

LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**19 OCTOBER 2005**

Chair: * Councillor Mitzi Green

Councillors:	* Mrs Bath (3)	* Vina Mithani (1)
	* Gate	* Janet Mote
	* Kinsey	* Omar
	* Jean Lammiman	* Osborn
	* Lavingia (2)	

Voting Co-opted: (Voluntary Aided) (Parent Governors)

* Mrs J Rammelt	* Mr H Epie
Reverend P Reece	† Mr R Sutcliffe

* Denotes Member present
 (1), (2), (3) Denote category of Reserve Member
 † Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**230. **Attendance by Reserve Members:****RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-Ordinary Member

Councillor Mary John
 Councillor John Nickolay
 Councillor Nana Asante

Reserve Member

Councillor Mrs Bath
 Councillor Vina Mithani
 Councillor Lavingia

231. **Declarations of Interest:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.232. **Arrangement of Agenda:****RESOLVED:** That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-Agenda item

12. Restructuring of School Development Services

Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency

This report was not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. Members were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency.

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

233. **Minutes:****RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2005, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.234. **Public Questions:****RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.235. **Petitions:****RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.

236. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

237. **Annual Education Service Review 2004-2005:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Learning and Community Development, which informed the Committee of the key achievements across the remit of 'Educational' services, in the context of significant changes within the national and local context. It was reported that there would be a move towards combined Children's Services in response to a Government strategy to join services together. In May 2005, the first Annual Performance Assessment (APA) had been submitted and the outcome was awaited.

The unvalidated Summer 2005 test results were tabled.

It was reported that all courses for students attending the newly opened vocational Skills Centre had ICT, literacy and numeracy elements. A Member queried if the recent visit by Lord Adonis had been the official opening of the Centre, and was informed that the official opening of the Centre would take place in November.

The provision for young people aged 16-19 in High Schools or College was discussed. It was reported that there was a central cluster of High Schools with sixth forms and this was the first phase in provision across the Borough. It was explained that Harrow could receive capital investment from central Government if a bid coordinated by Harrow on behalf of the schools in Harrow was submitted and successful. However this would require agreement between schools and would involve competing with other Local Authorities.

Members were informed that Lord Adonis had indicated that the provision for Year 7 pupils should be considered. Members commented that one reason children leave Harrow at the end of Year 6 was because there was no 16-19 provision in Harrow. However, it was considered important that this issue should not hold back the consideration of provision for 16-19 year olds.

A Member asked for clarification regarding the Arts Mark and Sports Mark for schools. An officer informed the Panel that they were national quality standards and that there were three levels: gold, silver and bronze. The Sports Mark was currently suspended as it was being rewritten to focus on the 5 key themes outlined in the report. It was anticipated that the new Sports Mark would be awarded at the beginning of 2006.

The Indicators for Improvement were anecdotal, for example, Members asked for an explanation on the obesity project being undertaken in schools and an officer informed the Sub-Committee that it was a pilot scheme being run in three primary schools with a view to being rolled out across the Borough. The project involved weighing children entering reception class, having an activity programme and liaising with parents. The project was being monitored for effectiveness. Members expressed concern that the strategy should focus on healthy living and not on weighing children.

An officer reported that specific action plans for each aim were available to any Member that wished to see them. Concern was raised about the under-funding of school nurses and an officer explained that this was currently under review.

The Sub-Committee expressed regret that the Director of Learning and Community Development was unable to attend the meeting due to religious observance.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Sub-Committee receive an update from the Portfolio Holder at its meeting in January 2006;

(2) the Director of Learning and Community Development be invited to attend the meeting in January 2006;

(3) the Sub-Committee receive an update at its meeting in April 2006 when the Healthy Lifestyle review would be considered.

238. **Exclusions Routemap:**

The Sub-Committee considered the Exclusions Route map provided by the Director of Learning and Development, which had been requested at the informal meeting in September 2005. An officer explained that it was expected that following the consultant's report, the Compact would be signed on time by all parties. It was reported that there had been a 23% reduction in permanent exclusions as a result of the work of the Rapid Response Team which sought to find solutions to prevent children from being excluded.

In response to a query from Members about Managed Moves, an officer explained that where the Rapid Response Team thought the child could benefit from a change of environment, with the support of the child's parents, the child would be moved to another school in order to prevent exclusion.

RESOLVED: That the consultant's report, the routemap and a covering report be submitted to Cabinet on its information circular in December 2005.

239. **Cultural Services Inspection Report and Action Plan:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Learning and Community Development, which reported to Members on the outcome of the Inspection of Cultural Services. The council services were assessed as 'a fair service that has promising prospects for improvement'. It was explained that the inspectors looked at how good the service offered by the Council was. An Action Plan was formulated following the inspection to respond to the recommendations made.

A Member queried how many hits the report had received since appearing on the website and an officer reported that this could be found out by contacting Harrow IT Service (HITS).

A Member commented that the Sub-Committee had advocated the building of a theatre in Harrow but there was no mention of this in the report. An officer replied that the inspectors had looked at how good the service currently being offered by the Council was, not the volume or location of service.

It was reported that the consultation of the Cultural Strategy had just been completed and would be going to Cabinet as soon as the comments had been collated and the strategy finalised.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee would consider the action plan at its meeting in April 2006.

240. **Better Outcomes for Children in Care:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Children's Services, which outlined responses to the social inclusion report – A Better Education for Children in Care and provided information about GCSE results for 2004 and 2005. The summary of attainment at GCSE of Children Looked After was considered. Members expressed concern that due to Children Looked After having a range of issues, some would not be entered for GCSEs. Following a request from the Chair, Members were updated on details of other attainments achieved by Children Looked After.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee receive a report each year at the January meeting to include information on SATs results.

241. **Restructuring of School Development Services:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Learning and Community Development which informed the Sub-Committee of the consultation being undertaken with schools and the next stage of restructuring in The Achievement and Inclusion Division. It was reported that this would involve deploying subject specialist advisors. Having practitioners in schools would allow an opportunity to link with other schools.

Information on the structure of the Achievement and Inclusion Division was tabled. It was reported that the Standards Fund which had paid for a significant proportion of the posts within the structure would be phased out. Schools would need to sign up to a service level agreement or buy back the service. If schools did not want to buy back the service they could instead use external consultants.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee receive a report on the outcome of the consultation at its January 2006 meeting.

242. **Phase 3 Funding for SEN - Update:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Children's Services, which updated members on the actions and response to the recommendations of the review of Phase 3 delegated funding for pupils with SEN in mainstream schools, which had been completed in January 2005.

In response to a Member's question as to why there had been an increase of 37% in calls logged by the Parent Partnership Service, an officer explained that this was due to an expansion in the service. Only two calls specifically about phase 3 delegation were logged which could indicate that a leaflet which had been produced to provide information to parents had been effective.

In response to a Member's question about who the parents of excluded children could contact for support, an officer explained that the Parent Partnership Service was primarily for children with special needs. When a child was excluded, parents were given advice by the Harrow Tuition Service and would be referred to the Council's Admission Manager.

RESOLVED: That (1) questions regarding Phase 3 Funding for SEN be put to the Portfolio Holder for Education at the Sub-Committee's meeting in January 2006.

(2) officers provide the Sub-Committee with details about who the parents of excluded children could contact for advice.

(3) the Sub-Committee receive an update at its meeting in April 2006.

243. **Update on the Harrow Teachers' Centre:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Group Manager, Lifelong Learning Services which updated Members on the outturn figures which had not been available at the Sub-Committee's meeting on 19 April 2005. At the meeting in April a loss of £72,000 had been predicted. The Sub-Committee was informed that the actual loss had been £15,000. This was partly due to a one-off income of £27,000 from an externally funded project, where outstanding rent had been collected.

It was reported that following recent software problems, improvements to the system would be in place by January 2006.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Sub-Committee be informed of any developments at the Teachers' Centre;

(2) the Panel be informed of the rates after going to Cabinet in February 2006;

(3) the Panel receive an update report at its meeting in October 2006.

244. **Verbal update on current reviews:**

A scrutiny officer explained that the Adult Community Learning review was on schedule against the scope and was expected to report to the Sub-Committee in January 2006. Visits to local centres had been scheduled for 10 November.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee receive a report on the Adult Community Learning review at its meeting in January 2006.

245. **Any Other Business:**

Governors' Web Forum/Chat Rooms

The Sub-Committee received an information note about the Governors' Web Forum/Chat Rooms from the Group Manager (ICT) which informed the Sub-Committee that the initial study which would aim to resolve issues, concerns and questions of all interested parties, should be completed by the end of 2005.

Special Meeting – 5 December 2005

Members were reminded that at the close of the Sub-Committee's Special meeting on 5 December 2005, Members would meet informally to prepare questions for the Portfolio Holder, who would be attending the meeting on 10 January 2006.

RESOLVED: That (1) the above be noted;

(2) the Sub-Committee receive a report on the Governors' Web Forum/Chat Rooms at its meeting in April 2006.

246. **Extension and Termination of the Meeting:**

In accordance with the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6.7(ii)(b), it was

RESOLVED: At 10.00pm to continue until 10.15 pm.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.33 pm, closed at 10.17 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MITZI GREEN
Chair