



Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission held on Tuesday 8 April 2025 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Cassandra Brown (Chair)
Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice- Chair)
Councillor Renata Hamvas
Councillor Youcef Hassaine
Councillor Irina Von Wiese
Martin Brecknell (Co-Opted Member)
Jonathan Clay (Co-Opted Member)

**OTHER
MEMBERS
PRESENT:** Councillor John Batteson

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Renata Hamvas.

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 disclosures of interest and dispensations.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2025 are to follow.

5. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

The commission received a report from Councillor John Batteson, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs and Business and Nick Wolff, Employment and Skills Manager on the following topics

- Strong and Fair Economy, Southwark 2030, Local Economy, Youth Services, Care-Leavers, Creating opportunities such as internships and apprenticeships
- Working with partners across Southwark, opportunities for young people with SEND, better signposting for young people for jobs, Youth parliament, e-newsletters, Tik-Tok and Instagram
- Southwark Skills partnership and skills delivery plan, Council team's role in delivering jobs services, Southwark Works, specialist support, Southwark Youth New Deal.
- Bringing together all skills services providers, awareness amongst young people and have access to pathways, communication strategy, one- hub, youth news bulletins.

The commission then asked questions on the following points

- Consultation with young people on jobs
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure success of these initiatives
- Government Policies- Right to work
- Connect to work program for young people with SEND
- Unpaid internships and council's role to discourage it
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers – access to training schemes

The commission then asked further questions on the following themes

- Challenges in advertising jobs for young people
- Prioritising work experience and internships opportunities
- SEND needs in young people and jobs
- Adult unemployment and economic crisis
- Collaboration across the 32 London Boroughs
- Support employers in hiring young adults with neurodiversity and SEND needs
- Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on jobs

6. EAST STREET TRADERS

The commission then received a report from the East Street Market renovation project team on the following topics

- High Street Funding, engagement with traders, research on history of local area, strategies for improvement, clear strong brand for east street
- Securing additional funding, electric power for market, meeting for changes in the market, East Street Community, parking issues.
- Blockage of roads, access to market, ineffective market management, one point of contact needed, incentive for bringing more footfall in market
- Separate areas for food stall sitting area, business hub and community area for IT facilities, bringing together shop owners and street traders, upskilling and collaboration.
- Attracting new young traders, new broadband for market, apps for delivery services, compelling vision for East Street Market, aim for destination market
- Report driven by thriving high streets and its funding, project management of deliverables, further Community Infrastructure Levy funding for East Street
- Professional and unified market, health and safety issues, waste management issues, lighting and wi-fi, nursery parks within the strategy, solar panels, power for permanent barrows, recycling waste management like cardboard compactors.
- Refrigeration, murals, workspace for young entrepreneurs, artists and traders, structure for governance and market management, budgetary considerations and feasibility studies.

The commission then asked questions on the following points

- Volunteer led market project team – 1200 unpaid hours
- Parking analysis and increase in footfall
- Delivering to homes
- Night markets over summer months
- Parking machines and 2-hour parking for market
- Long term vision for East Street; issues with changing the character of the market due to food hubs
- Supporting traders in pricing within the strategy
- East street market vision- leading independent sustainable market in London.

The commission noted the recommendations in the report.

7. SOUTHWARK SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (SSCP)

The commission then received a report from Alasdair Smith, Director, Children & Families on Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) covering the following topics

- Safeguarding Children 2023 statutory guidance, role of Police Health Service and Council, Structure of partnership- sub groups, Quality and

effectiveness, Local Children Safeguarding, Learning Network and Multi Agency Child Exploitation network (MACE)

- Major Changes- Children's well-being and schools bill in parliament, scrutiny of safe-guarding work, core child protection activity, reduction of children in child protection plan
- High level of agency workers, Health, Social Care and Police's role, serious youth violence, SSCP a self-critical system, internal home environment and external factors in community
- Neglect strategy- multi agency response to neglect due to pandemic and cost of living crisis, helping families get help earlier, child safeguarding reviews
- Government push for change in responding to families, multiagency service teams joint working, arrangements for targeted early help, online harm.

The commission then asked questions on the following points

- Priorities as the Chair of SSCP - transformation and additional roles
- Recent report on abuse and neglect in nursery settings and child minders
- Regular inspections of child minders and nurseries, mental, physical and psychological abuse

8. DRAFT SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORT

The commission discussed recommendations and agreed to re-order the sequence to bring similar topics together especially recommendation 8 and 11.

The commission also discussed making recommendations more specific and to combine some of the recommendations to make it more succinct.

9. WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25

The commission noted the work programme for the 2024-25 year.

The commission proposed discussing impact of school closures, impact on mainstream schools with SEND and the increase in the number of special schools in the upcoming council year 2025-26.

Meeting ended at 9:04 pm

CHAIR:

DATED: