

July 2004

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report of the Scrutiny Review Group

NHP - Community Schools Pilot

Members of Review Group

Cllr Mitzi Green

Cllr Jean Lammiman

Cllr Camilla Bath

Cllr Janet Mote

Cllr Adam Lent

Cllr Marie-Louse Nolan

Julie Brown – Director, Kids Can Achieve

Trevor McCarthy – School Governor, Rooks Heath High School

Jean Headley – Health Visitor, Northolt Road Clinic

Tricia Kelly – Health Visitor, Honeypot Lane Clinic

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The review group would like to thank all those who helped them in this review by giving up their time and sharing their experiences, perceptions and views. Particular thanks go to Tracy Brazier, Jennifer Wills and Michael Hart for the comprehensive and constructive ways in which they informed the Review. We are also grateful to those other members of staff and members of the public who gave their time to speak to us on our tours of the Canons and Rooks Heath clusters.

The Members named on the front cover of this report have compiled this report. The views expressed are solely theirs.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake at its meeting on 1 April 2003 a review of the New Harrow Project. In November 2003 the Committee subsequently noted that the Review would comprise three separate work streams, reviewing the People First community Schools pilot the next phase of the public realm roll-outs and the council's organisational structure.
- 1.2 The Area Director (People First) is submitting a report to Cabinet on 29th July on the options for the roll out of the community schools pilot across the other school clusters. It is proposed that this report is also submitted to Cabinet in order that it can be considered in conjunction with the report of the Area Director.
- 1.3 Work was undertaken to develop and extend the roles of two school clusters, Rooks Heath Cluster (ha2cando) and Canons to become Community Schools.
- 1.4 The Review Group seeks to review all aspects and phases of the NHP in terms of its ability to process, sustain and resource this second phase.
- 1.5 The Review Group consists Cllr Mitzi Green, Cllr Lammiman, Cllr Janet Mote, Cllr Bath, Cllr Marie-Louise Nolan and Cllr Lent as well as four co-optees. -Julie Brown – Kids Can Achieve, Trevor McCarthy – School Governor, Rooks Heath High School, Jean Headley – Northolt Road Clinic and Tricia Kelly – Honeypt Lane Clinic who are also authors of this report.
- 1.6 The Review Group found a number of highly commendable activities and projects in place at both clusters that benefit pupils, parents and the local communities.
- 1.7 Given the short timescale available for this review and the need for it to influence a Cabinet report by the Area Director, People First to Cabinet, a few key recommendations have been included at the end of this report. Additional information on the evaluation of similar national initiatives is becoming available and this also should be used to direct and influence the wider roll out of Community schools.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1.1 The Community Schools pilot was based on the extension of area working to include People First community services building on the LPSA work being undertaken in school cluster areas in south and south-east Harrow.
- 2.1.2 The ha2cando and Canons were identified as pilot clusters. Each cluster appointed a Co-ordinator to develop, implement and co-ordinate the work of the cluster and to achieve its targets. The Co-ordinators are based within the schools and are managed on a day to day basis by 3 or 4 Head teachers.
- 2.1.3 The ha2cando and Canons Clusters have been a great success offering a wide range of activities in schools and for the local community. Projects are driven from the bottom up and have been developed according to the local needs of the area.
- 2.1.4 We saw examples of work when we visited the ha2cando and Canons clusters. Ha2cando have a number of projects including a Junior Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP), IT classes for children and parents and multigenerational art projects. Initiatives at Canons include the provision of computers in the homes of pupils on free school meals, art therapy and regular literacy and language classes for parents and carers. Glebe School has also been identified as a pilot for extended school status.
- 2.1.5 We have been particularly impressed with the range of services offered and the way partnerships have been developed. The Co-ordinators have been particularly impressive in involving the local communities and developing new ways of working.
- 2.1.6 We understand that many outcomes may not be available for immediate evaluation but there are encouraging signs of the reduction in the level of permanent exclusions at one of the schools.
- 2.1.7 However, there are areas where further work is still needed. We are aware that officers would like to see the pilot rolled out and feel our findings are such that will ensure that the roll out is built on the strengths of the current pilot schools.
- 2.1.8 We would like the way information is shared and lessons learnt to be formalised to enable subsequent schools to benefit from this information.
- 2.1.9 Each cluster should develop clear aims and objectives against which performance can be monitored.
- 2.1.10 The Review Group should receive a report clarifying the management reporting structures within each cluster and the roles of the head teachers, school staff and school governors.
- 2.1.11 Although training for Councillors was offered, Councillors, especially local ward councillors, school governors and local residents should be encouraged to be involved and made aware early in the development of any additional community schools

- 2.1.12 There is a need for clarity of roles of co-ordinators. This will be particularly important if an internal appointment is made. The Co-ordinators should have a clearer role with regards to quality assurance.
- 2.1.13 Evidence learnt from the extended/community schools national initiatives should be used to inform any further roll out
- 2.1.14 Our conclusion is that the Community Schools Pilot should not be rolled out across the Borough until our recommendations have been addressed.

3. METHODOLOGY

February 2004

- Preliminary meeting with Michael Hart, Area Director, People First

17 June 2004

- Tour of Canons Cluster schools and activities
- Presentation by Cluster Co-ordinator

18 June 2004

- Tour of Rooks Heath Cluster schools and activities
- Presentation by Cluster Co-ordinator

29 June 2004

- Meeting with Michael Hart, Area Director, People First
- Draft content of report

Given the review group's wish for its findings and recommendations to be available to inform the decision on the roll out of Community Schools to other clusters, the report was shared with the Area Director People First on the further roll out to other clusters.

4. CASE STUDY 1 – COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PILOT

SCOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes being established to support joined up working on the pilot Resources available to support the pilot Overview of services/initiatives contributing to pilot
LEAD MEMBERS	Cllrs Mitzi Green and Jean Lammiman. Other Members Cllrs Mrs Bath, Miss Bednell, Lent, Janet Mote and Marie-Louise Nolan
WORKSTREAM SPONSOR	Paul Osburn, Executive Director, People First
ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER	Michael Hart, Area Director, People First
SUPPORT OFFICER	Scrutiny Officer
EXTERNAL INPUT	Stakeholders, partners, community groups, public
METHODOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at briefing for all Council Members Presentation by project manager on evaluation framework & performance against targets, benchmarking exercise Desktop consideration of results of community survey Meeting with staff involved in pilot including Community Learning Co-ordinators, language support & community based workers Use of existing evidence already collected by scrutiny bodies to inform this workstream Discussion with partner bodies & community groups (At evaluation stage, meeting with local residents, families & pupils to consider success of those services/initiatives identified for detailed examination)
ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS	<p>Pilot will be sufficiently advanced for meaningful review in timescale set</p> <p>Members determine and lead on the review, supported by officers to the level of resource indicated in the project plan</p> <p>Resources of Members, Senior Departmental officers and Scrutiny Unit</p>
SCRUTINY RESOURCE COMMITMENTS	<p>All Review Group Members 5.5 days</p> <p>Cllr Mitzi Green - additional 5.5 days</p> <p>Scrutiny Unit 4 days 03-04, 14.5 days 04-05</p> <p>Scrutiny unit resources to be proactively managed, with flexible deployment, pooling of resources and re-allocation of any 'spare' resources wherever possible</p>
TIMESCALE	January – July 2004
REPORT AUTHOR	Cllrs Jean Lammiman and Mitzi Green supported by Scrutiny Officer

5. KEY FINDINGS

ISSUE	EVIDENCE SOURCE	FINDINGS	COMMENT
Evaluation and Monitoring	<p>Visit to Clusters</p> <p>Questioning of Area Director</p>	<p>There are a number of highly commendable activities taking place around both clusters with a range of indicators to measure success ie reducing exclusions</p> <p>Some activities will be monitored via other existing programmes such as Adult Learning Quality Assurance</p> <p>Clientele are attending the Kenton Learning Centre who would not necessarily attend local colleges</p> <p>Need to ensure the sustainability of activity if Co-ordinators left</p>	<p>Need to ensure Quality Assurance is on the JD of all Co-ordinators</p> <p>There was no evidence of how quality of all services provided are currently monitored</p> <p>OFSTED inspections will make judgements on how schools are contributing to community/extended school activities</p> <p>Education Research is setting up database to measure performance on a cluster area basis</p>
Budget	<p>Visit to Clusters</p> <p>Questioning of Area Director</p>	<p>Clusters receive the same level of funds from LBH irrespective of size of cluster. However Ha2cando has attracted additional resources ie YISP.</p> <p>Co-ordinators are now permanent staff</p> <p>LPSA funding goes to the school and has its own school cost centre</p> <p>LBH Funding agreed of over £200k in 2004/5 to roll out to other clusters on a staged basis from January 2005.</p>	<p>Both clusters actively look for additional funding streams to support their work</p> <p>The fiscal year does not coincide with the school year therefore proposed roll-out will be limited in 04/05</p>
Communication and relationship between clusters	<p>Visit to Clusters</p> <p>Questioning of Area Director</p>	<p>Some learning experiences were not systematically transferred between clusters</p> <p>Core Group meetings of head teachers, Co-ordinators, staff and professionals are held within each cluster</p>	<p>Although areas very different, key learning points should have been shared more effectively. In future a more structured approach to sharing information should be introduced. Need to ensure that information is shared with the Central Harrow cluster.</p>

