

Item No.	Classification: OPEN	Date: 2 nd December 2003	MEETING NAME EXECUTIVE
Report title:		LONG TERM REVIEW OF EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES – Consultation	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
From:		Chief Executive and Strategic Director of Education and Culture	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members note the proposals for consultation on the OPM review of long term options for delivery of education support services.

BACKGROUND

2. The Executive considered the OPM report at its meeting on 25th November 2003 and agreed to consult on the OPM proposals, taking into account the observations of the Chief Executive and Acting Strategic Director of Education and Culture with the aim of agreeing a way forward at the end of January 2004. The officer report submitted to the Executive is attached as an appendix.

WHO AND HOW TO CONSULT

3. It is proposed that consultation should take place with the aim of establishing views on and support for the general propositions contained in the OPM report together with more focused responses on those matters raised in the attached officer report where appropriate.
4. The Council would generally be required consult all relevant stakeholders on an issue like this. This could include a large number of people so, in addition to the groups listed below, it is recommended that an advertisement in the local press be considered in order to ensure all those who wish to comment have the opportunity to do so. The OPM report will be placed on the Southwark Council website in order to facilitate this.
5. Consultation will be primarily focused on those groups locally who have a significant interest in the totality of the proposals in the OPM report, including headteachers, teachers, other school staff, school governors, Council education staff, unions, parents, CEA, and the DfES.
6. There will also be other bodies internally and externally with established roles and duties in relation to Children's Services, the Green Paper proposals, and the way specialist services are managed in the future that will have an interest in aspects of the proposals including the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, PCT, health authority, Police and Probation Service. These groups will be invited to submit comments and observations on relevant aspects of the proposals.

7. The consultation programme needs to be very structured. The Executive Summary of the report has already been sent to all schools in the borough. A copy of the OPM report and officer report will be sent to key stakeholder groups as soon as possible, asking that written responses be forwarded by late January.
8. There is also the need for moderated, quality responses from groups of stakeholders. To facilitate this, it is recommended that a number of mixed stakeholder sessions be commissioned to draw views on the report. The sessions ought to take place in early January (December is not a convenient month for schools to engage in consultation exercises). The intention would be to hold three or four stakeholder sessions to which Education & Culture Department staff, Headteachers, chairs of governors, and possibly other interested parties are invited, offering invitees a range of times and venues.
9. The following timetable is proposed:

What	When
OPM report, officer report and cover letter sent to partners and stakeholders	By week beginning Monday 8 th December
OPM report and officer report posted on the Southwark Council website	By week beginning Monday 8 th December
Advertisement in local press inviting comments on the proposals	By week beginning Monday 8 th December
Three or four key stakeholder sessions	Early January
Receipt of written responses to the proposals	By week beginning 19 th January
Possible scrutiny consideration of proposals	January meeting of scrutiny sub-committee
Executive consideration of proposals	Tuesday 3 rd February

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10. All can be met from existing budgets.

REASON FOR URGENCY

11. Having received the OPM report, it is now imperative that consultation with statutory stakeholders begins immediately.

REASON FOR LATENESS

9. The Executive commissioned this report on 25th November 2003 and Members asked for it to be tabled at the meeting on 2nd December.

APPENDIX 1 - AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Ian Hughes	
Report Author	Ian Hughes and Louise Gardiner	
Version	FINAL	
Dated	2 December 2003	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor & Secretary	Yes	Yes
Chief Finance Officer	No	No
Executive Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services	02.12.03	

APPENDIX 2

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 25 th November 2003	MEETING NAME EXECUTIVE
Report title:		Long Term Review of Education Support Services	
Ward(s) or groups affected:			
From:		Chief Executive Strategic Director of Social Services Acting Strategic Director of Education & Culture	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members welcome the report by the Office for Public Management (OPM), "Long-term Review of Education Support Services".
2. That the report and its recommendations be used as a basis for consultation with all appropriate stakeholders, subject to any initial views that the Executive may have on the proposed way forward.
3. That the Executive agrees to determine a way forward in respect of this report in late January 2004 in order to allow sufficient time for consultation.

BACKGROUND

4. OPM was commissioned by the Council and DfES to review long-term options for the future of education support services. The detailed background is contained in page 1 of the OPM report and pages 2-4 contain their recommendations. OPM have undertaken extensive work to engage stakeholders during this review and have endeavoured to come up with a range of proposals that meet the Council's local needs. The essence of this report, ie. that there should be an extended contract with CEA, a gradual return to local authority responsibility, and a move to a holistic children's service, is welcomed and strongly supported.

