

# Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

Thursday 19 October 2023

7.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## Membership

Councillor Chloe Tomlinson (Chair)  
Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Jason Ochere  
Councillor Joseph Vambe  
Councillor John Batteson  
Councillor Renata Hamvas  
Councillor Irina Von Wiese  
Martin Brecknell (Co-opted member)  
Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer (Co-opted member)  
Jonathan Clay (Co-opted member)  
Marcin Jagodzinski (Co-opted member)

## Reserves

Councillor Maggie Browning  
Councillor Bethan Roberts  
Councillor Laura Johnson  
Councillor Victoria Mills  
Councillor Victor Chamberlain  
Councillor Sunil Chopra  
Councillor Adam Hood

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### Contact

Amit Alva on email: [amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk)

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Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

**Althea Loderick**

Chief Executive

Date: 11 October 2023



# Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

Thursday 19 October 2023  
7.00 pm  
Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

## Order of Business

Item No.	Title	Page No.
	<b>PART A OPEN BUSINESS</b>	
1.	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	
	To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	<b>NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT</b>	
	In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear working days of the meeting.	
3.	<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.</b>	
	Members to declare any interests and dispensations in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.	
4.	<b>MINUTES</b>	1 - 6
	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023.	

Item No.	Title	Page No.
5.	<b>SCHOOL AMALGAMATION/ CLOSURE OF ST MARY MAGDALENE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL</b>	
	To hear from Anna Harding, Head teacher and Sonia Phippard, Chair of Governors on the plans for closure/amalgamation of the St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School with a focus on:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics of the school</li> <li>• Avoiding closure and amalgamation</li> <li>• Council's role and communication</li> <li>• Suggestions to improve council strategy on falling rolls</li> </ul>	
6.	<b>THE RESTRUCTURE OF KINTORE WAY NURSERY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE.</b>	7 - 9
	To receive a report from Matthew Waterfall and Sasha Das Gupta from the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) on the restructure of Kintore Way Nursey School with a focus on:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Challenges</li> <li>• Mitigation Strategies</li> <li>• Potential impact on the school's educational programs and services</li> <li>• Plans to collaborate or integrate with other educational institutions</li> <li>• Prioritising the interests of students and the community throughout this process</li> </ul>	
7.	<b>EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTHWARK</b>	
	To receive a report from Patrick Doherty, Principal Strategy Officer and Danny Edwards, Head of Economy on youth employment. <i>(report to follow)</i>	
8.	<b>CABINET RESPONSE TO EDUCATION AND LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY REVIEW: MITIGATING FALLING PUPIL NUMBERS IN SCHOOLS</b>	10 - 19
	To note the Cabinet response to Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Review: Mitigating falling pupil numbers in schools.	

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>CABINET RESPONSE TO EDUCATION AND LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY REVIEW: IMPACT OF COST OF LIVING CRISIS ON BUSINESSES</b>	20 - 30
	To note the Cabinet response to Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Review: Impact of Cost of Living Crisis on Businesses	
<b>10.</b>	<b>PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME 2023-2024</b>	31 - 38
	To consider the proposed work programme for the year 2023-2024.	
	<b>DISCUSSION OF ANY OTHER OPEN ITEMS AS NOTIFIED AT THE START OF THE MEETING.</b>	

Date: 11 October 2023



## Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission held on Wednesday 19 July 2023 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Chloe Tomlinson (Chair)  
Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Jason Ochere  
Councillor Joseph Vambe  
Councillor John Batteson  
Councillor Renata Hamvas  
Councillor Irina Von Wiese  
Jonathan Clay (Co-opted member)

**OFFICER**  
**SUPPORT:** Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Martin Brecknell (Co-opted member) and Marcin Jagodzinski (Co-opted member)

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Joseph Vambe.

### 2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were no items of business which the Chair deemed urgent.

### 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

There were no disclosure of interests and dispensations.

#### 4. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2023 were approved as a correct record.

#### 5. SCHOOL AMALGAMATIONS AND CLOSURES IN SOUTHWARK

The commission first received a report from Freddy Vanson and Theo Whitworth of the National Education Union on school amalgamations and closures covering the following themes:

- Equalities data on the disproportionate impact of redundancies on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) school staff.
- Retention and recruitment challenges of teaching staff nationally.
- School staff workforce diversity not reflective of the diverse backgrounds among pupils.

The commission then asked questions on the following points:

- Influx and levels of BAME members of the community at the teacher training levels
- Disproportionate impact of school closures and amalgamations on non-white school support staff and possible mitigation measures from the council
- Higher number of black staff members at juniors levels
- Comparison of equality data with schools outside Southwark and also comparison of more recent data with 2018-2020 data

Freddy explained to the commission that anecdotally and only from personal experience it is clear that more young black teachers tend to leave teacher training as a result of lack of support with work place issues, when compared to their white colleagues.

Freddy agreed with the commission that the trend based on the two schools closures in Southwark indicate disproportionate impact on non-white school support staff; however a clearer picture on the levels of this impact would be attained during the course of the next municipal year. Theo explained to the commission that support staff are more vulnerable with regards to efficiency saving measures implemented by schools prior to any discussions of schools closure or amalgamation. Freddy further explained to the commissions that very few schools have Teaching Assistants (TAs') any more, TAs' in schools helped deal and support with accidents in class so the teacher could continue teaching. Furthermore, Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) funding for students with special needs would provide similar support in classes, however the back log of EHCP applications and the time taken to receive such funding is a barrier for providing more support in classrooms.

Freddy explained to the commission that black school staff struggle to get into position of leadership within education and trends in the data indicate this. Southwark Schools Alliance initiative have a training programme for black leaders in education which helps black staff overcome some of these barriers. The commission heard from Theo that one of the factors for disproportionate representation of black staff within teachers and senior leadership is a result of Southwark's hiring policy which is inadequate in promoting diversity.

The commission pointed out that the blind application process within Southwark's hiring policy should lead to non-discriminatory and non-prejudicial selections, however the commission also considered that this could also result in lower numbers of BAME teaching staff due to fewer numbers of BAME applications. Freddy explained to the commission that there might be a case to consider applicants under the equalities protected characteristics to be selected based on the needs of the school staff body demographic which would be a step towards positive discrimination. More recent equality data will be gathered in the coming year.

The commission then asked further questions on the following themes:

- Source of equality data
- Lack of applications from BAME applicants and causes for being unsuccessful; Senior leadership roles and job description tailor made for white school staff
- Possible initiatives through the careers team within schools to promote applications from ethnic backgrounds
- Impact of the falling rolls and possible school closures and amalgamations, discouraging BAME staff from applying for senior roles.
- Losing expertise in supporting SEND pupils due to redundancies in school support staff

Freddy informed the commission that casework data was collated himself and rest of the data is sourced from Southwark Council. The reasons for fewer appointments of BAME staff is a combination of job advert wording, fewer numbers of application and fewer selections of BAME applicants.

Theo agreed with the commission that vulnerable children are losing special needs support and expertise due to redundancies in school support staff, however, special needs schools are in a better position with ratios of children to staff, hence their budgets have more protection. Freddy explained to the commission that Teaching Assistants have a wealth of 1 to 1 experience with pupils which cannot be trained in a limited time and ideally such jobs provide more value for money and need to be protected.

Freddy explained to the commission the lack of ethnic minority leaders in senior



management does impact the number of applicant from young BAME people in the community. Motions related to campaigns like 'Look like Me' are in process of being submitted to the NEU, this would also involve the careers team playing a big role in promoting BAME staff. However, Freddy informed the commission that there are fewer issues in hiring for senior roles due to higher wages, there is an increase in middle managers within academies leading to the loss of 3 TA's for one assistant head teacher.