ISSUE	EVIDENCE SOURCE	FINDINGS	COMMENT
		<p>Need to explore intranet or other IT to share information/informal discussion and to aid professionals supporting the clusters</p> <p>Clusters appear to be focussed on different areas ie Canons focus is on community whilst ha2cando focus is pupil focussed</p>	<p>The importance of sharing/transferring learning experiences should be recognised to assist in removing any concept of competition between clusters.</p> <p>Could develop a “buddying cluster system”</p>
Management	<p>Visit to Clusters</p> <p>Questioning of Area Director</p>	<p>The Area Director manages the HR role for both Co-ordinators. On day to day issues the Co-ordinators are managed by groups of 3 or 4 Head teachers.</p> <p>Co-ordinators are happy with the support offered by Area Director</p> <p>Next meeting of core group looking at priority areas to streamline initiatives in both clusters</p> <p>Central Harrow cluster operating a different model and are advertising for a part time worker</p>	<p>No evident team structures</p> <p>Previously unclear reporting structures between LBH and schools affected budgets and budgeting</p> <p>Problems may emerge when all 7 clusters are up and running and they are managed by 3 different Area Managers</p>
Role of Headteachers, staff Members, School Governors	<p>Visit to Clusters</p> <p>Questioning of Area Director</p>	<p>Canons and ha2cando Co-ordinators are helpful, enthusiastic and self-driven.</p> <p>There is a need for the clarity of roles of the co-ordinators. This is particularly important if an internal appointment is made</p> <p>The new positions of Co-ordinators may not coincide with the possible redeployment of displaced staff as a result of the Council restructure</p>	<p>Co-ordinators are critical to the success of each project. This may lead to ‘overloading’ the co-ordinators</p> <p>Other ways should also be sought to engage Governors.</p> <p>Councillors and school Governors need to be involved early on in the development of these initiatives</p>

ISSUE	EVIDENCE SOURCE	FINDINGS	COMMENT
		<p>Councillors are involved at varying levels in the Community Schools.</p> <p>Training for school governors in March 2005 will be delivered on Community Schools. Governing bodies should have a proactive role if this initiative is to have an positive impact on the community</p> <p>Unclear of the roles teachers and caretaking staff will play in after school/extended school activities</p>	<p>The schools will need to review the role of site supervisors as extended schools develop</p>
School site and surrounding areas	<p>Visit to Clusters</p> <p>Questioning of Area Director</p>	<p>Parking may be an issue for local residents</p> <p>Area Director is drafting guidelines on premises and security issues based on information from the DfeS and other local authorities' guidance.</p>	<p>A positive dialogue needs to take place between residents living close to the schools as well as those using the facilities</p> <p>Would like to see green travel arrangements around the cluster schools</p> <p>Need to ensure that accessibility for emergency vehicles is not impinged</p> <p>Need to consider space availability within the schools</p> <p>Need to ensure school equipment and property is maintained and has appropriate insurance</p>
Support to Clusters	<p>Visit to Clusters</p> <p>Questioning of Area Director</p>	<p>Professionals supporting the clusters such as Education Welfare Officers are based at the Civic Centre but spend up to 80% of their time operating locally</p>	<p>Important that clusters develop when the time is right for them rather than being led by the local authority</p>

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Evidence learnt from extended schools initiatives nationally should be used to inform any further roll out.
2. The roll out of the Community Schools pilot is deferred to ensure it is based on firmer foundations and on lessons learnt. Reasons for slowing rate of roll out are in the body of the report – lack of planning and clarity regarding financial structures, HR reporting structures, effective transfer of learning and local safety and environment issues. In addition, there is some concern over the need for the additional £200k not in planned base budget to be completed by April 2005. However, the imminent roll out in Central Harrow cluster should go ahead.

It is timely to take the opportunity to apply rigour to above and consult before finalising plans for the roll out of the remaining four clusters.

3. Each cluster should develop clear aims and objectives. Their performance and work should be evaluated and monitored against these aims and objectives to ensure they are in keeping with the expectations and needs of the council, school and the community
4. The Review Group should receive a report clarifying the management reporting structures within each cluster and the roles of the head teachers, school staff, and school governors
5. A process for communicating lessons learnt and learning experiences are transferred to other staff, particularly within, but also outside of the cluster areas. These lessons should be formally logged to enable their effective dissemination.
6. There is a need for clarity of roles of co-ordinators. This will be particularly important if an internal appointment is made. The Co-ordinators should have a clearer role with regards to quality assurance.
7. The Review Group should receive a report highlighting the budget, timescales, timetable and process for the roll out across Harrow.
8. Councillors, especially local ward councillors, school governors and local residents to be involved and made aware early in the development of any additional Community Schools.
9. These recommendations should actively inform Cabinet when it considers the extended Community Schools Cabinet Report by the Area Director, People First.

List of Community Schools

ha2cando

Earlsmead School
Newton Farm School
Roxbourne First School
Roxbourne Middle School
Roxeth Manor First School
Roxeth Manor Middle School
Welldon Park First School
Welldon Park Middle School
Rooks Heath High School
Grange First School
Grange Middle School
Alexandra School

Canons

Aylward
Little Stanmore School
Glebe School
Stag Lane First School
Stag Lane Middle School
Canons High School
St Bernadette's School