

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

Tuesday 4 February 2025

7.00 pm

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

Membership

Councillor Cassandra Brown (Chair)
Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sunil Chopra
Councillor Renata Hamvas
Councillor Jon Hartley
Councillor Youcef Hassaine
Councillor Irina Von Wiese
Martin Brecknell (Co-opted Member)
Jonathan Clay (Co-opted Member)
Marcin Jagodzinski (Co-opted Member)

Reserves

Councillor Gavin Edwards
Councillor Ketzia Harper
Councillor Sunny Lambe
Councillor Jason Ochere
Councillor Victor Chamberlain
Councillor Adam Hood

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Access to information

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Contact

Amit Alva on email: amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk

Members of the committee are summoned to attend this meeting

Althea Loderick

Chief Executive

Date: 27 January 2025



Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

Tuesday 4 February 2025

7.00 pm

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

Order of Business

Item No.	Title	Page No.
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PART A OPEN BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

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

In special circumstances, an item of business may be added to an agenda within five clear working days of the meeting.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

Members to declare any interests and dispensations in respect of any item of business to be considered at this meeting.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2024. *(To follow)*

5. WORKING LINKS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND HEALTH - SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

1 - 5

To receive a report from Russell Jones, Assistant Director – (Dual Role) Integrated Commissioning Southwark Council and South-East London, Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) on Working links between Education and Health - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

6.	EHCP ASSESSMENT PROCESSES - CHAIR'S FEEDBACK	
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Chair's feedback from the meeting with officers (SEND) on EHCP Assessment Processes.

7.	CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS - EDUCATION AND LOCAL ECONOMY 2023-24	6 - 33
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To note the Cabinet response to scrutiny recommendations from Education and Local Economy 2023-24

- School Amalgamations and Closures
- Community Wealth Building and Youth Employment

8.	WORK PROGRAMME 2024 - 2025	34 - 41
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To consider the work programme for the 2024-2025 year.

Date: 27 January 2025

Meeting Name:	Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
Date:	4 February 2025
Report title:	Briefing – working links between Education and Health – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/A
From:	Russell Jones, Assistant Director – Integrated Commissioning – Southwark Council and South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB)

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission note this report, on working links between Education and Health in SEND, for information.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Since 2018, the proportion of children and young people with a special educational need (SEN) in Southwark has been increasing. Alongside this, the proportion of children with an educational, health and care plan (EHCP) has also increased.
3. Supporting children and young people with SEND to have the best start in life requires effective joint working between education, health, and care partners. The legal framework underpinning this is the SEND Code of Practice. In Southwark, the SEND Strategic Partnership governance arrangements supports joint working locally.
4. The Council, the NHS, and schools deliver and commission a range of education, health, and care services for children and young people with SEND – including a mixture of universal, targeted, and specialist services. Universal services meet the majority of children and young people's needs (including those with SEND), with a smaller number of children and young people supported by targeted and specialist provision.
5. Council and NHS leaders are committed to developing integration for the benefit of Southwark's communities. In line with this, in April 2024 the Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) created the Integrated Commissioning Unit. The Integrated Commissioning Unit is responsible for SEND strategic commissioning.
6. Community health services for children and young people in Southwark are primarily commissioned from the Evalina at Guy's and St Thomas' (GSTT) NHS Foundation Trust and from South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust. Alongside this, the Council and the ICB also commission a small number of non-NHS community health services – for example the Nest open access mental health service.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Health/Education – operational working links

7. A range of health services work in partnership with schools and colleges to support children and young people with SEND – including community paediatrics, complex needs school nursing, children's community nursing, speech and language therapy (SLT), occupational therapy (OT), physiotherapy, Continuing Healthcare (CHC), health visiting, and mental health services.
8. Please see below a summary of strengths and areas for development in current education/health working links.

Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health services, including community paediatrics and nursing services, deliver support (such as clinics, medicals, assessments, interventions, and tailored support planning) in special school settings. Being on-site enables development of good working relationships, timely interventions, and holistic support for children and young people, and minimises loss of education time. • Health services offer training in education settings, responsive to needs. For example, community nursing services have offered training around managing medical devices, the complex needs school nursing team have provided training on health support to build school staff confidence, and the physiotherapy team offers training on moving and handling. • There is a range of mental health support available for children and young people in and outside of school, including the Nest open access provision, the Schools Engagement Team, and Mental Health in Schools Teams. • There is dedicated physiotherapy support in place for special schools and a flexible offer for mainstream provision. • Health services have undertaken a range of work to improve the experience of transitions between children's and adult services – including running transition clinics and in 2024 hosting the first Transitions Information Event for all special schools in Southwark and Lambeth. • Education and health are appropriately represented at joint decision making panels/forums – for example the ICB's Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) is a core member of the weekly SEND Panel, and there is a senior Education representative on the CHC Panel. • Health services have worked with Education colleagues to trial innovation projects to improve services – for example rolling out the WellComm screening assessment to roll out to support earlier identification and intervention for speech and language needs. • Southwark benefit from a committed and skilled health workforce.

Areas for development

- Waiting times for some services, in particular neurodevelopmental disorder assessment and mental health services, are longer than is optimal. While this is a challenge for systems nationally local leaders are working to address this issue via the Local Care Partnership. In the interim, work has been undertaken to support children, young people, and their loved ones to 'wait well' – including the development of a virtual waiting room. Work has also been undertaken to improve coordination between NHS and non-NHS services to help people access the right support, appropriate to their needs, as quickly as possible – this remains ongoing.
- Work is currently underway, via a joint working group, to improve the timeliness of and input to the EHCP process from health partners.
- Transitions between children's and adult services can be challenging for children, young people, and their families. To address this services have undertaken a range of improvement initiatives – see Strengths section overleaf.
- Although Southwark benefits from a committed and skilled health workforce, the borough is affected by national health and care workforce issues which in turn impacts on capacity.
- There is currently variation in the commissioning arrangements for different services and some services are working to historic specifications meaning there is not always a consistent offer for children and young people. Officers are seeking to address this through the development of joint commissioning arrangements and through the work of a joint review group between Commissioning and GSTT.

Health/Education – strategic working links

9. Southwark's governance arrangements for SEND have been through a transition over the last 12 months. The re-established SEND and Inclusion Strategic Partnership Board reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The SEND Quality and Improvement Board is the group responsible for driving the change across the system and reports to the SEND Strategic Partnership Board.
10. Health and Education partners have been active participants in the development of the refreshed governance arrangements – including representatives from the Council's Education services, the Integrated Commissioning unit, the ICB Partnerships team, school and college leaders, and clinical leaders from GSTT and SLAM.
11. The re-establishment of these governance arrangements is a positive development and leaders will continue to embed and develop these arrangements over the coming year – including strengthening partnership performance oversight to drive change.
12. Leaders will also work over the coming year to strengthen strategic joint

commissioning arrangements across the Council and the ICB – including developing SEND joint commissioning principles and strategy.

13. Beyond Southwark, the ICB's central SEND team have instigated SEND Forums to share best practice across health, care, and education in the six SEL boroughs.

Policy framework implications

14. The Children and Families Act (2014) and associated SEND Code of Practice sets out the statutory responsibilities of the Council, NHS, and education partners as relates to children and young people with SEND.
15. Other applicable legislation includes the Human Rights Act (1998), the Children's Acts (1989, 2004), and the Equalities Act (2010).

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

Community Impact Statement

16. This report relates to services which aim to promote inclusion and participation within the community for children and young people with SEND.
17. There are no specific impacts arising as a result of this report.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

18. This report relates to services supporting children and young people with a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act (2010).
19. In Southwark, there is a strong correlation between those with highest levels of SEND and socio-economic disadvantage according to the 2022 Southwark JSNA,¹ and the prevalence of SEND within looked after children is increasing.
20. There are no specific impacts arising as a result of this report.

