collection. Children and the most vulnerable adults would continue to be supported.

Particularly in social care, investment would be made in preventative measures in order to realise savings in future years. Falls prevention would receive additional funds and technology used to allow people to live longer in their own homes. Work would also be started with families at an earlier stage.

The report set out recommendations to make the £16 million savings required to balance the Council's books. Councillor White added that the report provided reassurance to residents that the Council would continue to act in their best interests and deliver a sustainable level of Council Tax. Councillor White was confident the savings would be delivered but a contingency had also been established, should it be needed.

Councillor White had recently met, in conjunction with Conservative Council Leaders in North East London, the Local Government Minister, Bob Neill MP. Funding for local government would be changing to a business growth model and, in future, Business Rates would pay for up to 70-80% of Council services. Councillor White had explained that grant levels per head were key and that residents in some local roads received very different grant levels depending on which side of the road they lived. The Minister had indicated he was open to a separate funding deal for London, if this could be agreed by all boroughs.

Councillor White emphasised that the proposals sought to protect front-line services. He thanked officers and Cabinet Members for their professionalism during the process and was particularly grateful to Councillor Ramsey, the Chief Executive and the Group Director – Finance & Commerce for their assistance.

General Questions

Councillor Barrett felt there was insufficient detail of the savings given in the report but thanked officers for the further information they had supplied to him. He asked that, in future such reports include more detailed information as this would benefit the public.

The Leader clarified that the figures did not assume an annual Council Tax rise of 2.5%. Raising Council Tax was one option but other ways to make savings would also be considered. The change from a grant-based to a business rate-based system might also help the Council's finances but nothing could be ruled out at this stage.

Councillor Tucker asked if the Government Minister had given any advice on what areas the Council could invest in. Councillor White replied that he had not as this was not the Minister's role. The new model of funding would mean it was important to attract more businesses to Havering as this would increase the level of Business Rates collected and hence give more funds to be spent on services. The Council was in any case investing in projects such as the new swimming pool and new libraries in Rainham and Elm Park.

Councillor Barrett felt that monitoring of the budget savings was very important and asked if this could be done via exception reports brought to the overview and scrutiny committees. Councillor White was however seeking to reduce the cost of committee meetings. It was also part of Councillor Ramsey's role as Cabinet Member for value to ensure close monitoring of the savings. Councillor Ramsey added that monitoring of budgets was very important and that overview and scrutiny committees were welcome to look at the budget if they wished. The budget was considered robust enough for a two-year settlement and a new funding system would be in place after this.

Councillor Darvill asked if each Overview & Scrutiny Committee could look at the proposals but Councillor White pointed out that it was for each Committee to determine its own work programme, including investigations such as that suggested. Staffing implications of some proposals would however mean they could not be discussed in a public forum.

Councillor O'Flynn asked if there was a total saving of £16 million or £19 million as both figures were mentioned in the report. Councillor White confirmed that £4 million was not covered in the papers and there were various options to make this up including Business Rates and technical budget adjustments.

Questions raised and answers given relating to the specific savings proposals are shown in the appendix to the minutes.

Two propositions relating to items in the schedule of Savings Proposals were put to the vote. The details of those votes are set out in the appendix.

During the course of discussions, the Members of all Overview & Scrutiny Committees agreed to suspend Committee Procedure Rule 8(b) in order to complete the agenda of the meeting.

The Committees noted:

- 1. The financial position of the Council.**
- 2. That the report was formally consulting them on the Corporate budget adjustments and that this was the opportunity to scrutinise the Cabinet's decisions.**

APPENDIX : QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES RELATING TO INDIVIDUAL SAVINGS PROPOSALS LISTED IN APPENDIX 4 OF CABINET REPORT, 13 JULY 2011

CULTURE AND COMMUNITY
CULTURE AND LEISURE

Item 1: Five a side centre – Could the project plan for this centre be made available?

It was confirmed that the project plan was a public document and could be supplied to Members.

Item 3: Arts Service – Will services be reduced at Fairkytes or prices raised?

The savings would be achieved through better marketing and increased partnership working. Councillor White felt that the savings could be achieved and officers had a clear idea of where these savings would come from. Prospective partners for the Arts Service were Havering Music School and the Queen's Theatre.

It was confirmed that the Council remained committed to opening a new library in Harold Hill with a delivery date of 12-18 months.

Item 4: Community Halls

Could further details be given of the revised management arrangements?

Offices advised that a report on community halls would be presented to Cabinet in September including the amount of repairs needed and options for achieving the identified savings. A consultation paper would be released in the next 3-4 months and it was confirmed that Members could also receive this.

Item 5: Hornchurch Stadium – What would be the impact of the revised management arrangements on users of the stadium?

There were many issues to be worked through with this saving and the precise impact on users was therefore uncertain at this stage.

Item 6: Westland Temporary Camping Site – Could further details be given of the temporary arrangements during the Olympic period?

Councillor White wished to ensure that the Olympic Games were relevant to the people of Havering. Westlands Playing Fields would therefore open as a temporary camping site during the Games period. The plan was supported by St. Edwards School and transport would be provided to and from the camp site. The plans were not subject to the planning process but consultation would be undertaken with St. Edwards School and playing fields users.

Councillor White added that it had recently been announced that more than 300 Chinese journalists would be based in Havering during the Olympic period and a media centre would be set up in Romford.

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The income received from the campsite during the Olympic period would offset the costs involved. It was possible however that the facility could be reopened for a month in the summer in following years. A paper on Travellers in Havering as a whole would be taken at the next Cabinet meeting.

Item 8: Parks commuter parking – Will all people who drive to parks now have to pay for parking?

Most people in fact walked to Havering's parks but Raphael and Lodge Farm parks did suffer from considerable commuter parking and solutions to this had been discussed with residents and ward Councillors.

Officers explained that it was too costly to install barriers that would be lifted after the morning rush hour. There was also the problem of shift workers leaving their cars in the car parks. Officers felt the assessment of income from the policy change was realistic and would supply details to Councillor Barrett.

Is this change detrimental to Havering residents who visit parks?

Councillor White noted that he had visited a park last Sunday which had been very busy but he had not noticed many parking problems. People walked to the park or came by bus or bicycle.

It was proposed to refer item 8 on parks commuter parking to Cabinet for further consideration. This motion was **LOST** by five votes to four. Councillors Deon Burton, Hawthorn, McGeary and Morgon voted in favour of the motion; Councillors Brice-Thompson, Dervish, Misir, Osborne and Wells voted against.

Item 9: Countryside paths – Could more detail be provided for this saving?

Work would be transferred to the grounds maintenance DSO and countryside rangers which would be more efficient.

Item 10: Libraries – What is the current total libraries expenditure?

Councillor Ramsey indicated this was in the region of £1.5 million and officers would supply the precise figures.

REGENERATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Item 14: Management Restructure of Community Functions – Could more detail be given on this?

It was proposed to merge the corporate policy and community safety sections but it was not possible to give further details at this stage due to the impact on individual staff.

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Item 15: Efficiency in spending grants budget – How many grants were given out in Havering?

Approximately £250,000 of social services grants were allocated with further grants from corporate policy and communications. Officers would supply full details.

STREETCARE

Item 17: Savings on environmental maintenance – Will these changes remove the demarcation between workmen?

Grass cutting used to be a major problem but the establishment of a single team to do the work would overcome this.

Item 19: Parking – Where and when will car park charges be increased?

More pay and display locations were being introduced but the current levels of charges were not changing. The car parks would also be managed in the same way.

Councillor Tucker said that the Council's car park at Tesco in Rainham was barely used and Councillor White invited him to propose any changes to the parking policy. It was accepted that the section 106 agreement in Romford, whereby no operator could charge less than the Council for parking, had led to some inconsistencies in parking charges. Councillor White reiterated that there were no plans to change either the 20p for two hours or 50p for three hours parking charges.

Item 21: Waste Tonnage Reductions – Will extra recycling facilities be introduced?

It was not planned to introduce extra recycling bins. It was planned to reduce waste tonnage by e.g. putting extra controls on recycling sites and ensuring waste was only taken from Havering residents. Councillor White added that there were definitely no plans to reduce the current weekly refuse collection.

HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

Item 22: Trading Standards – reorganisation – It was clarified that the proposed £40,000 saving was in addition to the existing saving.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Item 23: Registrars income improvements – Would dances and other events not be held at Langtons?

Clashes were avoided between musical events and weddings etc. The hall at Langtons could be used for small wedding receptions but these could not take place at the same time as other ceremonies. The savings target was achievable due to the introduction of additional income generation services such as the nationality application checking service.

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DIRECTORATE WIDE

Item 24: Could further details be given of the planned efficiency savings?

There was not a detailed savings plan as yet although officers felt that the proposed savings were fully achievable.

SOCIAL CARE AND LEARNING

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Item 25: Adult Social Care – Could further details be given of savings planned via renegotiation of the community equipment contract?

A new contract with community equipment suppliers would commence from October 2011. Savings would also be generated from a reduced need to store equipment as this would now be delivered direct to retail outlets.

Item 26: Supporting People – Specific cuts to services had not been decided yet but it was anticipated that there would need to be an overall saving of less than 10%. It would be necessary to review which services had the least impact or value and this would be the subject of a future Cabinet report.

Item 28: Service review – How will more efficient working in preventative services be achieved?

Back office efficiencies at Yew Tree Lodge had been identified and it was likely that further efficiency savings could also be found.

Item 29: Day Opportunity commissioning – Could a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment for this saving be supplied?

This saving related to a stimulation of the market for older people's services and was not therefore suitable for an Equality Impact Assessment as each person's needs were assessed individually. Consultation with services users would be carried out by social workers as part of service users' annual reviews.

Item 30: ASC Commissioning – Domestic Violence – How long does the current contract have to run?

The present contract had 18 months to run and the new tender was for three years with a possible extension of two further years.

Item 31: Reablement performance – What is the cost of new reablement beds?

There was no cost for new reablement beds as these were covered by Government funding via the Department of Health. Total funding, including elements for other purposes, was in excess of £2 million.

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Item 32: Reducing demand – telecare investment – What is the total investment in telecare?

Total figures would be provided by officers. It was noted that some telecare initiatives were provided by Government rather than Council funding.

Item 34: Reducing demand – falls prevention – Should efforts be made to improve Havering's pavements in order to reduce numbers of falls?

The Council was working with many partners on its falls reduction strategy. There were also joint efficiencies with the health sector that could be produced in this area. Members felt that carpets, stairs and other areas could also be looked at in order to reduce falls. A higher level of exercise could also mean that falls caused less harm when they did occur.

Item 35: Reducing demand – Hospital Admissions and Re-admissions – Would the cost of CRB checks and recruiting volunteers be excessive?

The proposed network of volunteers to support users with long term conditions was currently being discussed with voluntary organisations. There was confidence that such a network could be established, at no cost to the Council. Members agreed it was important not to take volunteers for granted.

Item 37: Reducing demand – transition planning – How will the transfer of care from children's to adult services be managed?

There were around 30 transitions from children's to adults care per year and officers were aware of the risks around transition. Work was now undertaken with children's services at an earlier stage and with better planning for young people with long term care packages, more cost effective options could be found.

Officers added that this item should be taken in conjunction with item 55 which dealt with the creation of a specific "transitions team" working with people from the age of 12 to 24. The combined adult and children's directorate allowed for a better, more cost effective transition. It was also clarified that the council was legally required to have a head of children's services.

Item 42: OP Residential Care – Were the Cabinet confident that a £1 million saving over three years would be achieved in this area?

Officers accepted that the savings target was ambitious but money from central Government had allowed the testing of telecare and telehealth which was already having an impact. 49% of people receiving home care reablement required no further support and half of the remaining recipients required less support than under a different route. Less support was also now needed for people who had gone through Royal Jubilee Court. A reduction in spending on residential care from 50% to 40% would have a significant impact on the Council's budget, even with increased investment in prevention. Members felt that regular monitoring of these proposals would be essential.

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Item 43: Adult Social Care Charging – Was there a danger that people would no longer take up services such as meals on wheels if charges were increased?

The meals on wheels service was no longer subsidised but was now selling more meals than previously. Whilst it was possible that things could change once the outcome of the Dilnott report was known, 60% of service users still paid no charge at all.

Children's Services and Learning & Achievement

Item 45: School Improvement Transformation – What would be the impact of academies not taking up services?

Officers advised that this saving related to grant match funding and was not affected by any decisions made by academies.

Item 46: Traded services – What would be the impact of this saving on schools?

This related to removing the Council subsidy on services supporting school improvement but would have no effect on schools themselves. A competitive price and product would still be given to schools. The precise business model was still being worked on and it was too early to say if this would involve any redundancies.

It was proposed to refer item 46 on traded services to Cabinet for consideration. The motion was LOST by six votes to three. Councillors Barrett, Dodin and Murray voted in favour of the motion; Councillors Binion, Bull, Misir, Taylor, Thompson and Trew voted against.

Item 47: Adoption – Would the proposed changes mean fewer adoption panels being held?

It was uncertain at this stage how many panels or meetings would be required. Legal advice would be needed on constituting an adoption panel across three boroughs. The new structure would definitely not delay any child being adopted which would not be cost effective in any case.

Item 48: Information, Advice and Guidance – What discussions have taken place with schools regarding this new model?

Work on this area was at a very early stage. Officers felt that a targeted model would give a more consistent focus. Schools were aware of the proposed model but no discussions had taken place as yet. Legal opinion had not been obtained at this stage. Legal advice could be brought to a future meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee unless the advice made reference to individual staff.

Item 49: Children's Centres – Will these changes lead to any redundancies at the Children's Centres?

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There would be no redundancies as a result of any changes. Children's Centres were central to the prevention strategy although there were efficiencies that could be made in a number of the centres. Provision for disabled children was made in all Children's Centres and one Centre specialised in facilities for disabled children. There was not a role for the voluntary sector in achieving this specific item but a role for voluntary organisations in the management of Children's Centres had not been ruled out in the longer term.