The commission then asked further questions around the following points of discussion:

- Reasons for high number BAME staff leaving schools due to discrimination and disciplinary and mitigation measure that the council could adopt.
- Demonstrable qualification through training programmes for TAs' with more 1 to 1 experience
- Higher number of BAME representation on the governing body; bias on the school interview panel for hiring Headteachers and senior school leaders.

The commission heard from Freddy that the trend in casework data do indicate that there are higher numbers of BAME staff leaving schools and there is a need for more legislation, guidance and support from the council in ensuring that schools carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) regularly and especially during redundancies. On training for TAs' the commission learnt that there are Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs run by the schools and Special Educational Needs co-ordinators (SENCo) also provide training but more needs to be done.

Freddy informed that the commission there are fewer issues when the governing body is more reflective of the staff demographic. The commission agreed to request data from the council's human resources team on schools that indicates a higher number BAME staff leaving.

## **6. COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING IN SOUTHWARK**

The commission received a report from Danny Edwards, Head of Economy on Community Wealth Building (CWB) on the following points:

- Community Wealth Building, inclusive economies and inclusive growth; Place based approach at the heart of communities.
- Pillars of CWB; Council wide approach for CWB; Southwark 2030 sets overarching economic vision for Southwark
- New economic strategy 2023-30 details inclusive growth due for consideration by Cabinet in October 2023
- Southwark Anchor Network is a strategic leadership group as part of the wider CWB agenda, harnessing the combined purchasing power of anchor

institutions of £207bn.

- Fairer Future's Procurement Framework due to be considered at Cabinet in September 2023.
- Southwark Works initiative with support from council and anchor institutions

The commission then asked questions around the following themes:

- Focus of the CWB programme on small and medium enterprises (SME)
- Understanding the reasons for unknown size of companies in the Centre for Local Economies and Strategies (CLES) report. (pg.16)
- Understanding unknown spend within Spend by Anchor and Geography in the CLES report. (pg.30)

The commission learnt from Danny that the unknown spend in the CLES report is a result of the data gathered from procurement based on a devolved commissioning model used by the council and anchor institutions, where the ownership for commissioning funds lies with local departments and institutions which creates gaps in the contract monitoring register. One of the recommendations within the CLES report is to look at new ways of gathering procurement data.

On CWB programmes focusing on SME and locally generative institutions, the commission understood that Southwark is not an isolated economy, therefore CWB program's focus will always be a combination of large businesses and SMEs'. One of the ways the councils supports SMEs is Southwark Pioneer's Fund (SPF).

The commission then had discussions around the following themes

- Geography of spend concentrated to tourist areas with increasing demand for food and beverage businesses compared to retail businesses catering to local need.
- Connecting local employment needs to local opportunities, decreasing in work poverty; Unlocking spend from large businesses to support SME
- SPF and its work in supporting SMEs like care leavers, women and BAME owned businesses.
- Consideration and implementation of the recommendations from the CLES report; Success and delivery of social value business projects
- Detailed analysis of local employment amongst the anchor institutions; promoting Southwark Works to local employment need, like care-leavers; dedicated employment engagement service in Southwark Works
- Affordable accommodation for key workers; Southwark works promotion in schools; Information on procurement from large multi-centre companies
- Places identified in the CWB place based approach, targets to measure

success in bringing in spend locally to Southwark.

- Southwark being the first London living wage borough having 298 accredited London living wage employers and soon to reach 300 employers who would be supported a London living wage unit run by the council.

The commission heard from Danny that the dedicated employment engagement service is a critical component of Southwark Works and is being developed to be commissioned in the near future. On Southwark Works, 85% of employed are from BAME backgrounds but there is a need for a more robust and comprehensive regional engagement program. On social value there are pockets of successes such as jobs and apprenticeships within construction and also in delivering a London Living Wage, however there is a need for a central social value framework.

On place based approach in CWB the commission learnt that the focus of place based approach is in line with the local authority vision to support local communities and businesses; similar approaches within CWB focuses on neighbourhoods. The council's delivery plan includes recruitment targets of placing 2.5 thousand Southwark residents in employment by 2026.

## **7. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24**

The commission agreed to keep falling schools rolls on review during the year and hearing from ward councillors on specific issues within the schools in their respective wards.

The commission agree to include procurement, employment and social value as part of its review on CWB.

The commission also agreed to consider reviewing the SEND strategy especially due to the rising need of SEND provisions in schools.

The commission agreed to review topics 'Southwark Stands Together' and Inclusion Charter in Schools.

The commission agreed to remove the review of the Integrated Care System and Fragmentation of the NHS from the work programme.

Meeting ended at 9:05 pm

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**

## **Report to the Education Scrutiny Committee**

### **London Borough of Southwark**

#### **Kintore Way Nursery**

##### **Introduction**

NAHT welcomes the opportunity to come to speak to the Education Scrutiny Committee about the current and ongoing proposals to reduce spending at Kintore Way Nursery but also to speak with Elected Members about the value that maintained nursery schools bring to the wider education landscape and the hugely beneficial and important role they play in support children with SEND.

We will not spend too much time on the current financial situation for all local authorities at present other than to acknowledge these are significant and challenging. However, we are also clear that whilst resources are limited and the calls on those resources many, we believe that there is a clear and unequivocal need not just to protect the early years provision you have in Southwark but to expand upon it, drawing on the expertise and experience that exists within your dedicated and long serving, specialist workforce.

In terms of Kintore Way itself this is an important nursery school and one of the oldest and biggest in the country. Behind the new facades that have gone up in Bermondsey over the past few years there still remains a high level of need and Kintore Way is meeting that need now as it has done for over 80 years. Kintore Way is an 'Outstanding' local service and something for the borough to be rightly proud of. We understand that times are tough and money tight but Southwark must be careful not to lose yet another vital service to austerity or indeed to diminish it to the point where it becomes just another child care setting. Kintore Way is a school and provides more than just child care.

The limited resources that do exist must be used to ensure those most in need receive the support they require to engage meaningfully and positively with the wider community.

##### **Context**

Kintore Way Nursery School currently provides early years education for 204 children of which around 90 or 45% have SEND. The deficit that has developed at the nursery has not been caused by a failure of the management at the school to manage the budget properly but rather because much of the additional funding that is required to support those children with SEND must come from its existing budget even though the needs of some children are far greater and therefore require far greater resources than children without additional needs.

Whilst the school, having identified there is need that requires support, can apply to Southwark for additional funding to help the school meet that need the funding provided by Southwark is rarely sufficient to cover the true cost of supporting any given child with SEND.

The SENDIF system for providing additional funding to support children with high needs who have not yet secured their EHCP will pay a maximum of £6000 per child per year, however, the vast majority of children do not receive anywhere near this amount.

A child with an EHCP can expect to receive £9000 for additional support in a mainstream school and £20000 in a special school. Therefore, even if a child waiting for an EHCP was to receive the full SENDIF entitlement they would still get £3000 less than it is recognised is required to support a child with SEND who has an EHCP.

In Kintore Way's case this difference, between what is received through SENDIF payments and what they actually need to spend supporting many children with SEND, has been the primary driver of the deficit. It is precisely because Kintore Way is inclusive and experienced in supporting young children with SEND that they have built up the deficit.

In addition a couple of decisions taken by the council but not adequately resourced have also led to the deficit increasing, specifically the opening of a reception class which was never properly supported by the borough despite the borough requesting it be opened.