Health impact statement

21. Services referenced in this report aim to support positive health outcomes for children and young people with SEND through partnership working.
22. There are no specific impacts arising as a result of this report.

Further guidance

23. N/A

Climate change implications

¹ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Southwark Council (2022)

24. There are no specific impacts arising as a result of this report.

Resource implications

25. There are no specific impacts arising as a result of this report.

Consultation

26. This report was developed with clinical leaders from GSTT, officers from the Integrated Commissioning Team, and the Designated Clinical Officer.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
N/A	N/A	N/A

APPENDICES

No.	Title
N/A	N/A

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Claire Belgard, Acting Director of Integrated Commissioning – Southwark Council and SEL ICB		
Report Author	Russell Jones, Assistant Director – Integrated Commissioning – Southwark Council and SEL ICB		
Version	Final		
Dated	24 January 2025		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance		No	No
Strategic Director, Finance		No	No
Acting Director of Integrated Commissioning		Yes	No
Director of Partnership Delivery and Sustainability / Health SEND SRO (Southwark)		Yes	No
Assistant Director – SEND		Yes	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			27 January 2025

Meeting Name:	Cabinet
Date:	15 October 2024
Report title:	Response to the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission - School amalgamations and closures
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Jasmine Ali Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Refugees
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	Not Applicable

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR JASMINE ALI, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND REFUGEES

The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission has submitted a timely report to Cabinet on the issue of School Amalgamation and Closure. We thank the Commission for their detailed work and recommendations.

Falling school rolls have had a huge impact on London councils, not least here in Southwark. Cabinet and indeed the Commission will note that Southwark has been recognised as a beacon for our *Keeping Education Strong* strategy, which brought the council and local schools together to find a plan to deal with the crisis.

The cause of falling numbers of children in our schools is a combination of factors, from Brexit, declining birthrates, the cost-of-living crisis and the sharp rise in rents and house prices.

The Commission's recommendations have been carefully considered by our education department and legal team. Here is a short summary of our response.

Recommendations one and two

These call on Cabinet to act in accordance with the Southwark Stands Together policy and investigate employment practice and a suggested disparity in the treatment of Global Ethnic Majority staff members in schools. They propose we review the hiring policy in schools in an effort to increase and encourage the recruitment, training and career progression of Global Ethnic Majority staff. We cannot fully accept these recommendations. We can only partially accept them for our grant-maintained schools; we are unable to accept this for academies, free schools or private schools as by law they have their own Human Resource Services.

Our education team will continue its work with grant-maintained schools on good employment practice and will share best practice between our schools and other schools in the borough.

Recommendation three

This calls for Cabinet to review hiring policy to increase and encourage the recruitment, training and career progression of Global Ethnic Majority staff in schools. As above we cannot legally accept this recommendation.

We will continue to deliver training programmes designed to equip those involved with the recruitment processes within grant-maintained schools, with the training, skills and knowledge to recognise and mitigate unconscious bias, in the spirit of our own equalities practice and the Southwark Stands Together commitment.

Recommendation four

This calls on the council to review its communications with schools that may be impacted with amalgamation or closure.

We fully accept this recommendation.

I can assure the commission that our approach to early identification of concerns about falling pupil rolls and ongoing communication with schools at risk of closure and amalgamations has been reviewed. Steps have already been taken to address lessons learned from previous delivery and the discussions of the Education & Local Economy Scrutiny Commission. Further work will be undertaken to embed a more robust and consistent approach.

Recommendation five

This calls on cabinet to review nursery budgets with financial deficit that impact on families with special education needs and disabilities.

We can accept this recommendation.

I am happy to say that we work collaboratively with nurseries. The council has reviewed all maintained nursery budgets and those with financial deficits have been proactively approached to understand what support can be put in place to ensure they can take necessary steps to address their budgetary issues.

Recommendation six

This asks Cabinet to explore all possible options on supporting all LA maintained nurseries, ensuring they can maintain their provision and stay open, especially but not limited to Kintore Way nursery going forward.

We accept this recommendation.

