

Item No. 10	Classification: Open	Date:	Meeting Name: Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Report title:		School Organisation Plan	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Council Assembly	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee consider Council Assembly's request that recommendations 2 and 5 as set out below be referred to the Education, Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Council Assembly meeting on 29th October 2003 considered the School Organisation Plan and agreed the following:-
 1. *That the draft school organisation plan 2003-2008, be published for statutory consultation, whilst noting that work will be undertaken to assess in detail the case for a new school in the East Dulwich and Nunhead area.*
 2. *That officers report to the Education, Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee on proposals to deal with any schools in the category described under proposition 3 page 27.*
 3. *That Council Assembly requests that future reports on the Unitary Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance explicitly address the links to the School Organisation Plan in light of widespread concern about provision for schools in the UDP.*
 4. *That Council Assembly notes:*
 - (a) *Paragraph 3.10 of the School Organisation Plan sets out as 'Proposition 9' the principle that "Southwark continues to provide a network of accessible local schools, with parents having a primary school within reasonable walking distance".*
 - (b) *Paragraph 1.15 of Appendix 1 to the Plan confirms that there are some locations where there is not a choice of primary schools within walking distance;*
 - (c) *Paragraphs 2.4 to 2.8 of the Plan set out the current basis for preparing projections of pupil numbers and its limitations;*
 - (d) *Those limitations are exacerbated, at least in respect of primary schools, in areas where there is a relative lack of community schools and an influx of families with young children;*

- (e) *Appendix 18 of the Plan projects, even on the current basis, a deficit by 2008 of primary school places in the Herne Hill and Dulwich Area;*

and therefore requests the Executive and the School Organisation Committee;

- (i) *To have due regard to Proposition 9, especially in areas of sparser population; and*

- (ii) *To consider no later than October 2004 a report, based inter alia on research into the success/failure of admissions applications for entry in January and September 2004 to maintained schools in the Herne Hill and Dulwich Area, on the desirability of increasing primary provision in that Area.*

- 5. *That Council Assembly notes that paragraph 4.31 which relates to primary school places in Area E, Herne Hill and Dulwich, recommends no further change at this stage and agrees that the primary school situation in area E be referred to the Education, Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub Committee in order to inform the 2004-2009 School Organisation Plan.*

- 3. In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 11, the reference to the Education, Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee in relation to recommendations 2 and 5 above, stands referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

4. School Organisation Plan

- 4.1 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.

5. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

School Organisation Plan

- 5.1 The draft SOP 2003-2008 was approved by Council Assembly on 29 October 2003 for statutory consultation?. The draft SOP was considered by Education Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 3 September 2003 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.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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. This was reported to Executive on 2 December 2003.
- 5.6 The publication of the draft SOP 2003-2008 has been advertised in the local press, and copies distributed to libraries and Council offices as well as being circulated to other key partners and neighbouring LEAs. There is an 11-week period for formal objections or other comments or views to be received. The draft Plan will then be submitted to the School Organisation Committee for approval.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 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.

7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 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.

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 5.6, the draft SOP is the subject of statutory consultation prior to submission to the School Organisation Committee in the spring.

9. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR AND SECRETARY (LEGAL ISSUES).

10. COMMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

- 10.1 Council Assembly agreed on 29th October 2003 that officers report to the Education, Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee on proposals to deal with any schools in the category described under Proposition 3 in the draft School Organisation Plan. Proposition 3 states that, where it is unlikely that a school can be removed from the categories of special measures or serious weaknesses through the policy and time frame set out in the EDP, closure or a "fresh start" is considered. Any proposal for a closure or fresh start is a decision for the Executive and would be subject to statutory consultation. Education, Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee, would therefore receive a report after a decision by the Executive to consult on a proposal to deal with a school in special measures or serious weaknesses by closure or "fresh start" under Proposition 3 of the draft SOP, and the views of the sub-committee recorded and reported as part of the normal consultation process.
- 10.2 Council Assembly also requested that the Executive should consider no later than October 2004 a report back on the primary school situation in area E, and the desirability of increasing primary provision in the area, based, inter alia, on research into the success/failure of admission applications for entry in January and September 2004 to maintained schools in the Herne Hill and Dulwich area.
- 10.3 This analysis will be reported to Education, Youth and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee in Summer 2004 and will therefore be based on information from next year's school admission applications. It will also review the issue in conjunction with the diocesan authorities, because a number of the primary schools in this planning area are voluntary aided. The analysis will also be based on next year's projections using the 2004 school rolls.

Lead Officer Ian Millichap, Constitutional Team Manager
Report Author Lesley John, Constitutional Team

Original Lead Officer Denise Skidmore, Head of Access and Inclusion,
Original Report Author Martin Wilcox, Education Planning Officer

<u>Background Papers</u>	<u>Held at</u>	<u>Contact</u>
School Organisation Plans	Education John Smith House, 144 - 152 Walworth Road London SE17 1JL	Martin Wilcox 020 7525 5018
DfEE Regulations and Guidance		