### **SEND Services**

The SEND system in England is broken and many children are currently not receiving the support to which they are entitled. Only 49.2% of EHCP applications are concluded within the statutory timeframe meaning over half of children in need have to wait, sometimes lengthy periods, for the outcome to their application.

There are shortages in Education Psychologists (360 fewer than in 2010). An average vacancy rate of 23% for Speech and Language Therapists and the number of Specialist Teachers for the Deaf has reduced to 887 from 1062 a decade ago.

This is not being driven by a reduction in need as the number of EHCPs has been growing at around 9% a year for some years now (total active EHCPs as at Jan 232 was 517,026). This diminishment of the specialist workforce means that the vast majority of locally employed SALTs and EPs spend the vast majority of their time reviewing EHCPs for children they have not met and means that therapeutic work in many areas is non-existent.

School leaders at primary phase constantly cite the lack of specialist staff as one of the major barriers to being able to support children with SEND.

Southwark bucks the trend for the initial refusal of an EHCP rate with 38% of first time applications being refused as compared with 22% nationally. However, the picture in Southwark in terms of SEND rates is much the same as elsewhere in the country and with only 3.7% LA decisions to refuse an EHCP being upheld at the First Tier SEN Tribunal in 2021/22 it is probably the case that the overwhelming majority of cases refused in this borough will be overturned if the case gets to a tribunal.

Indeed, the challenging and adversarial Tribunal system which pits families against councils cost local authorities around £73 million in legal costs in 2021/22, money which would have been much better spent on supporting those with SEND.

One positive of course is that whilst Southwark is suffering with the same challenges faced by all other local authorities as a result of cutbacks and underfunding it does have Kintore Way Nursery which is hugely successful in identifying and supporting need early and setting children and their families on a path towards securing an EHCP. The earlier the EHCP is awarded the better the outcomes for the family.

Kintore Way also has access to the therapeutic input of Ed Psychs who provide insight into the needs of the child and strategies and techniques for the children and families aimed at managing the

challenges they find. It also works closely with SaLTs to support children with speech and language barriers to overcome these before they enter primary school.

Services in the community are few and far between so Kintore Way (currently supporting around 90 children with SEND) plays a vital role not just in Bermondsey but in supporting the whole of Southwark with its management of SEND. As well as ensuring children who need special school places are identified early on.

### **Resource Base**

The good news is that the Council could make a significant and positive difference by taking a decision to fund early intervention services through its maintained nursery schools. Many LAs operate resources bases which are specifically designed to identify and support children with SEND with a view to allowing them to access greater resources through the EHCP process earlier in their school journey.

Aside from the clear financial benefits this provides to the Council in gaining access to greater resources from central government it also provides younger children and their families with the support need to transition more successfully to primary education.

We all know that the SEND system is fundamentally broken and that it is common for parents to have to fight to get the resources they need and to which their children are entitled. It is important to consider how exhausting an experience of constantly battling with public institutions to access services can be and also how this pits local authorities against parents.

The borough has recently saved £3.2 million from the GLA roll out of universal free school meals for all primary aged children.

London Council's have done some excellent work in this area (albeit from before the pandemic) on the hidden value of MNS which can be viewed here: [Hidden Value: A report exploring the role and future of maintained nursery schools in London | London Councils](#).

We would encourage Southwark to explore running a pilot or trial of a resource base using Kintore Way as the centre for this and with a view to improving upon the support that is provided early on to those children with SEND.

<b>Item No.</b> 18.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 12 September 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Response to Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Review: Mitigating Falling Pupil Numbers in Schools	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>		Councillor Jasmine Ali, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Refugees	

## **FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR JASMINE ALI, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND REFUGEES**

The following report is a response to the Local Economy Scrutiny Commission’s timely review of our work to mitigate the impact of falling school rolls in Southwark.

I would like to thank Cllr Ochere, Cllr Tomlinson and all of their team for their excellent work in this area. It was most helpful to go through this work with them as we responded to this challenging issue.

The scrutiny review interviews of the Greater London Authority (GLA), a selection of school leaders, our education team and the independent consultants have already added value to this work. I am pleased to report we support all eight of the recommendations and are doing much of what they propose already.

### **Background**

Following our £200m investment in schools, education in Southwark has never been stronger, with 97% of schools Ofsted-rated as good and outstanding. Taken together the impact of the dramatic fall in births, Brexit, the pandemic, the cost of living crisis, the national housing crisis and inflated housing costs in the borough constitute a demographic earthquake. The result has been a significant fall in pupil numbers in primary schools.

### **Keeping Education Strong Strategy**

We have documented our approach in our Keeping Education Strong strategy.

This work is the product of close partnership working between the council and schools.

The work of the scrutiny team (between July 22 and April 23) has been especially helpful. Their interviews with the GLA and local schools have already added value to our work in this area. It was reassuring that the commission “acknowledges that Southwark is one of the boroughs in London that have a clear strategy in place for tackling falling pupil numbers”.

### **Scrutiny Commission Recommendations and Response**

The report makes eight helpful recommendations which are set out below, along with our responses.

1. This calls for further strategic relationships across the council including housing.

*We welcome this recommendation and aim to get on with it.*

2. This calls for us to look at the current working process of the GLA and its data on school rolls. The GLA is set to review its own work on falling school rolls in 2024.

*I will write to the GLA to ensure our thoughts are considered in their review.*

3. This requests that officers explore the different mechanisms for schools to temporarily reduce their Pupil Admission Numbers before any proposed action on closures or amalgamations take place.

*There is already a process to change the capacity of a school at short notice (under the Office of the Schools’ Adjudicator). So we can agree this straight away.*

4. This calls for all closed schools to be re-provisioned for pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities.

*We can confirm that plans are already underway to repurpose closed schools for children and young people with SEND needs.*

5. This calls for a long-term proactive strategy in response to projected budget deficits in schools by early intervention and by subsequent reduction in PAN and ring-fencing budgets around affluent schools which could help provide financial support for schools with falling rolls.

*We have put clear policies in place as agreed with the Schools Forum to assist this as a result of the strategy on Keeping Education Strong. Our officers will now further explore with Schools Forum how we can work together to support schools with falling rolls.*

6. This recommends a council ‘school staff redundancy policy’ that proactively supports school staff.



*We acknowledge that each school is responsible for setting its own restructure and redundancy policies. However the council HR team provide clear advice and guidance for school leaders in any restructure or redundancy situation as a result of falling rolls.*

7. This calls on the council to monitor and report on the impact that ongoing falling rolls has on Global Ethnic Majority pupils, pupil premium pupils and pupils on Free School Meals (FSM).

*The Equality Impact Assessment are produced for each school going through changes will detail potential impact of reducing PAN, amalgamating or closing a school and mitigations on pupils from Global Ethnic Majority background, those attracting a Pupil Premium and/ or eligible for Free School Meals, as well as those with SEND. In addition, each report will also consider the impact on staff. Officers will revise the current Equalities Impact Assessment template to fit in all of the necessary information. To provide greater transparency.*

8. This asks for a strategy for unused and closed school buildings. *We are happy with this as the Council's policy has is for ex-school buildings to be used for education, training, employment, recreation or community activities. Council officers will now explore the benefits and dis-benefits of supplementary planning guidelines.*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Cabinet note the response to the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report and recommendations.
2. That the Cabinet approve the agreement to deliver recommendations 1, 4 and 8.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3. On 19 April 2023, the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission met to consider and agree its recommendations to Cabinet following nine months of meetings, discussions and reports on the strategy to manage falling pupil numbers in schools.
4. Between July 2022 and April 2023, in addition to hearing from the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Refugees, and the Director of Education, the Scrutiny Commission heard from the head teachers of Ivydale, Victory and St George's primary schools; the planning policy manager from the Council; a representative from the Church of England diocese; the Demography and City Modelling Manager of the GLA; and the London Regional Officer of the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT).

