

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 4 November 2003	Meeting Name: Executive
Report title:		Secondary Strategy – Comments of Scrutiny	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Chief Executive (Head of Corporate Strategy)	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Executive consider the comments and recommendations of the Education, Youth & Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee on the Secondary Strategy, *Promoting Achievement: Developing Diversity and Improvement in Southwark Secondary Schools*, and provide a written response by 4 January 2004.
2. The Education, Youth & Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee agreed the following:
 - i. *That it welcomes the commitment to simultaneously tackle achievement, attainment and inclusion;*
 - ii. *That it welcomes the proposed collegiate approach where all members of the Southwark education community take responsibility for the achievement of all Southwark young people;*
 - iii. *That it expresses its concern about the limited consultation undertaken with respect to the Strategy and suggests that the document be launched for wide consultation;*
 - iv. *That it notes the lack of SMART objectives within the Strategy and asks Officers to bring back to the Sub-Committee a revised version of the Strategy that addresses this after the formal launch;*
 - v. *That the Executive articulate how a strategy which has a mix of academies and community schools will ensure that no community school is left behind;*
 - vi. *That the Executive bring forward a recruitment and retention strategy for teachers covering housing, childcare and other issues such as transport, and that the Executive Members for Housing and Education attend the Sub-Committee meeting on 14 January 2004 to discuss these issues;*
 - vii. *That the Executive formally raise with London Challenge the issue of co-ordination and collaboration across the five principal London Challenge boroughs, with particular reference to Lambeth, for example in the context of the cross-borough flow of pupils between Southwark and Lambeth; and*
 - viii. *That the Sub-Committee notes that in Southwark the current focus of Neighbourhood Renewal on education is limited and requests the Chair of the Local Strategic Partnership (Southwark Alliance) and relevant LSP members to meet with the Sub-Committee within the next two months to discuss how this will be addressed.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The Education, Youth & Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee considered the draft Secondary Strategy at its meeting on 28 October 2003. The Director of Schools Services outlined the process that had been undertaken in producing the Strategy, including consultation with head-teachers, the London Challenge Team, the Department for Education & Skills (DfE&S) and Southwark's Education & Culture Department. Members were of the view that consultation should be extended to governors, parents and other partners. The Sub-Committee noted that the Strategy would be considered by the Executive on 4 November and recommended that it should be launched by the London Schools Minister on 12 November as a consultative document.
4. The Director of Schools Services highlighted key components in the Strategy of raising attainment and standards, developing better quality teaching and learning, developing leadership and improving school buildings. A core theme was developing the role of schools in the community, including the concept of the extended school. Schools needed to work collaboratively - sharing resources and disseminating good practice – and to engage with the local community. The Director of School Services indicated that pupil-tracking data, which had gone live in September, facilitated the forging of links and made more information available to secondary schools. The Sub-Committee welcomed this and felt that it would be especially important for primary and secondary schools to work more closely together in respect of key stages 2 and 3. However, Members were concerned that despite a collegiate approach and the sharing of resources between schools, a mix of academies and community schools could lead to the latter being left behind.
5. Members asked how implementation of the Strategy would be measured. The Director of School Services explained that, once the Strategy was formally agreed, small groups of Officers and head teachers would be meeting to determine objectives and milestones. Members were of the view that SMART objectives needed to be incorporated into the Strategy itself – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based objectives.
6. Members asked how a new culture of co-operation and collaboration would be translated to classroom level. The Director of School Services indicated that a new framework for inspection of schools emphasised the quality of teaching and of leadership. Most schools were developing techniques for self-evaluation. Recruitment and retention needed to be looked at but were complex issues and there was a particularly competitive market. The Director of School Services stated that Southwark had introduced good practices and initiatives in education and needed to advertise these more widely – which would help to attract teaching staff to the borough. Improved buildings would also act as an incentive. Members felt that there were additional issues such as housing and transport that the Council needed to address.
7. Members considered that the role of London Challenge was key in terms of co-ordination across the five principal boroughs. The exchange of children between Southwark and Lambeth was highlighted as an example where collaboration was essential. Members were of the view that London Challenge should be asked to clarify their ongoing role once the strategies of the five boroughs had been agreed.

8. Members particularly noted that the costs of bringing school buildings up to a minimum standard did not necessarily fit them for the current requirements of education in Southwark. A majority of schools were considered to have a high proportion of unsuitable accommodation. The Strategy identified schools that were located within a regeneration area but Members commented that there was not a strong link between Education and Neighbourhood Renewal.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

9. Paragraph 15.3 of the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules requires the Executive to consider and provide a written response to a Scrutiny Sub-Committee's report within two months of receipt.

REASONS FOR LATENESS AND URGENCY

10. The Education, Youth & Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee considered the draft Secondary Strategy on 28 October 2003, after the initial agenda despatch for the Executive meeting. The comments of the Sub-Committee are to be considered in conjunction with draft Secondary Strategy.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Education, Youth & Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee 28 October 2003 – Agenda and Minutes	Town Hall, Peckham Road, London. SE5 8UB	Peter Roberts Scrutiny Team 020 7525 7229

APPENDIX A

Audit Trail

Lead Officer	Shelley Burke, Head of Overview & Scrutiny	
Report Author	Peter Roberts, Scrutiny Team	
Version	Final	
Dated	30 October 2003	
Key Decision?		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Chief Officer	No	
Executive Member	No	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Support Services	30 October 2003	