Additional information relevant to Members' consideration is set out below.

Set out below are a few initial observations that Members should take into account when considering their response to the OPM report.

5. **Green Paper: Every Child Matters:** This Green Paper was published by the Government during the time that education support services were being reviewed by OPM. OPM has obviously attempted to build into its recommendations related issues that it considers inevitable or desirable. However, the management and governance arrangements contained in Green Paper are early proposals for consultation and they have attracted a significant amount of debate and criticism. The initial consultation period for the Green Paper will end on 1 December 2003 and greater clarity of direction is likely to be available by January 2004.

6. **Cross-departmental and cross-sector responsibilities for the Green Paper:** Responsibility for managing the changes associated with 'Every Child Matters' will rest jointly with Social Services, Health, the Police/Probation Service, as well as the Education service. For this reason the future direction is not only a corporate matter for the Council to consider, it is a partnership issue which needs to embrace the responsibilities of external agencies. At present the Children's Partnership has a key role to play in developing the future strategic partnership approach. The Council's approach is being developed by a sub-group of Chief Officer Team, including the Chief Executive, Director of Social Services, Director of Education, and CEA.

7. **Interim Transition Director for Children:** The proposal for an interim Transition Director for Children must be viewed alongside an assessment of the effectiveness of current partnership arrangements for children's planning and service integration. It is likely that, at least initially, the role would need to be one of leading the partnership with CEA around school improvement and ensuring the full participation of the LEA and schools in the debate about future service design and structures.

8. **Extending the CEA contract:** OPM recommends that the CEA contract be extended and for the extended contract to include:

- Early years
- Adult education
- Achieving collaboration between schools.

The contract may be extended for a further year to July 2005, but no longer. If an extension is agreed it should be on the same basis as the present contract, i.e. with only the most senior manager(s) being transferred so as to maintain a flexible but effective form of contract management. There will need to be proper staff consultation and TUPE will apply to the transfer of any posts. Members will also need to consider the financial consequences of an extension as DfES are meeting part of the costs, and any changes to the performance regime that should be operated in the second year.

10. **Education Partnership Board:** This proposal will need further development as the Partnership Board could duplicate the development work planned elsewhere in relation to the Green Paper proposals.

It is, however, totally accepted that a Partnership Board should be developed in order to promote continuous improvements in education outcomes for Southwark children and Southwark schools. It would however be more appropriate if the role were to be more focused on schools improvement, raising standards, improving capacity. The composition of the Board should follow from the objectives that are finally agreed for the Board. Members may wish the work of the Board to be completed before that currently envisaged – summer 2007 – albeit the development of a leadership group for education services may well be desirable up to and beyond this date.

11. **Future role of DfES:** The Council will wish to seek clarity of the future role of DfES. The CEA contract was let under direction from the Secretary of State. The proposals for continuous monitoring and involvement appear to reflect an assumption that this will continue. Members may wish to explore and clarify this position.

12. **Libraries & Culture Services:** Alternative strategic management arrangements will be required for the Libraries and Culture Services if these changes are agreed.
13. **HR issues:** The OPM recommendations would imply the deletion of the post of Strategic Director of Education & Culture. These implications will need to be managed in a way which does not conflict with the employment rights of the existing postholder.
14. **Resource Issues:** As part of the Atkins termination agreement the DfES are making a contribution towards the costs of the current LEA service provided through CEA. Members will doubtless wish to explore the possibility of continuing DfES support for any extended contract period.

REASON FOR URGENCY

15. Having received the OPM report, it is now imperative that the consultation arrangements with all stakeholders are put in place at the earliest opportunity. The report cannot wait until the next meeting on the 2nd December 2003 because a decision then would reduce by a week the consultation available to schools prior to the Christmas holidays.

REASON FOR LATENESS

16. The OPM report was not received until the late evening of the 20th November.

Lead Officer	Chief Executive	
Report Author	Chief Executive	
Version	Final	
Dated	24 November 2003	
Key Decision?		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Borough Solicitor & Secretary	Yes	Yes
Chief Finance Officer	No	No
<i>List other Officers here</i>		
Executive Member		
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services	24/11/2003	