5. The Commission also received reports from the Director of Education on the Keeping Education Strong strategy and from an independent consultancy (Isos) who reviewed the strategy and provided further recommendations to deliver on it. An annual Place Planning report also comes to cabinet in October. This report provides detailed analysis of pupil numbers, future projections and mitigations in place to manage capacity.
6. Work across the wider council continues in promoting the growth of pupil numbers. There is a focus on building and enabling housing which supports families with children to stay in Southwark and attend Southwark schools.
7. Whilst there has been decline in available and affordable stock in the private rented sector (PRS), Southwark Council continues to be the largest social landlord in London with 55,000 homes lived in by 40% of Southwark residents (tenants and leaseholders),
8. Southwark's council-house building programme is delivering more family sized homes and is continuing to promote the delivery of larger homes with a requirement in the Southwark Plan (P2) for residential developments to provide minimum percentages of larger units. The draft Old Kent Road Area Action Plan (AAP) also emphasises the need for family homes with a target of at least 4,000 family homes with 3 or more bedrooms. We will continue to promote further dialogue between directorates to develop further planning strategies to meet current and future need for family homes."
9. The recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission were published and shared in a report (Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Review of mitigating falling pupil numbers in schools) on 13 June, 2023, and a request was made for Cabinet to respond within eight weeks.
10. This report is the response from Education to those Scrutiny Commission recommendations.

#### **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

11. Responses to the recommendations from the Scrutiny Commission:

**Recommendation 1** - That the cabinet should promote dialogue between the housing, planning and education directorates to develop further planning strategies for family sized home building in close proximity to Southwark schools.

**Response to Recommendation 1** - Cabinet agrees this recommendation and will promote further dialogue in strategy development between directorates.

**Recommendation 2** - That the cabinet review the council's current working process with the Greater London Authority (GLA) on matters related to sharing and use of Council data to produce pupil place projections and also to ensure that Council data is used to develop the GLA's modelling methodology to produce more accurate projections in the coming municipal year 2023-2024.

**Response to Recommendation 2** - As detailed in the Scrutiny Commission report dated 13 June, 2023, the Demography and City Modelling Manager from the GLA attended the Scrutiny Commission in Autumn 2022 to explain the methodology used by the GLA to produce projections on pupil numbers and the process the Council follows to provide the GLA with data. These projections are based on a number of factors, including housing trajectories and planning permissions, which are provided to the GLA by the Council as required, and in a timely manner, to allow the GLA to model its projections.

It is our understanding that any inaccuracies in these projections have been caused by external factors (such as Brexit, Covid, welfare reforms, housing rent levels) rather than data provided by the Council. In such instances these external factors could not have been predicted or modelled for.

The GLA's modelling methodology is developed in conjunction with all 32 London local authorities and the processes are agreed together. These processes are reviewed and refined annually and the next review is scheduled to take place in Spring 2024. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member will write to the GLA to ensure they take our views into consideration before the next review.

**Recommendation 3** - That the Cabinet commission officers to explore the different mechanisms through which there could be a temporary reduction in Published Admission Numbers (PAN) from a two-form to a one-form entry for schools facing closure or amalgamation prior to any decisions of closure or amalgamation.

**Response to Recommendation 3** - Yes, there already exists a process to change the capacity of a school at short notice (under the Office of the Schools' Adjudicator). A school can reduce its PAN and then increase it at a later stage, or admit bulge classes, and in every case under the Keeping Education Strong strategy, reduction of PAN was and will be explored before proposal of amalgamation and/ or closure.

**Recommendation 4** - That the cabinet commission officers to explore options in transforming mainstream schools facing amalgamation or closures into schools with SEND provisions for children with special needs prior to any decisions of closure or amalgamation.

**Response to Recommendation 4** - Yes, where school buildings have become vacant as a result of closure or amalgamation of a mainstream school, plans are actively underway to re-provision these schools for SEND purposes.

**Recommendation 5** - That the cabinet devise a long-term proactive strategy in response to projected budget deficits in schools by early intervention and by subsequent reduction in PAN and ring-fencing budgets around affluent schools which could help provide financial support for schools with falling rolls.

**Response to Recommendation 5** - We have put in place clear policies and procedures, agreed with Schools Forum to mitigate this and council officers will further explore with Schools Forum how we can work together to support schools with falling rolls. There are number of points in the year where we can review our strategy and its effectiveness – through the annual Place Planning report which comes to cabinet each October and provides detailed analysis of pupil numbers, future projections and mitigations in place to manage capacity; numbers of pupils actually taking up places each September; the October census which is a data capture of numbers of children in school on a given day; and registration for reception places each January/February.

**Recommendation 6** - That the cabinet ensure the council have a school staff redundancy policy that proactively and thoroughly supports school staff prior to any final decisions on staff redundancies due to Published Admission Numbers (PAN) reduction and/or closure of schools. Furthermore, that the school staff are supported in finding employment in other Southwark schools and/or organisations; whilst monitoring and ensuring that the 'at risk' school work force policies reflect and maintain the diversity percentages of the school's work force and therefore that the 180 6 redundancy levels do not disproportionately affect Global Ethnic Majority staff and low-income support staff.

**Response to Recommendation 6** - Each school is responsible for setting out its own restructure and redundancy policies ratified by the governing body. As part of its Keeping Education Strong Strategy the council has ensured that all affected staff in maintained schools receive one to one support in exploring options should their school be in scope for closure or amalgamation. A re-deployment process was presented to Schools Forum in September 2022 which set out the offer of options of employment in other settings as a first course of action to affected school staff. The schools HR team provide clear advice and guidance for school leaders in any restructure or redundancy situation as a result of falling rolls.

**Recommendation 7** - That the cabinet commission the council to monitor and be transparent by publishing reports on a. the impact that ongoing falling rolls has on Global Ethnic Majority pupils, pupil premium pupils and pupils on Free School Meals (FSM) by looking at percentage of pupils in these schools prior to action being taken as compared to the percentage reduction of pupils thereafter. b. the impact that actions to address falling rolls such as PAN reductions, amalgamations of schools and closures could have on Global Ethnic Majority pupils, pupil premium pupils and pupils on FSM's by looking at percentage of pupils in these schools prior to action being taken as compared to the percentage reduction of pupils thereafter.

**Response to Recommendation 7** - The Equality Impact Assessment are produced for each school going through changes will detail potential impact of reducing PAN, amalgamating or closing a school and mitigations on pupils from Global Ethnic Majority background, those attracting a Pupil Premium and/ or eligible for Free School Meals, as well as those with SEND. In addition, each report will also consider the impact on staff.

Where any changes (PAN reduction, amalgamation or closure) are made in a school, we can say what percentage of pupils in a school have each of those characteristics before any changes are made and after any changes have been made and use this analysis to support the decision making.

**Recommendation 8** - That the cabinet commission officers to devise a strategy for unused and closed school buildings in terms of repurposing and planned delegations such as for recreation and community activities.

**Response to Recommendation 8** - Yes, the Council's policy has been shared with stakeholders and in every case we ask for ex-school buildings to be used for education, training, employment, recreation or community activities. Council officers will explore the benefits and dis-benefits of supplementary planning guidelines.

