

<b>Item No.</b> 6	<b>Classification</b>  Open	<b>Committee</b> OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  EXECUTIVE  COUNCIL ASSEMBLY	<b>Date</b> 3 SEPTEMBER 2003 9 SEPTEMBER 2003 17 SEPTEMBER 2003
<b>From</b>  STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE		<b>Title of Report</b>  DRAFT SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2003-2008	

## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval to the publication of the draft School Organisation Plan 2003 -2008.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the draft School Organisation Plan 2003-2008, as attached, be published for statutory consultation, subject to 2.2
- 2.2 That the recommendations of the Executive be referred to Council Assembly for decision. (Note: The School Organisation Plan forms part of the Budget & Policy Framework).

## 3 BACKGROUND

### School Organisation Plan

- 3.1 The LEA is responsible for preparing a School Organisation Plan (SOP) for its area. The Plan covers a rolling five year programme and is now to be updated every three years, except where there is a significant change of policy, strategy or local circumstances relating to the organisation of schools in the LEA's area, which would necessitate a new plan. It is required to contain three parts:

- i) demographic information on rolls and projected rolls;
- ii) a statement of policies and principles relevant to the provision of school places;
- iii) conclusions about the need to add or remove school places in particular areas of the LEA.

The Plan is to deal with general policy and principles and is not expected to identify individual schools for action. Such detailed proposals would be brought forward separately for consideration within the overall context of the Plan.

- 3.2 The Council's initial draft SOP was published in May 1999 and was approved by the School Organisation Committee (SOC) on 14 September 1999. The subsequent SOPs 2000-2005, 2001-2006 and 2002-2007 were approved by the SOC on 20 November 2000, 3 December 2001 and 29 January 2003 respectively.

## **School Organisation Committee**

- 3.3 It is the responsibility of each LEA to establish a School Organisation Committee (SOC) for its area. The SOC is, however, not a committee of the Council but a separate statutory body. It is intended to bring together the key partners in education provision locally, giving each partner an equal voice. The rôle of the SOC is to consider and approve the School Organisation Plan and to consider individual statutory proposals for change at specific schools.
- 3.4 The groups represented on the SOC are:
- i) The LEA with a membership of elected members of the Council.
  - ii) The Church of England nominated by the diocese.
  - iii) The Roman Catholic Church nominated by the diocese.
  - iv) The Learning and Skills Council.
  - v) Schools, with a membership of serving school governors.
  - vi) The Southwark Black Education Forum.
- 3.5 The SOC regulations confirm that unanimity is required from all groups for a decision on the SOP or on individual statutory proposals to be taken, although abstentions are allowed. Each group can reach a decision on how it will vote by a majority vote within the group. If it is not possible for the SOC to reach a decision on a matter put before it, the issue is referred to a School Adjudicator appointed by the Secretary of State.

## **4 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **School Organisation Plan**

- 4.1 A draft SOP for 2003-2008 is appended to this report, along with an Executive Summary. The draft SOP is largely based on the policies and principles contained in the previously approved SOPs, which received broad support during consultation. The draft SOP has, however, been updated in the light of the new DfES guidance. The SOP sets out how these policies are related to and support other LEA statutory Plans, most significantly the Education Development Plan. Some of the principles have been updated in the light of the new Government initiatives London Challenge and Building Schools for the Future, with their emphasis on new academies and the upgrading of all the borough's secondary schools.
- 4.2 The demographic information is based on January 2003 roll data, which has been updated to take account of the most recent 2002 population projections, which are in turn based on the 2001 Census. This updated population information has had some impact on the school roll projections. It should be noted that primary rolls are projected to stabilise, before increasing again, while there is projected to be a continuing increase in secondary rolls.
- 4.3 The primary school projections are analysed by five planning areas. There are projected to be some pressures on the planning areas in the north and centre of the borough, but with some compensatory surplus places in the adjacent planning area. On this basis it is not proposed that there should be any overall change in the number of primary places in the borough, but that the primary position should be kept under review.
- 4.4 It is very difficult to predict future secondary schools rolls accurately at an individual school level. Therefore secondary projections are made for the borough as a whole by the GLA using their projection model, which draws on data from previous years. This projection is used to assess overall future secondary provision. It is recognised that it is important to ensure a sufficiency of places in high quality schools to meet parental demand. Consideration will therefore be given with the GLA to how secondary projections can be prepared on a more local basis.

4.5 The draft SOP reviews the significant factors that could affect the projections – these include changes in cross borough recruitment. The most recent survey by the GLA showed that in 2002 some 3,774 pupils age 11-19 resident in Southwark attended secondary schools outside the borough (699 age 11) while 2,908 came into the borough (533 age 11). This is the equivalent of 20 forms of entry moving out and 17 forms of entry coming in. Southwark is a significant importer from Lambeth and a major exporter to Lewisham. This cross border movement constitutes a large market, whose decisions about secondary places could be influenced by various factors. Current developments that are likely to have an impact on this include:

- The preference of many parents for a place at new schools and academies in the borough rather than schools outside Southwark.
- Increasing pressure on places in neighbouring boroughs. Lambeth's reduction in the size of Lilian Baylis school from 7 to 4 f.e. and the opening of an academy on the former Henry Thornton site.
- Lewisham closed Telegraph Hill in July 2001 and has now embarked on a secondary review with a view to increasing secondary provision, and building a new secondary school in the north of the borough.
- Major regeneration projects in the borough at Bermondsey Spa, Canada Water and Elephant and Castle.

4.6 The methodology used for roll projection is based on traditional cohort survival and catchment ratio projection methods and does not reflect recent changes in school popularity or the impact of school closures in other LEAs. However, an attempt has been made in the secondary projections to take account of the impact of the opening of the new academies and parents who have not previously had a place at a Southwark school.

4.7 There has recently been pressure for Year 7 places in the borough. As a result of the opening of the new academies in September 2003, the impact of which has been included in Southwark's secondary projections, the draft SOP concludes that there should be sufficient secondary places in the borough in the short term. However, projections suggest there may be a deficit of Year 7 places by September 2006. This will need to be kept under review in the light of the 2003/04 Year 7 intake and revised projections.

4.8 Consideration is being given to the need for additional secondary provision to serve the East Dulwich/Nunhead area in response to parental demand in the area. As agreed by Overview and Scrutiny and Executive Committees, a feasibility study is being carried out on the option of establishing a small boys' school on the Waverley Lower School site with the intention of federating with Waverley School.

4.9 The publication of the draft SOP 2003-2008 for statutory consultation is now recommended. It will be advertised in the local press, libraries and Council offices as well as being circulated to other key partners and neighbouring LEAs. There will then be an 11-week period for formal objections or other comments or views to be received. The draft Plan would then be submitted to the School Organisation Committee for approval.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 LEAs are required to meet the costs of servicing SOCs and provision has been included within the 2003/04 Education and Culture budget for this purpose.

## **6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The draft School Organisation Plan has been developed in full recognition of the importance of education in raising achievement and improving life chances. The SOP has been developed to address the needs of the diverse community Southwark LEA serves.

## **7 CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR AND SECRETARY (LEGAL ISSUES).**

7.1 Members are being asked to agree that the draft School Organisation Plan for 2003-2008 be published for statutory consultation. This Plan is one reserved to Council Assembly.

7.2 The LEA is required by section 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ("SSFA") to prepare a School Organisation Plan. The Plan is a statement which sets out –

- (a) how the LEA proposes to exercise its functions with a view to securing the provision of primary education, and secondary education suitable to the requirements of pupils of compulsory school age, that will meet the needs of the population of their area during that period;
- (b) how the authority propose to exercise their powers during the prescribed period with a view to securing the provision of secondary education suitable to the requirements of pupils over compulsory school age; and
- (c) any facilities which the authority expect to be available outside their area for providing the above.

7.3 The plan must contain:-

- (a) the provision which the LEA propose to make for children with special educational needs;
- (b) how the LEA proposes to remedy any surplus and shortfall in its provision of primary and secondary schools; and
- (c) the manner in which the LEA will secure the raising of standards, improved outcomes for all pupils, greater diversity in the types of schools, increased collaboration between schools, and greater community cohesion.

(Subsection 26(3) SSFA and Regulation 3 of the Education (School Organisation Plans) (England) Regulations 1999 (as amended by 2003 Regulations))

7.4 Regards must be had to Guidance issued by the Secretary of State as to the content of the Plan. This has largely been complied with. Some matters have been excluded because they are not relevant to an inner city authority or to Southwark.

7.5 There is normally a requirement to consult on the draft Plan prior to consideration by Members, by virtue of the Guidance and administrative law principles. However, in this instance, prior consultation is not recommended for the following reasons:-

- The Plan was supposed to have been published for statutory consultation by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2003 (Regulation 4). The Council is therefore already over one month late in the process.
- The previous Plan was approved by the School Organisation Committee only a little over 7 months ago.
- Extensive consultation took place in relation to the previous Plan.
- The changes to the Plan are not significant.
- All those who would normally be consulted will have the opportunity to make representations and objections as part of the statutory consultation process. Therefore, no final Plan will be approved by SOC, without their views being taken into account.

7.6 Members are advised that recent changes as a result of the 2002 Act mean that the Plan is to be published only every 3 years (the next draft SOP must be published by 1 June 2006) and updated by 1 June of any other year where there is a change of policy, strategy or local circumstance relating to school organisation in Southwark.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

8.1 This year's draft SOP is based largely on previous SOPs, which were the subject of extensive consultation.

- 8.2 As outlined in paragraph 4.9, the draft SOP will be the subject of statutory consultation prior to submission to the School Organisation Committee in the autumn.
- 8.3 Copies of this report have been sent to trade union representatives, the Southwark Black Education Group, the Headteachers' Council and Southwark Governors' Forum.

Lead Officer Report Author	to be appointed Martin Wilcox	Head of Access and Inclusion, Education Planning Officer
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DfEE Regulations and Guidance		