Item 51: Children's Transformation – Could further details be given of this proposed saving?

It was important to focus more on prevention programmes which would also produce financial savings. Officers agreed that these savings would need to be continually monitored, Councillor Rochford added that there would be no effect on child protection, only on prevention strategies.

Item 53: Implications of SEN Green Paper – Will the proposed savings be achieved?

Officers felt that the savings could be achieved although this depended on the progress of the Green Paper. There would be no effect on either the funding or provision of services for children with special educational needs.

Item 55: Re-engineering of transitions process and structure – Could further details be given of the proposed savings?

Work had already started on this transition. A lot of expenditure had previously been incurred due to poor planning or decision making previously. Improvements in this would mean savings were achievable.

DIRECTORATE WIDE

Item 56: Review of Structure – Could examples be given of changes as a result of this review?

Officers explained that there was a need to reflect the service in future and this would require different resources and a different shape of directorate structures. There were many uncertainties that had to be planned for e.g. the findings of the Monroe report.

The combined adults and children's directorate allowed greater scope for integration and this also applied to work with the NHS.

FINANCE & COMMERCE**ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Item 57: Increased staff occupation density of Mercury House – Had negotiations taken place with unions over the introduction of hot desking etc?

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The current overall ratio for the Council was seven desks to ten staff but it was felt that some ratios could be reduced further. The strategy on flexible working had been agreed with the unions. Talks were being held with several potential occupiers of the two vacant floors of Mercury House.

A number of office-based staff did still require an assigned desk although technology was allowing an increasing amount of remote or home working. There was also more use of scanning and electronic devices in order to reduce the amount of paper used.

Item 58: Reduction in building cleaning – How many redundancies would there be as a result of this reduction?

Cleaning in public or communal areas, toilets etc. would be carried out at the same frequency as currently. Work was in progress to ascertain the staff numbers affected but there would be no redundancies of permanent staff as a result of this saving.

Item 60: Re-introduction of school swim transport – Will new 32 seat coaches be purchased for this service?

The aim was to use school transport vehicles during their down time. The service would need to be marketed to schools but officers felt the projected income was achievable.

Item 61: Deletion of post within Transport service – Would this impact on the current service?

This related to the work of a retired postholder. There were now different reporting arrangements and officers felt management of the section could continue in this way in the future.

Item 62: Staff car parking – Why had last year's savings not been achieved?

It had been agreed to put back the new parking system several months after discussions with the unions. This meant the original projected income was not achieved. Officers would supply further details.

Item 63: Reduction in courier service – What would be the impact of this?

The internal courier run would reduce from three to two deliveries per week.

DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL

Item 72: Emergency Planning shared services – Could more details be given of these proposals?

It was proposed to share the management of the service with Barking & Dagenham and Waltham Forest. This would start in the post-Olympic period. There would be no staff redundancies involved.

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LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Item 73: Reduced support levels to Mayor – What would be the impact of this?

The Mayor would concentrate more on events within Havering in future and there would therefore be less call on the Deputy Mayor.

Item 77: Reduction in Cabinet Member – Could more details be given of this?

Councillor White explained that, once the Council's transformation programme had completed, there would be no need for a Cabinet member with a transformation portfolio. It was important that Councillors made decisions or put forward proposals, rather than officers.

Item 78: Road Safety – Whilst noting that there was no proposed reduction in school crossing patrols, would there be a reduction in the number of road safety events held?

Officers confirmed there would be no reduction in school crossing patrols. Efforts would be made to retain the existing number of road safety events but some may have to be reduced. It was possible some events could be held jointly with neighbouring boroughs.

Item 79: Committee Services restructure – What was the rationale for this proposal?

Some committees had been abolished recently which had led to some spare capacity in committee services.

Item 80: Members Allowances. Reduction in IT etc. – Could more details be given of this?

The issuing of Members with I-pads would allow the saving of money via less use of paper etc.

Item 81: CCTV Reduced staffing – Would the Council's CCTV network be brought together with that of Homes in Havering?

An options paper on the CCTV service would be brought forward in the autumn. Discussions were also in progress with two other boroughs re sharing CCTV Control rooms.

CORPORATE ITEMS

Item 82: Car pooling/car club – How many vehicles would be needed for the scheme?

Such schemes had worked well in areas such as Croydon but a pilot would be undertaken first to establish the number of vehicles needed. Approximately 20 vehicles were needed for the pilot scheme which would be purchased at a reduced rate from a third party supplier.

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Item 83: Reduction in strategic provisions – How was this saving made up.

The saving was derived principally from provision for the ELWA levy with the rest of the variance put towards carbon trading.

Item 84: Reduction in Senior Management – How would this be achieved?

It was proposed that there be a reduction of 20% in senior management – four senior manager posts being removed out of twenty. Steps would be taken to ensure services could still be run with a reduced senior management. Management levels would need to be increased during the period of change.