### **Policy framework implications**

12. There are no additional policy framework implications attached to these recommendations.

### **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

#### **Community impact statement**

13. We know that our schools are the heart of our communities and that changes can have a far reaching impact on those communities. However, having full, well-resourced schools that can provide an excellent education is best for children, families, staff and communities.

#### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

14. A full Equalities Impact Needs Analysis (EINA) has been completed for the Keeping Education Strong Strategy, for the recommendations made by the independent consultancy and an individual EINA will be completed for each school proposed for PAN reduction, amalgamation or closure.

#### **Health impact statement**

15. The implementation of the Keeping Education Strong strategy has considered the impact on the mental health of school staff at every stage, and reference to support available has been made explicit in communications.

**Climate change implications**

16. There are no climate change implications to these recommendations.

**Resource implications**

17. There are no additional resource implications to these recommendations.

**Legal implications**

18. There are no specific legal implications to these recommendations.

**Financial implications**

19. There are no specific legal implications to these recommendations.

**Consultation**

20. Extensive consultation was undertaken at every stage of developing the Keeping Education Strong strategy and will also be undertaken in the event of any school amalgamation or closure, both in line with and in addition to the statutory requirements.

**SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

21. No supplementary advice from other officers were required.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Review of mitigating falling pupil numbers in schools	Education Directorate 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Southwark Council London SE1P 5LX	Poppy Charlton 07712 545090
<b>Link (please copy and paste into browser):</b> <a href="https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s114684/Report%20Mitigating%20falling%20pupil%20numbers%20in%20schools.pdf">https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s114684/Report%20Mitigating%20falling%20pupil%20numbers%20in%20schools.pdf</a>		
Keeping Education Strong: Strategy for future proofing primary schools and protecting the quality of education in Southwark	Education Directorate 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Southwark Council London SE1P 5LX	Poppy Charlton 07712 545090
<b>Link (please copy and paste into browser):</b> <a href="#">Report Keeping Education Strong - Strategy for future proofing primary schools and protecting the .pdf (southwark.gov.uk)</a>		

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Equalities Impact Needs Analysis	Education Directorate 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Southwark Council London SE1P 5LX	Poppy Charlton 07712545090
<b>Link (please copy and paste into browser):</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/emergency-evacuation-information-sharing/equality-impact-assessment">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/emergency-evacuation-information-sharing/equality-impact-assessment</a>		
PAN reduction, amalgamation or closure	Education Directorate 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Southwark Council London SE1P 5LX	Poppy Charlton 07712 545090
<b>Link (please copy and paste into browser):</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2023-to-2024/schools-operational-guide-2023-to-2024">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2023-to-2024/schools-operational-guide-2023-to-2024</a>		
National Association of Head Teachers	Education Directorate 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Southwark Council London SE1P 5LX	Poppy Charlton 07712 545090
<b>Link (please copy and paste into browser):</b> <a href="https://membership.naht.org.uk/become-a-member/?gclid=EAlalQobChMIIntPa1ZbwgAMVwIdQBh3BigXZEAYASAAEgLCmfD_BwE">https://membership.naht.org.uk/become-a-member/?gclid=EAlalQobChMIIntPa1ZbwgAMVwIdQBh3BigXZEAYASAAEgLCmfD_BwE</a>		
isos consultancy	Education Directorate 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Southwark Council London SE1P 5LX	Poppy Charlton 07712 545090
<b>Link (please copy and paste into browser):</b> <a href="https://www.isospartnership.com">https://www.isospartnership.com</a>		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Jasmine Ali, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Refugees	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children and Adult Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Poppy Charlton, Service Development Manager - Performance and Strategy	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	31 August 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance	No	No
List other officers here	N/a	N/a
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		31 August 2023



<b>Item No.</b> 19.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 12 September 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Response to Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Review: Impact of Cost of Living Crisis on Businesses	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>		Councillor Martin Seaton, Jobs, Skills and Business	

## **FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR MARTIN SEATON, CABINET MEMBER FOR JOBS, SKILLS AND BUSINESS**

It is vitally important that we support businesses across the borough during this time of need, and we are committed to investing in our town centres and high streets to do just that. We welcome the recommendations of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission, which emphasises the need to support local businesses through the cost-of-living crisis.

We are very proud of our flagship Southwark Pioneers Fund (SPF), which is helping those wishing to start or grow their business. The next strand of the SPF will help our everyday high street businesses to reduce CO2 emissions and become more efficient with their resources.

Thriving Town Centres and High Streets are key to our Economic Strategy ambitions and we will continue to invest in relationships with large and small businesses, both directly and through key business networks including our successful Business Improvement Districts.

We launched our Thriving High Streets Fund to invest in all of Southwark’s high streets and we recently awarded more than £135,000 to six projects in the first phase. These projects will make a positive contribution to help local small and medium-sized enterprises thrive and to make our high streets more inclusive, particularly for low income and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

We will continue to provide support for innovation in our borough and improvements to our local areas, securing new affordable workspace for start-ups and small businesses where it is most needed.

I am proud of the work we have done so far and look forward to working with the team to support our business further and let them know that the council is on their side and has so much to offer for helping our local economy to thrive.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That the cabinet approves the response to the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny recommendations on the review of the cost-of-living crisis on business, as set out in paragraphs 4 to 35.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report - Review of the cost-of-living crisis on businesses, was received by cabinet on 13 June 2023 (agenda item 23). Seven recommendations were made. This report sets out a response to each recommendation.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. The recommendations set out in the *Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Review of the cost-of-living crisis on businesses* impact on various departments of the council. As such, relevant service areas have contributed to the response set out in this report.
4. **Recommendation 1** - That the cabinet ask officers to review the access and support for small businesses through the council website whilst also ensuring that the support is widely publicised in the business community; and also that the cabinet look at organising, promoting and setting up workshops and networking events to help small businesses.
5. **Response to recommendation 1** - In line with the Council Delivery Plan (CDP) commitment to “Back Southwark residents to start more businesses, co-operatives and social enterprises,” the council launched the Southwark Pioneers Fund (SPF) in September 2022. The SPF offers business advice, guidance and financial assistance to anyone with a business idea, through to founders with an established micro enterprise, to reach their full potential. Support includes workshops and networking events to help businesses to develop and connect with each other.
6. Officers regularly review our business support offer on the council website, and we also send a monthly e-newsletter to over 12,000 businesses and community groups, providing a wealth of up-to-date information on business support programmes available both locally and pan-London. All support programmes are communicated to the Federation of Small Businesses and Southwark Chamber of Commerce so that their members can access appropriate opportunities.
7. As part of our Town Centres and High Streets programme, the council is organising a series of local business engagement events to find out what local businesses want and need to survive and thrive. These events are also an opportunity to showcase the wider business support on offer to SMEs generally.
8. Southwark has five Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and numerous

local networks that work together to support their local area. The council is working hard to encourage and support local networks in town centres and help businesses to work collaboratively to boost local activity. By way of example, we are currently supporting the Elephant & Castle business forum to explore a Business Improvement District (BID) which includes Walworth, and we are working alongside Tree Shepherd to launch a new Peckham business forum in autumn 2023.