The council is actively working to support maintained nursery schools with their budget issues through the licensed deficit framework within the council Scheme for Financing Schools, and is committed to working with governing bodies to improve their long-term sustainability. The Council has successfully worked with Kintore Way and The Grove Nursery Federation to develop a pilot early years resource base provision across their nursery sites, which went live in September 24.

The council has worked with Schools Forum to significantly increase the funding allocated to the Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund to support children with additional needs who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), many of whom attend nursery schools.

Recommendation seven

This calls for an in-depth review of the processes and timelines for the Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund and EHCP.

This recommendation is accepted.

A comprehensive programme of activity to review all our Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund and EHCP processes has been launched, and forms the core of the Council's SEND Improvement Programme which is overseen by the newly re-established SEND and Inclusion Strategic Partnership Board.

Recommendation eight

This calls for the council to continue to provide strategic leadership and effective governance within its current processes for amalgamation of schools.

This recommendation is accepted.

Dedicated project resources have been assigned to ensure a more seamless single point of contact approach for schools being supported through closure or amalgamation processes. This will ensure more timely delivery of the statutory processes, and effective and consistent communications with parents and the local community. More robust programme oversight has been established to ensure that statutory timescales are met.

The Council's Education Service will ensure all previous and future activity delivered under the Keeping Education Strong strategy, including closures, place reductions and amalgamations, will be subject to a lessons learned review and that the first of these will be completed before the end of the municipal year.

The council will continue to work in partnership with schools facing difficulty to ensure they are supported through transitions and that this work fully recognises the specific needs and impacts on individual communities, through our equalities framework.

Conclusion

While not all the recommendations can be accepted, on balance I believe the commission and cabinet can agree that we are in a better position than we were when dealing with the fallout of falling school rolls. We would like to thank the Commission for their work and our education team for their detailed response. We are all clearly committed to protecting our schools from the realities of falling school rolls where school places exceed demand. At the same time we continue to support our schools' staff, pupils and families working together to keep education strong in Southwark.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation for the Cabinet

1. That the Cabinet approve the response to the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report and recommendations on School Amalgamations and Closures of 22 July 2024, as set out in paragraphs 8 to 49 of this report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2. This report sets out responses to the recommendations set out in the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report and recommendations on School Amalgamations and Closures of 22 July 2024.
3. The commission's recommendations impact on various departments across the council. All relevant service areas have contributed to the response set out in this report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

4. None - The council's constitution requires that a response to scrutiny recommendations is made to cabinet within two months.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Report – School Amalgamations and Closures, was received by Cabinet on 22 July 2024.
6. The report made eight recommendations. Having considered the recommendations, the Council's response is set out in this report.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Recommendation 1

7. That the cabinet in accordance with the council's commitment to tackle racial inequality and the 'Southwark Stands Together' initiative, recognises the importance of Global Ethnic Majority representation throughout the school workforce, and investigate disparities relating to HR processes especially in redundancies and retention. And also that the Cabinet develop a long term plan to address disparities in redundancies by monitoring diversity and identifying trends over time, with actions beginning within the first quarter of the new municipal year 2024-2025 as below
 - Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are used to monitor over time, identifying trends in redundancy percentages of staff with protected characteristics across the school workforce.
 - Acknowledge and value the contributions of school support staff who are Global Majority and are in higher proportions in the school workforce and are deeply embedded in school communities

- Work with schools, academies and local trade unions, to raise awareness of and tackle disparities in redundancies
- Monitor retention of Global Majority staff across the school workforce, identifying any emerging trends and also respond to concerns.