DRAFT



CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:	Havering's New School Improvement Strategy
CMT Lead:	Andrew Ireland
Report Author and contact details:	Grahame Smith 01708433942 grahame.smith@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	HIAS

SUMMARY

In light of the forthcoming Education Bill, 2011, and the wide-ranging and significant changes to both funding and policy in relation to schools and school improvement, the Department for Education (DfE) directed all Local Authorities to submit detailed plans on their strategy to support all schools, and especially those that were failing to provide a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils/students, or those schools that were performing below the new government floor standards.

This report summarises Havering's response to the DfE request and sets out the strategy that will take Havering's school improvement services forward in the coming months and years.

Please note that many of the principles and processes contained in this new strategy are already part of existing practice.

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee notes the new School Improvement Strategy in its aim to continue to provide high quality educational support for schools and institutions in Havering.

REPORT DETAIL**1. Key Objective**

The 2011 Education Bill, which takes forward the White Paper, The Importance of Teaching (November 2010), charges all Local Authorities with a 'strong strategic role as champions for parents and families, for vulnerable pupils and of educational excellence.' This new School Improvement document sets out how Havering Local Authority is already ensuring rapid improvements for maintained schools performing below the floor standard, in an Ofsted category and those of some concern - and it sets out how we will support all schools that wish to collaborate to improve educational performance for all our pupils. In Havering we are committed to high achievement through partnership work with all stakeholders. As an education community we are committed to using all our resources, both core staff and the great reservoir of skill and expertise present in our schools, collectively to enhance pupils' learning and improve the overall quality of provision.

2. Specific Guiding Principles

- i. We seek to ensure that no schools in Havering are failing to provide an acceptable standard of education for their pupils. Where weaknesses exist we will take decisive action to ensure schools are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, to broker in support where appropriate and provide some centralised support for those schools who are below Government floor standards or in an Ofsted category.
- ii. All key members of Social Care and Learning are clear as to how weaknesses are identified and how resources are commissioned to overcome them.
- iii. The identification process includes rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems which are not focused solely on schools with low raw attainment scores.
- iv. Inclusion is a critical element of effective provision and is central to our focus on closing gaps in performance.

3. General Guiding Principles

- i. The highest priority for the LA is to promote high standards of provision and to prevent underachievement or failure at all levels. Key to this is its commitment to supporting self improvement in all schools.
- ii. Self-awareness, derived from accurate school self-evaluation, translated into effective improvement planning and implementation, is at the heart of school improvement.
- iii. Intervention and core LA support must be tailored to meet these identified needs, as well as additional support commissioned from other schools or providers.
- iv. Enduring school improvement comes from embedded change which is owned by and comes from within schools, and which must include improvements in Leadership and Management, teaching, learning and pupil progress. Schools are responsible for their own performance and the achievements of their pupils. However, it is the duty of the LA to challenge schools and to ensure they are supported to commission the right resources to rapidly improve.
- v. The maintenance of the high quality of relationships that have been established between schools, governing bodies, LA officers and Members of the Council, is key to ensuring the efficient and effective functioning of the education community in Havering in its continual drive for improvement.
- vi. Equally important is gaining an accurate and informed view of provision, especially in relation to Leadership and Management and teaching and learning.

4. Working with Schools

We are committed to high achievement through partnership because we believe it to be the most efficient and effective route to securing continued improvement.

As an education community, Havering is using all its resources collectively to enhance pupils' learning and improve the overall quality of provision. We are collectively committed to open, transparent communication and honest and frank debate. The LA regularly reviews its practice in relation to its key activities with representative groups of schools and governors, particularly in relation to the nature of the monitoring, challenge, intervention and any core elements of the support provided.