9. **Recommendation 2** - That the cabinet review the council's role in the hospitality sector and act as liaison to help bridge the hospitality skills by connecting young people and the community to academies run by the sector; and also extend support in hiring apprenticeships.
10. **Response to recommendation 2** – As a central-London borough, Southwark is home to a diverse and thriving hospitality sector, catering to a wide range of tastes and enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Despite continued strong employment growth in the sector, large recruitment and skills gaps still exist. The sector also has a poor reputation, with many citing low pay, long hours and a lack of opportunities for progression as reasons not to pursue a career in hospitality. Despite this negative perception, many good jobs and careers exist within the sector, but awareness of these and of the pathways into them is lacking. These issues of reputation and awareness sit alongside an issue of provision, with the local skills offer currently unable to meet the sector's demand for skilled labour.
11. The need for intervention within the hospitality sector is something that has been identified as a priority by the Southwark Skills Partnership and is recognised within the Southwark Skills Strategy delivery plan. Our objectives are to: raise the profile of the hospitality sector locally; increase awareness of the employment and training opportunities available locally and of the pathways to them; improve and increase capacity for hospitality skills provision locally to provide new pathways to hospitality jobs locally.
12. To do this, we are looking to establish a Hospitality Skills Centre in Southwark (a CDP milestone), designed and delivered in partnership with sector specialists, to improve and increase capacity for good quality hospitality skills provision within the borough. A potential site has been identified and we are currently in the process of assessing the viability of the skills centre at this venue.
13. In the interim, we will continue to work alongside Lewisham Council to support the Mayor's Academies Hospitality Hub at Lewisham College with the design and delivery of its activities, working with employers to formalise the regional skills response, provide work-based training and employment opportunities, and inspire residents to work in the hospitality sector.
14. **Recommendation 3** - That the cabinet review the cabinet member for jobs, business & town centres portfolio for the coming municipal year to provide clear remits as it currently does not include business rates; this is to avoid businesses reaching a crisis point due to being unable to afford increase in

business rates.

15. **Response to recommendation 3:** The council is not responsible for setting business rates, which is done centrally via the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). In lieu of any potential changes to portfolio remits, the respective portfolio holders (and local economy and business rates teams in particular) will continue to work together to provide wider support to local businesses, signposting to relevant programmes or business rate relief schemes to help them with economic challenges including business rate rises.
16. **Recommendation 4** - That the cabinet look to review and invest more in the council's governance and on-site management structure for support to Local Businesses especially Street Markets; this could be achieved by appointing business liaison officers to help organise night markets, historical and cultural festivals; and a local trader to be involved in managing the site, as a co-operative manager working with the on-site council management; and also that the council carry out quarterly reviews on the progress of the above mentioned initiatives.
17. **Response to recommendation 4** - We are committed to delivering the CDP target of encouraging the expansion of street markets across Southwark. To achieve this the Council's in house markets and street trading service is already supporting market traders whether it be the work being undertaken in collaboration with Big Local Works/Bermondsey BID in relation to the Blue market or working with Southwark Association for Street Trading (SAST) to develop East St. market. We have been supporting the Blue market to enable them to deliver a variety of events and are supporting East St. Community/SAST in developing a thriving high streets fund bid focused on governance, branding and promotion through continued engagement and events. The service has also supported the introduction of a market at Maddock Way through working with the tenant resident's association. The service also supports community event organisers through the licensing of market stalls, for example the Queer Arts Fair held in Peckham last summer which was a great success and the more recent Akwasidae Festival on Camberwell Green which was well attended this summer.
18. **Recommendation 5** - That the cabinet look at utilising the benefits of central areas of successful businesses like Blue Bermondsey and Elephant by providing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money for Local Street Markets in the year 2023-2024.
19. **Response to recommendation 5** - The strategy for future rounds of CIL allocations is currently under discussion and a delivery programme has not yet been determined. Any future CIL strategy will consider the allocation criteria, community engagement, process for developing projects and decision-making processes. Officers will be bringing forward a report to cabinet towards the end of 2023 that will make proposals on aligning the approach to the CDP commitment on thriving neighbourhoods. Any

application for CIL for Local Street Markets will need to follow the process and timeframes approved through the future cabinet report.

20. **Recommendation 6** - That the cabinet ask officers for an action plan to outline how the LAP seeks to use its repayable capital to develop a local community asset or assets for long-term public benefit that could provide a low-cost environment for the social economy to operate and scale in ways that commercially owned real estate cannot. It is important that this action plan contains a timeframe for delivery, along with key milestones and that there are periodic updates to this commission to monitor progress.
21. **Response to recommendation 6** – The Southwark Local Access Partnership (LAP) is a partnership led initiative steered by a Partnership Board that includes the council as part of the strategic decision-making committee. The LAP has a budget of £1.4m to be used for enterprise development support (for socially minded enterprises), commencing in autumn 2023. A further £4.4m (£2.625m repayable capital, £1.85m grant capital) is available for investment and proposals are being developed in relation to an Asset Trust model to ensure that the funding delivers the most appropriate long-term investment solution for Southwark’s social economy.
22. Key next steps to be taken in the coming months include: (1) Asset Trust Workshop - working with a facilitator to determine the key requirements, governance, organisations and board members required to register an asset trust. Following this, we will be able to begin registration of the community asset trust. (2) Recruit Fund Manager - engagement with Resonance social impact property fund manager for advice and potential ongoing support in line with their 'impact labs' initiative through which they develop community assets. Securing a fund manager to support the alignment with our LAP funding providers is another key step. (3) Asset Identification - working with our Users and Influencers and Enterprise Development Partners to prioritise the key assets required by Southwark's minoritised and female-led organisations. Identify potential assets through our community partners & stakeholders, working with our fund manager to review, plan and secure potential assets.
23. Officers will ensure that the commission is kept updated on LAP progress in regard to the Asset Trust development and a more detailed action plan will be provided once fully developed by the LAP coordinator.
24. **Recommendation 7** - That the cabinet commission the council to devise a charter similar to the Schools Inclusion Charter whereby businesses that are important community/cultural assets, can apply for and be granted 'Heritage Business' status; therefore enabling them to access additional support, CIL money, protection from eviction and/or appropriate mitigation measures from any detrimental impacts associated with regeneration or other policies such as changes to parking. The charter could consider the wider impact and value that businesses which are owned or managed by under-represented groups such as women and Global Ethnic Majority groups have on the local economic area including employment.

25. **Response to recommendation 7** – The motivation behind the recommendation to establish a charter on heritage business status is recognised. However, a wide range of support mechanisms for protecting local businesses from the possible impacts of development already exist. These include:
- Planning policy protections set out on the Southwark Plan
  - Provision for affordable workspace
  - Safeguards for tenants of the council commercial properties
  - Support for businesses through council initiatives such as the SPF
  - Support for arts and culture organisations
  - Support for community based organisations.
26. The Southwark Plan 2022 (P33) recognises that small and independent businesses and small shops are a vital part of the prosperous local economy in Southwark and are made up of a wide range of innovative and inspiring enterprises, helping to boost local employment and the distinctive character of local neighbourhoods.
27. Where existing small or independent businesses or small shops may be displaced by development a business relocation strategy, written in consultation with affected businesses, must be provided. The business relocation strategy must set out viable relocation options to ensure that any existing businesses are carefully considered in redevelopment schemes, either to be re-provided where phasing allows, or to be relocated in Southwark to ensure the borough retains its local talent, culture and commercial creativity.
28. Ongoing Area Character studies will identify local landmarks, many of which are local community/cultural assets. The consultation undertaken as part of the study often reveals which local community/cultural spaces are of particular importance to local people. The study also highlights where there are potential improvements (such as to transport and public realm) that if invested in (e.g. via CIL funds), would be of benefit to local businesses. Current policy means that CIL funds cannot be targeted at businesses specifically as such funds can only be used for wider infrastructure purposes.
29. The Southwark Plan also contains various provisions in regard to Affordable Workspace (P31). For example, where existing small and independent businesses are at risk of displacement from a development there should be full consideration of the feasibility of providing affordable and suitable space for existing occupiers in the completed development. In developments proposing 500sqm GIA or more employment floorspace must, among other things:
- Prioritise affordable workspace for existing small and independent businesses occupying the site that are at risk of displacement. Where this is not feasible, affordable workspace must be targeted for small