Response to recommendation 1 - Accepted

8. This recommendation is accepted for the council maintained school workforce. It is not possible to accept this recommendation for academy and private schools as we have no access to their data, we are not their employer, and they do not use council Schools Human Resources Services.
9. The council will embed the investigation of disparities in human resource processes by routinely undertaking an equalities impact analysis of the statutory annual school workforce return that it coordinates in November each year for its maintained schools. This will deepen understanding of trends in redundancies of staff with protected characteristics across the workforce. The council's Education Services' will use this analysis in their engagement with council maintained schools and trade unions to ensure key messages are understood across the school system, and this is reinforced with updated best practice guidance and standards information provided by the local authority.
10. The Council will continue to advise and support its maintained schools to complete an Equality Impact Assessment as part of any organisational change process. The use of the Equality Impact Assessment is an essential tool in enabling a school to identify any disparities and for the school governing body to take appropriate action.
11. The Council will continue to work in close partnership with its maintained schools to influence and address any disparities in redundancies and retention. School governing bodies will continue to be advised they should consider the equalities make up of their staff on an annual basis and have regard to equality considerations within staff retention and any redundancy processes.
12. For matters of policy and procedure in all schools the school governing body is the responsible authority with the council acting only in the role of modelling best practice, influencing and offering advice and guidance.

Recommendation 2

13. That the Cabinet to put together a long term plan to address disparities in disciplinary, with actions beginning within the first quarter of the new municipal year 2024-2025 as below
 - Ensure the diversity of governance panels and governance boards involved in disciplinary cases including informal cases, with equal and fair representation of the demographic of school staff including pupils and school support staff
 - Work with schools and academies, as well as local trade unions, to raise awareness of and tackle disparities in disciplinary.

Response to recommendation 2 - Accepted

14. This recommendation is accepted for the council maintained school workforce. It is not possible to accept this recommendation for academy and private schools as we have no access to their data, are not their employer, and they do not use council Schools Human Resources Services.
15. The council will continue to work with the council maintained schools to raise awareness of, and tackle, disparities in disciplinary action. Council maintained schools, and the council teams that support them, acknowledge the critical importance of ensuring that disciplinary processes are fair, transparent and equitable for all staff. Formal disciplinary hearings are conducted by individual school governing body panels with all decisions relating to them made by school governors, not by the council.
16. The council's Schools' Human Resources and School Governor Services will continue to work in close partnership with council maintained schools to influence and provide advice and guidance to increase board diversity and promote the importance of having school governing bodies and disciplinary panels that reflect the communities they serve. The council can only influence and advise as it has no legal authority to do more, save in exceptional circumstances.
17. The council's School Governor Services will continue to work closely with council maintained school governing bodies to support diverse school governing board recruitment and actively promotes the Inclusive Governance Campaign.
18. The council's Schools' Human Resources and Legal Services will continue to provide targeted training to governors, equipping them with the skills to conduct formal disciplinary hearings with fairness and objectivity.

Recommendation 3

19. That the Cabinet, in accordance with the council's commitment to tackle racial inequality and the 'Southwark Stands Together' initiative, review the hiring policy in schools in an effort to increase and encourage the recruitment, training and career progression of Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) members of staff, in all levels of school staff, support staff, teaching staff, teaching assistants, Headteachers, Senior Leadership Teams and managers within the 2024-2025 municipal year.

Response to recommendation 3 - Not Accepted

20. This recommendation is not accepted. The Council has no legal authority to review and amend hiring policy in schools, this responsibility sits with the individual school governing bodies for all schools.
21. The council's Schools' Human Resources and School Governor services will continue to support council maintained schools to be more inclusive and equitable. This includes promoting the use of guidelines on forming diverse

and inclusive recruitment panels which have been developed to help governing bodies ensure that such panels reflect a wide range of perspectives and experiences. This approach helps to minimise biases and promotes fair decision-making throughout the hiring process.

22. The council will continue to deliver training programmes designed to equip those involved in the recruitment process within council maintained schools, with the skills and knowledge necessary to recognise and mitigate biases. These programmes are essential in fostering a more equitable recruitment environment, ensuring that all candidates—particularly those from Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) backgrounds—have equal opportunities to succeed. These approaches and training opportunities will continue to be rolled out through the academic year 2024/25 and developed in partnership with our schools community.