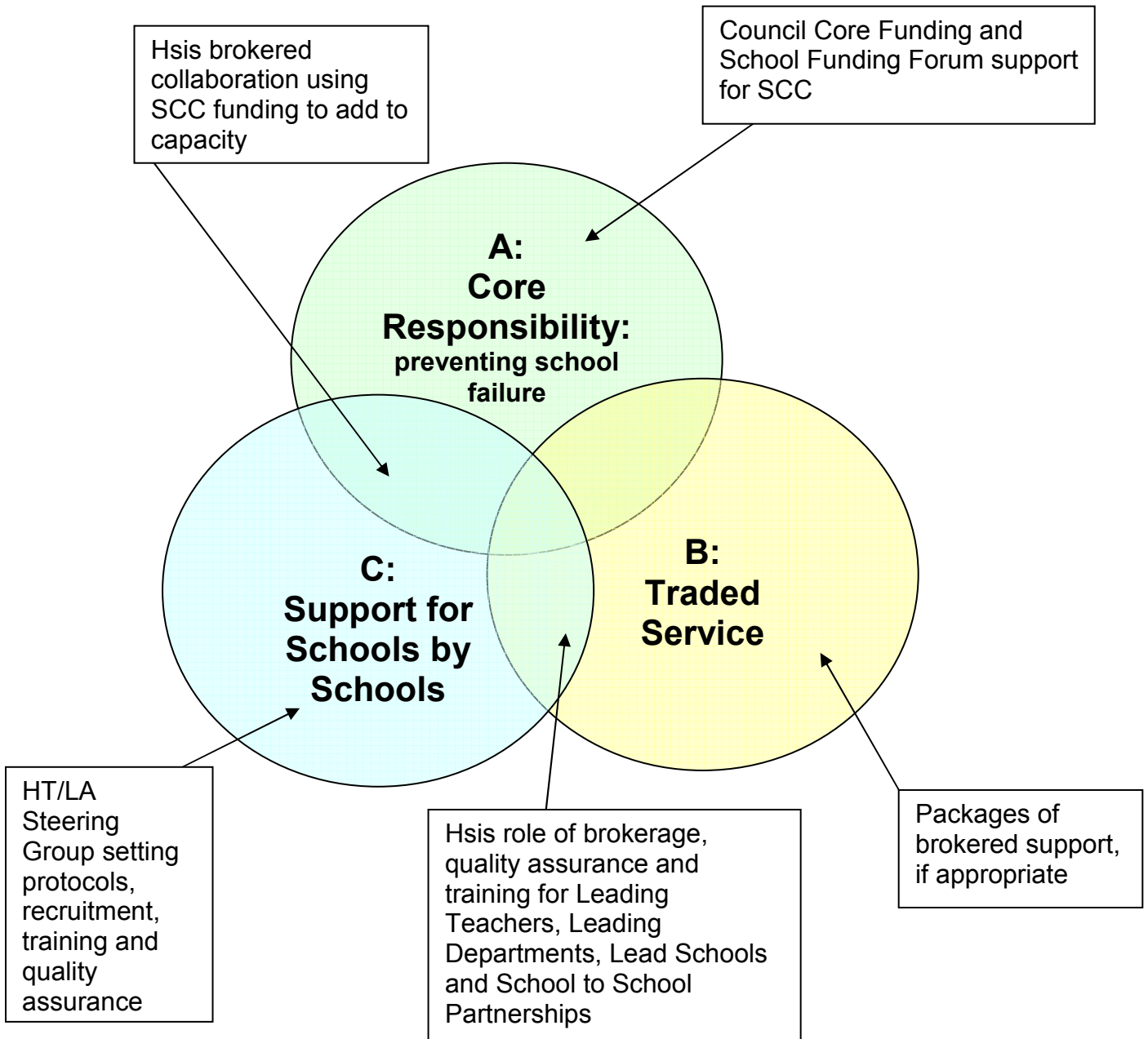
We have the full agreement of schools to:

- partnership working;
- support their ongoing development of effective school self- evaluation and school improvement planning;
- offer appropriate challenge and intervention, this being based on rigorous analysis of all available data;
- monitor and evaluate effectively to identify potential weaknesses at an early stage so as to enable early intervention;
- apply the criteria used to determine the need for intervention;

Our purpose is to develop ways of working, in partnership, that build on existing effective practice.

The three main, overlapping strands, of the work of Hsis are represented in the following diagram:

THREE STRANDS



A CORE RESPONSIBILITY: PREVENTING SCHOOL FAILURE

5. Identification of School Support Levels

The LA has identified three categories of school support. In all cases there is a discussion between the LA and the school prior to the placing of the school in a category, unless it is an automatic category change such as a school going into an Ofsted category or performing below floor standards.

The key criteria for categorisation are:

- Standards and progress achieved since the last Ofsted;
- Capacity for improvement

These are considered and reviewed annually. In addition, the Schools' Monitoring Group (SMG) meets once every half-term to consider issues arising from across Social Care and Learning, which may cause additional criteria to be considered as part of the categorisation process. Membership of the SMG includes:

- Head of Learning and Achievement
- Principal Educational Psychologist
- Principal Finance Officer
- Manager for Additional Education Needs Services
- Behavioural Support
- Education Officer (SENNS)
- Principal Inspector Performance (Hsis)
- Principal Inspector Development (Hsis)
- Senior Inspectors (Hsis)
- Schools' HR Manager
- Educational Welfare Service Manager
- Governing Body Support Service Manager

The Chair and convenor of the group is a Principal or Senior Inspector. Other officers attend as appropriate. The Hsis Senior Leadership Team reviews all support categories twice yearly. The progress of any school identified as causing a concern is formally reviewed at least every term by LA staff working with the school concerned and the Headteacher. Any particular concerns will be reported to the Chair of Governors at this point. In any case, discussions will be held with the Chair at least every term. For those schools designated as a school causing concern, this may include regular meetings of a Progress Review Meeting or a Monitoring Board evidencing progress against an Action Plan

Systems and Processes

Both schools and the LA review performance in line with key areas covered by the Ofsted Framework. Regular review and completion of a school based self-evaluation process by the school is strongly encouraged as the foundation of that process.

The key areas currently include:

- current performance in terms of achievement and attainment;
- trends over time;
- teaching and learning;
- leadership and management;
- quality of provision;
- personal development and well being; effective safeguarding procedures;
- effectiveness of community cohesion, promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination;
- capacity for improvement; stability; and attitudes.

Evidence is drawn from the following sources:

- analysis of the most recent test data linked to the longer-term trend of each school's performance; Fischer Family Trust data, RAISEonline, LA data and schools' own data;
- school self-review;
- the most recent Ofsted report with specific reference to improvement issues and the impact of actions taken; LA databases on finance, staffing, SEN, attendance, exclusions and pupil numbers; LA/SIP school visit reports;
- any Mid-Ofsted Review that may have been completed; available data on staff turnover, relationships, quality of leadership and management, quality of teaching, school curriculum and school ethos; and Governing Body minutes (where available);
- LA alerts, arising from visits undertaken by Senior Inspectors - annually for Ofsted "good and better" schools and bi-annually in those judged by Ofsted as less than "good".

6. Support Levels

Category 1: Schools on track for good or outstanding at their next Ofsted

Schools in which there are no concerns, where there are some outstanding or good elements, where pupils make good or better progress in terms of value added and where their attainment is normally above or at national average.

Category 2: Schools satisfactory at last Ofsted and improving

Schools in this category may have one of the following:

- schools removed from category 3 which remain Category 2 for a minimum of one year;
- schools that have identified that they need to broker in some additional support to build capacity;
- schools amalgamating or federating;
- no substantive Headteacher, but still with the capability to improve;
- new Headteacher (for first year only); and
- schools facing difficulties at a particular point in time (e.g. high number of temporary staff, budget).

Category 3A: Schools satisfactory at last Ofsted, potentially vulnerable to remaining satisfactory or an Ofsted category

Schools in this category are at risk of being identified as requiring a notice to improve at their next Ofsted Inspection.

This will normally include significant identified weaknesses in one or more of the following:

- standards/achievement
- leadership and management
- teaching and learning
- behaviour
- personal development and well being
- home-school relationships
- budgetary control

Schools removed from category 3B remain in category 3A for a minimum of one year. Schools within this category **may** also be identified by the LA as a 'School Causing Concern' in which Statutory Intervention may be needed.

Category 3B: Schools in Ofsted category or performing below the floor standard

- schools served an Improvement Notice by Ofsted;
- schools identified by Ofsted as requiring Special Measures;
- Schools performing below the floor standards;

Schools within this category will be identified by the LA as a 'School Causing Concern' in which Statutory Intervention may be needed.

Category 3C: LA Formal Warning Schools

Schools in this category are identified by the LA and will be subject to a formal warning where it has evidence that:

- the standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so, unless the LA exercises its Statutory Power; and/or
- there has been a serious breakdown in the way that the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, pupils' standards or performance (e.g. serious financial difficulties); and/or
- the safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened (whether by breakdown of discipline or otherwise).

Schools within this category will be identified by the LA as a 'School Causing Concern' where a formal warning and Statutory Interventions are in place.

7. Levels and Nature of LA Support

The focus and level of support will at all times be designed to encourage independence and to build capacity rather than to foster a culture of dependence.

Schools in Category 1: There is an offer of 0.5 day of core entitlement – a 'keep in touch' meeting.

Schools in Category 2: There is an offer of 1.5 days of core whole school improvement entitlement.

Schools in Category 3A: There is an offer of 3 days of core whole school improvement entitlement and a small number of days of subject and aspect support.

Schools in Category 3B: There is an offer of 6 days of core whole school improvement entitlement and a larger number of subject and aspect days of support. Schools in this category are likely to have a variety of Statutory Interventions in place eg formal whole School Improvement Partnerships.

For all schools identified as a 'School Causing Concern' to the LA, a Principal/Senior Inspector will ensure that there is a Statement of Action drawn up in negotiation with the school. Time-scales for improvement will be dependent on the nature of the support needed. However significant improvements will be expected quickly. In addition, there will be a formal termly or half-termly meeting between a Principal/Senior Inspector, the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher to review progress against the action plan. All visit report forms will be copied to the Chair of Governors.