- and independent businesses from the local area with an identified need; and
- Collaborate with the council, local businesses, business associations relevant public sector stakeholders and workspace providers to identify the businesses that will be nominated for occupying affordable workspace.
30. Whenever regeneration plans are being developed in respect of properties owned by the council, we would always consider existing commercial tenants and their historical and cultural heritage to ensure they are retained locally wherever possible. An example is Peckham Palms, which was created by the council to accommodate displaced local businesses impacted by redevelopment.
31. Aside from redevelopments, we aim to be flexible with council tenants where appropriate and help local businesses which are deemed to add community or cultural benefit. Part of this is to refer them to relevant business support programmes, such as the SPF or LAP. However, we have policies in place (see para 38) which dictate that market rents are charged, and the council is under a fiduciary obligation to collect those rents. Leaving failing or unviable businesses to continue in premises presents risks and, amongst other things, blocks up churn in the portfolio, which might act to exclude the very tenants who run the 'heritage' businesses of tomorrow.
32. In terms of wider business support, the Southwark Pioneers Fund is targeted at underrepresented groups in business and those with less than 10 employees (micro businesses). The SPF Growth programme is open to any existing business wishing to develop their business for future viability and growth – this includes businesses struggling with the current extreme economic circumstances. Grants of up to £10,000 are available to a small number of businesses who would benefit most, including those with a historical or cultural heritage.
33. Support for the borough's creative sector businesses is available via the council's Culture Together Grants programme: grants can include an allocation of funding towards core costs, such as business overheads associated with project activity. Creative and cultural businesses seeking premises can register their requirements on the council's Space Register, which is consulted by Sustainable Growth officers when opportunities for meanwhile or longer-term tenancies arise in developments. The council's culture team has recently launched the [Southwark Creatives Directory](#), offering creative freelancers based in the borough the chance to promote their work and serving as a resource to encourage businesses to employ local talent. Leaders of creative organisations are also supported with networking opportunities in the form of the Creative Network Southwark and quarterly roundtable meetings with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks, Streets & Clean Air to ensure the needs and challenges of creative businesses are understood
34. For Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, the council's

Common Purpose grants offer funding for services that support Southwark's diverse communities to be more resilient, resourceful, happier and healthier. Grants are available to VCS organisations to meet the overarching aims of the Common Purpose programme to bring Southwark's diverse communities together, tackle social exclusion and promote a greener borough.

35. The adoption of a charter is therefore not recommended as it would create an additional administrative burden while doing little to add to these existing protections and support mechanisms.

### **Policy framework implications**

36. The Council Delivery Plan (CPD) has the following related commitments and milestones:
- i. Back Southwark residents to start more businesses, co-operatives and social enterprises.
  - ii. Provide extra support for entrepreneurs who are underrepresented in business, including women, Black, Asian, minority ethnic and disabled people.
  - iii. Grow a network of start-up hubs rooted in our communities
  - iv. Establish a new Hospitality Skills Centre.
  - v. Encourage the expansion of street markets across Southwark.
37. The Southwark Plan (2022) is our Local Plan. It was adopted by the Council Assembly on 23 February 2022. It sets out the vision, strategic objectives and policies for development in Southwark for the period 2019 to 2036.
38. The Asset Management Plan for the Commercial Property Estate (2016) and the Corporate Asset Management Plan (2021) outline the central strategy for the management of the council's non-dwellings property holdings.
39. The council's forthcoming economic strategy 2023-30 sets out how we will shape a greener, fairer and more resilient economy. Among other things it will also be an economy where our high streets are supported to continue providing the essential goods and services residents rely on, and smaller established businesses are better able to face current and future economic pressures, such as rising land values and costs.
40. The Voluntary and Community Strategy for Southwark sets out a vision of thriving community organisations that better meet the needs of our residents. It was developed in partnership with the local VCS and Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group in 2016.



## **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

### **Community impact statement**

41. The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report recognises the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis on local businesses. There are no community impacts arising from this report, but consideration will be given to any specific recommendations to be taken forward.

### **Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

42. The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report acknowledges the impacts of the current extreme economic circumstances, especially for Global Ethnic Majority-led businesses. The council is committed to tackling the inequalities experienced by people in business and our business support programmes are designed to be accessible to enterprises led by people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, women, disabled people and young people. Monitoring is in place to ensure that this support is targeted accordingly.

### **Health impact statement**

43. There are no direct health impacts arising from this report.

### **Climate change implications**

44. None applicable.

### **Resource implications**

45. There are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

### **Legal implications**

46. None applicable.

### **Financial implications**

47. There are no new direct financial implications arising from this report. Responses to the recommendations set out current council processes and activities which are contained within existing budgets. Any new actions required as a result of the recommendations will be explored, developed and appropriate funding identified. Further reports will be put forward as required for approval.

### **Consultation**

48. The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission consulted a range of stakeholders including market traders, businesses, BIDs, Federation of Small businesses (FSB) and the LAP, as part of their cost-of-living review.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

### Head of Procurement

49. Not applicable

### Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance

50. Not applicable.

### Strategic Director of Finance (FC23/003)

51. This report is requesting the Cabinet to note the response to the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny recommendations on the review of the cost-of-living crisis on business, as set out in paragraphs 4 to 34.
52. The strategic director of finance notes that there are no new immediate financial implications arising from this report and notes other comments in the financial implications.
53. Staffing and any other costs connected with this report to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Review Impact of the cost-of-living crisis on businesses	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva <a href="mailto:Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk">Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk</a>
<a href="#">Cabinet report template 2012 (southwark.gov.uk)</a>		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Martin Seaton, Jobs, Skills and Business	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Caroline Bruce, Strategic Director of Environment, Neighbourhoods and Growth	
<b>Report Author</b>	Matthew Little, Principal Strategy Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	31 August 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance	Yes	Yes
Director, Planning and Growth	Yes	Yes
Director of Environment	Yes	Yes
Head of Sustainable Growth	Yes	Yes
Head of Culture	Yes	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		31 August 2023

<b>Item No.</b> 10	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 19 October 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
<b>Report title:</b>		Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2023-24	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		N/a	
<b>From:</b>		Scrutiny Officer	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the education and local economy scrutiny commission note the work programme as at 19 October 2023 attached as Appendix 1.
2. That the education and local economy scrutiny commission consider the addition of new items or allocation of previously identified items to specific meeting dates of the commission.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The general terms of reference of the scrutiny commissions are set out in the council's constitution (overview and scrutiny procedure rules - paragraph 5). The constitution states that:

Within their terms of reference, all scrutiny committees/commissions will:

- a) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the council's functions
- b) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the cabinet and council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time in areas covered by its terms of reference
- c) review and scrutinise the performance of the council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas
- d) question members of the cabinet and officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and

targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects and about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area

- e) assist council assembly and the cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues
  - f) make reports and recommendations to the cabinet and or council assembly arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process
  - g) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants
  - h) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working
  - i) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance
  - j) conduct research and consultation on the analysis of policy issues and possible options
  - k) question and gather evidence from any other person (with their consent)
  - l) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the scrutiny process and in the development of policy options
  - m) conclude inquiries promptly and normally within six months
4. The work programme document lists those items which have been or are to be considered in line with the commission's terms of reference.

#### **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 5. Set out in Appendix 1 (Work Programme) are the issues the education and local economy scrutiny commission is due to consider in 2023-24.
- 6. The work programme is a standing item on the education and local economy scrutiny commission agenda and enables the commission to consider, monitor and plan issues for consideration at each meeting.

7. As of 20 May 2023 the commission also now has within in its remit the cabinet portfolio elements listed below:

**Children, Education & Refugees (Councillor Jasmine Ali, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member)**

- **Early years and childcare** – including children and family centres, early years education, childminders and nurseries
- **Schools** – including school standards, inclusion, places and admissions; special education needs; free healthy school and nursery meals and fruit; healthy schools and Southwark’s Let’s Go Zero schools network
- **Further, higher and adult education** – including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), adult literacy and numeracy; and scholarships
- **Children’s social care** – including children in care and care leavers, fostering and adoption, support for children with disabilities and their families; and child safeguarding
- **Family support** – including parenting programmes, the council’s sure-start for teenagers service and support for families who are providing unpaid care for a child with a disability or health condition, including respite care
- **Youth offending services.**

**Jobs, Skills & Business (Councillor Martin Seaton)**

- **Increasing employment** - support to find a job or start a new carer; careers advice and work experience; paid internships; supporting young people and care leavers’ into employment, education and training; relationship with Jobcentre Plus; supporting businesses to engage with schools and colleges (including the Education Business Alliance)
- **Vocational Skills** - including apprenticeships, vocational training and skills centres
- **Businesses support** - for local businesses, cooperatives, social enterprises and entrepreneurs; increasing procurement from local businesses; and relationships with local business groups and Business Improvement Districts.
- **High streets** – including town centre action plans, Thriving Highstreets Fund, markets
- **Commercial property** – management, leasing and rent setting of the council’s retail and commercial units, office accommodation and related property
- **Industrial strategy** - growing industries that generate good jobs and wider value for our community, including green industries, life sciences and creative and cultural industries
- **Living Wage** - promoting the London Living Wage employers
- **Workers’ rights** - promoting good employment practices and equality and diversity at work and trade union membership.

### Young People (Councillor Portia Mwangangye)

- Increasing the voice and influence of young people
- Southwark Youth Parliament
- The council's in-house and commissioned youth services
- Positive Futures Fund
- Southwark Young Advisors.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva <a href="mailto:Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk">Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk</a>
Link: <a href="https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CI=550&amp;Year=0">https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CI=550&amp;Year=0</a>		

### APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Work Programme 2023-24

### AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer	
<b>Report Author</b>	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	11 October 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team</b>	11 October 2023	

## Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Work Programme – 2023/24

Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
19 July 2023	<p>Community Wealth Building (CWB) in Southwark</p> <p>To evaluate Southwark's strength and weaknesses regarding Community Wealth Building - according to the five pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plural ownership of the economy</li> <li>• Making financial power work for local places</li> <li>• Fair employment and just labour markets</li> <li>• Progressive procurement of goods and services</li> <li>• Socially productive use of land and property</li> </ul>	<p>Commission received a report from Southwark's Local Economy team on council's role in Community Wealth Building (CWB). Officers- Nick Wolff, Principal Strategy Officer, Chief Executive's and Danny Edwards, Head of Economy.</p>
	<p>School Amalgamations and Closures in Southwark</p>	<p>Commission received feedback/report from Freddy Vanson, District &amp; Branch Joint Secretary, National Education Union (NEU) Southwark Branch, on School Amalgamations and Closures in Southwark especially with regards to redundancies with a focus on disproportionate redundancies and disciplinary amongst Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) school staff.</p>



Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
19 October 2023	St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School (SMMS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics of the school</li> <li>• Avoiding closure and amalgamation</li> <li>• Council's role and communication</li> <li>• Suggestions to improve council strategy on falling rolls</li> </ul>	To hear from Anna Harding, Head teacher and Sonia Phippard, Chair of Governors on the plans for closure/amalgamation of the St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School.
	The Restructure of Kintore Way Nursery School and Children's Centre. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Challenges</li> <li>• Mitigation Strategies</li> <li>• Potential impact on the school's educational programs and services</li> <li>• Plans to collaborate or integrate with other educational institutions</li> <li>• Prioritising the interests of students and the community throughout this process</li> </ul>	To receive a report from Matthew Waterfall and Sasha Das Gupta from the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) on the restructure of Kintore Way Nursey School.
	Employment for young people in Southwark.	To receive a report from Patrick Doherty, Principal Strategy Officer and Danny Edwards, Head of Economy on youth employment.

Upcoming Meetings	Agenda Items yet to be scheduled	Comment
<p><b>5 December 2023</b></p> <p><b>30 January 2024</b></p> <p><b>1 May 2024</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of school closures and amalgamations on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) school staff and pupils</li> <li>➤ Male and Female members of school staff (data breakup)</li> <li>➤ LGBTQ staff</li> <li>➤ Disabled members of school staff</li> <li>➤ Senior Leadership Team in schools</li> <li>➤ School Support Staff (low-paid)</li> <li>➤ Governors</li> <li>➤ EHCP's and exclusions with regards to time taken for the process of EHCP's and schools exclusions data.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• BAME school staff disciplinary data</li> <li>• Flexible working requests in schools (job-shares, part-time)</li> <li>• Falling school rolls and its experience from interviewing parents, teachers and head teachers</li> <li>• Live relocation strategy for businesses</li> <li>• Council Process for scrutinising S-106 agreements and business community engagement.</li> <li>• Reviewing Council's approach to inclusion including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).</li> </ul>	<p>All Items agenda items to be confirmed</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southwark Stands Together (SST) role and successes, focusing on benefits to BAME school staff.</li> <li>• Update on Children’s Safeguarding Partnership in Southwark since its evolution and restructuring in 2022-2023</li> <li>• Community Wealth Building (CWB) focusing on procurement, social value and employment for young people</li> <li>• Interview with Cabinet Member Children, Education &amp; Refugees.</li> <li>• Interview with Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Keep Education Strong strategy with regards to the extent it goes to avoid closures.</li> <li>➤ Local Authority Nursery Provision</li> <li>➤ SEND provisions structures and EHCP timelines</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Policies for Southwark small and medium enterprises (SME) to help boost the local economy sector in Southwark especially planning and regeneration projects.</li> </ul>	
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## Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-24**

### AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)

**NOTE:** Original held by Scrutiny Team; all amendments/queries to Amit Alva Tel: 020 7525 0496

Name	No of copies	Name	No of copies
<p><b>Electronic Copy</b></p> <p><b>Members:</b></p> <p>Councillor Chloe Tomlinson (Chair)            Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice-Chair)            Councillor Jason Ochere            Councillor Joseph Vambe            Councillor John Batteson            Councillor Renata Hamvas            Councillor Irina Von Wiese</p> <p><b>Education Representatives</b></p> <p>Martin Brecknell            Lynette Murphy O'Dwyer</p> <p><b>Parent Governor Representatives</b></p> <p>Marcin Jagodzinski            Jonathan Clay</p> <p><b>Reserves Members</b></p> <p>Councillor Maggie Browning            Councillor Bethan Roberts            Councillor Laura Johnson            Councillor Victoria Mills            Councillor Victor Chamberlain            Councillor Sunil Chopra            Councillor Adam Hood</p>		<p>Joseph Brown – Senior Cabinet Officer</p> <p>Euan Cadzow-Webb - Liberal Democrat Group Office</p> <p><b>Dated: October 2023</b></p>	