Recommendation 4

23. That the Cabinet immediately review its communication process with schools at risk of closures and amalgamations to ensure,
 - Tracking of pupil numbers and the evolution within the KES strategy, with regards to schools at risk of closure/amalgamations is clearly visible to schools on an ongoing basis. That the KES strategy evolves and can respond to the reality in the ground in schools.
 - Early review and mitigation measures for budgetary deficit such as nursery initiatives and resource based provisions, with a commitment to proactively working with nurseries to prevent closures.
 - Clear channels of communication with schools on budget deficits as per the Keeping Education Strong strategy and also that schools receive timely responses from the council on any issues, and that the council engages and works with schools and parents when concerns are raised, to find the best possible solutions.

Response to recommendation 4 - Accepted

24. This recommendation is accepted.
25. The approach to early identification of concerns about falling pupil rolls and ongoing communication with schools at risk of closure and amalgamations has been reviewed. Steps have already been taken to address lessons learnt and the discussions of the Education & Local Economy Scrutiny Commission. Further work will be undertaken to embed this.
26. The Council will continue to track pupil numbers on a termly basis through Department for Education school census returns that all schools complete, and through the council's admissions process its maintained schools via which places are allocated to new pupils. It is recognised that the numbers of pupils in any school may fluctuate up or down over the school year. This will be picked up through this process ensuring that officers are able to use the latest intelligence to understand the position with pupil numbers in each school. The

findings of this activity are now routinely shared with schools so that trends and trajectories of concern are identified earlier, and future planning discussions can commence promptly.

27. The council has a rigorous schools in financial deficit process through which council maintained schools are challenged and supported to manage budget deficits. Where possible the council will explore opportunities for the development of additional provision, such as nursery or resource based provision, to support improvements in a school's financial position. This is assessed on a case by case basis, starting with whether the provision is needed and also considering its impact on finances. Extending services also comes with additional costs so the net effect on the school may not always be positive, but these opportunities are and will be explored in all instances.
28. Positive changes have been made to our proactive communications approach with schools including a new approach to undertaking an annual risk assessment of all council maintained primary schools taking into consideration pupil numbers, finance and education standards. The outcome of the risk assessment is communicated to schools, and is followed up with advice and support from school advisors and other officers.
29. Where schools are identified for further action from the annual risk assessments the Children's Services division is creating additional and dedicated project and communications capacity to ensure single responsible individuals are holding the continuing activity including communications and engagement with schools during these processes. This also includes working alongside school leaders and governing bodies to ensure parents are properly and sensitively engaged throughout any proposed change process.

Recommendation 5

30. That the Cabinet review nursery budgets with financial deficits and aim to reduce the impact on the nurseries' and its SEND provisions, whilst also ensuring the additional DfE funding is equitable and funding criteria's are established among nurseries in need; and also to proactively approach nurseries with budgetary deficits within the within the first quarter of the new municipal year 2024-2025.

Response to recommendation 5 - Accepted

31. This recommendation is accepted.
32. The council has reviewed all maintained nursery budgets and those with financial deficits have been proactively approached to understand what support can be put in place to ensure they can take necessary steps to address their budgetary issues.
33. The funding framework for maintained nursery schools is set by government nationally through the early years funding formula and the council's Finance Department ensures all nursery schools are paid according to this set formula.

34. A comprehensive programme of work is being undertaken to improve the earlier identification of children with additional needs in nursery and before they enter nursery, through joint work with NHS services. This will support nursery schools to apply for additional funding earlier where necessary, and provided through the local Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund (SENDIF) or Education, Health and Care Plans as appropriate.
35. SENDIF funding criteria has been recently reviewed and designed collaboratively with nursery schools and providers, and this has included developing new digital mechanisms in order to streamline applications processes and ensure funding can be requested and released in a more timely fashion. The budget available for this early years additional funding has also been increased by over 150% for the current academic year.

Recommendation 6

36. That the Cabinet explore all possible options with regards to supporting all LA maintained nurseries and its provisions ensuring they can maintain their provision and stay open, especially but not limited to Kintore Way (KW) nursery going forward
 - Early years SEND funding (EHCP) for children under 5 in nurseries
 - Pilot programme of Resource Based Provision proposed for 3 posts of staff supporting 20 SEND children in a designated area of the nursery
 - Clearly devise a long term plan for reducing the budget deficit ensuring long term financial sustainability
 - That measures such as the ones listed above are considered swiftly if any nursery is at risk of having to reduce provision or close.