School Description	Hsis Category	Core School Improvement Entitlement	Core Subject/Aspect Entitlement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ofsted Category & Below Floor Standard 	3B 3B	6 days 6 days	Days to be agreed Days to be agreed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory Schools (potentially vulnerable) 	3A	3 days	Days to be agreed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory Schools (heading towards good) 	2	1.5 days	Days to be agreed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good Schools 	1	0.5 days	--
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding Schools 	1	0.5 days	--
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academies Free Schools Independent Schools 	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --

Support and monitoring will be drawn from across the full range of LA services where appropriate or brokered in to the school to meet the identified needs, and will be focused on those key areas for improvement identified in the school's priorities or action plan. The nature of the support will depend upon the identified key areas for improvement but creative ways of supporting school improvement will be encouraged. The LA will make effective use of existing LA and national initiatives and programmes to support schools. Where appropriate, consultants from outside the LA may be used to provide support. Full use will be made of National Leaders of Education, Local Leaders of Education, Leading Edge schools and other schools, both within and outside the LA, where this is appropriate. The LA may provide finance to enable schools to organise their own training or release for members of staff as necessary within budgetary constraints.

8. Process for Designation as a Category 3 School

Prior to a school being designated Category 3, there will be a dialogue about the categorisation process with the Headteacher and senior LA staff. The formal categorisation process will take place as follows:

- concerns will be raised and discussed with the Headteacher;
- a Senior or Principal Inspector will meet with the Headteacher to explore further any concerns raised.

Following this process, schools will be formally designated as Category 3 with the agreement of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. Whilst the LA wishes to work in close partnership with all schools, in exceptional circumstances the LA may decide upon a category using the above criteria, without agreement of the school.

Schools designated as Category 3B and 3C:

- a meeting will be arranged with either a Principal or Senior Inspector, the Headteacher, and Chair of Governors. At this meeting the school will formally be designated as Category 3B or 3C and a plan of support will be agreed. The monitoring and evaluation process will be explained. A discrete Action Plan will be agreed and reviewed on a termly basis with a Principal or Senior Inspector;
- a letter and Statement of Action will be sent to the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Head of Learning and Achievement outlining the categorisation and the support agreed, and a discrete Action Plan will be included.

The above process may be undertaken for any Category 3A school that has been identified by the LA as a School Causing Concern.

9. The Monitoring and Evaluation Process for Schools Causing Concern

Hsis inspectors will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the agreed school plan in a meeting at least once each term to ensure that the school is making progress to remove the causes of concern. This will be with a senior member of Hsis staff, Chair of Governors and Headteacher.

In order to assist the LA in evaluating its own performance, Schools Causing Concern will be asked to evaluate and report annually on the quality of the support they are receiving from the LA. Copies of all monitoring reports will be forwarded to the Head of Learning and Achievement.

The Lead Member will be informed of the progress of Schools Causing Concern in terms of number of schools and progress through termly reports.

The Director of Social Care and Learning will also receive termly summary reports on the progress of Schools Causing Concern via the Head of Learning and Achievement.

10. Statutory Powers of Intervention

Schools designated as Category 3C, 3B and those at 3A that have been identified as 'Schools Causing Concern', are those in which the LA has statutory powers of intervention. DfE 'Statutory Guidance on SCC' September 2008, sets out significant reserve powers of intervention for exceptional circumstances. Some examples of these powers are named below:

- the appointment of additional, experienced governors where the school requires special measures or significant improvement in discussion with LA and Governing Body;
- the appointment of an Interim Executive Board where the school requires special measures or significant improvement in discussion with LA and Governing Body;
- direction for closure of a school or to convert to an 'Academy' in Special Measures where there is no prospect of the school making sufficient improvements in discussion with LA and Governing Body;
- a requirement on LA to reconsider radical action when the case becomes urgent;
- financial notice of concern which could lead to suspension of delegated budget;
- placing a school into formal arrangements with another school (e.g. federations, partnerships).

The decision to invoke the LA statutory powers of intervention will be taken by the Group Director, Social Care and Learning, following a full assessment of the school's position by Hsis Principal Inspectors, Strategic Finance Lead and the Head of Learning and Achievement.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial Implications and risks:

The processes and procedures as outlined within this report are carried out from within existing Learning & Achievement resources. Therefore there are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report. Should there be subsequent changes to the strategy any resource implications will be addressed as necessary, in line with the appropriate decision hierarchy.
Caroline May, Finance

Legal Implications and risks:

There are no apparent implications or risks in noting this report. **Stephen Doye**

Human Resources Implications and risks:

Assuming that the levels of staff will be maintained to support this process, there are no HR implications. **Louise Howard, Schools' HR**

Equalities Implications and risks:

The policy is designed to encourage and facilitate equality across the borough in terms of educational provision.

ICT Implications:

There are no ICT implications. **Penny Patterson, Senior Inspector (ICT Futures)**

CHERYL COPPELL
Chief Executive

Background Papers List

- Education Bill, 2011

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