Response to recommendation 6 - Accepted

37. This recommendation is accepted.
38. The council will explore all viable options to support council maintained nurseries. It is recognised that the funding framework for maintained nursery schools is set nationally through the early years funding formula and associated guidance which requires all settings to be funded on an hourly rate based on numbers of children attending. Some supplementary funding for nursery schools is provided through this formula but the issue of whether this is sufficient to cover their higher operating costs of council maintained nurseries in the longer term is a nationally recognised challenge. Steps have however been taken, as described in the response to recommendation 5, to ensure more funding is available for under 5s provision and that this is more easily available when needed.
39. The council is actively working to support maintained nursery schools with their budget issues through the licensed deficit framework within the council Scheme for Financing Schools and is committed to working with governing bodies to improve their long term sustainability.

40. Also as noted in the response to recommendation 5, the council has worked with Southwark Schools Forum to significantly increase the funding allocated to the Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund to support children with additional needs who do not have an EHCP, many of whom attend nursery schools.

Recommendation 7

41. That the Cabinet commission officers to do an in-depth review of the processes and timelines for SENDIF and EHCP, with an aim to investigate and mitigate the factors causing backlogs and long waiting times and also aim to complete this by May 2025.

Response to recommendation 7 - Accepted

42. This recommendation is accepted.
43. A comprehensive programme of activity to review all our Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund (SENDIF) and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) processes has been launched and forms the core of the Council's SEND Improvement Programme which is overseen by our SEND and Inclusion Strategic Partnership Board.
44. SENDIF funding processes have been reviewed and a new streamlined digitally enabled application process is due to be launched in the coming months.
45. The Council has invested significant funds into increasing capacity in the EHCP system to mitigate caseload issues impacting on timeliness. Over the last 6-months there has been a significant increase in the timeliness of these processes. The council remains ambitious to deliver a good service to all residents and will continue to invest in improving performance.

Recommendation 8

46. That the Council continue to provide strategic leadership and effective governance within its current processes for amalgamation of schools, factoring in some key aspects.
- Demographics of both the schools with regards to diversity, faith and culture
 - Adhering to amalgamation process timeline of 23 weeks
 - Local Authority support and investment
 - Effective communication with parents in explaining stages of the amalgamation process.
 - That the council assign resources to ensure schools are given sufficient support to oversee amalgamations (for example a project manager/single point of contact with overall responsibility)

- In cases of amalgamations, that the council has a plan to ensure the new school is supported in giving its staff secure contracts for the year ahead; given that, a merged school is new/expanded it will not have census data from the previous year to accurately reflect expected pupil numbers
- That the council has a process for formally reviewing all amalgamations that have taken place and ensure all lessons are learnt and where there are positive stories, these are celebrated and shared.
- That the enormous amount of work required by the school leadership and staff for a successful amalgamation is recognised and celebrated through offering the school support for positive news coverage through a media “event”, additional Inset days for staff, special awards for staff and honoraria payments, special awards for children or the school as whole.

Response to recommendation 8 - Accepted

47. This recommendation is accepted.

Policy framework implications

48. There are no additional policy framework implications linked to these recommendations.
49. The service remains committed to the council’s priorities, values and commitments to serve Southwark.

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

Community impact statement

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

Health impact statement

50. There are no additional community, equalities or health impacts associated with the recommendation or the response to these recommendations. However, in delivering the responses in general the Council will seek to continue to use its position of influence to deliver increasingly positive and equitable outcomes for global ethnic majority, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
51. The recommendations and response also recognise the need for closer and more consistent engagement with communities where there are potential impacts on the cohesion of those communities due to difficult decisions made in relation to the schools and their sustainability. The response to these recommendations will promote more transparency and quality of engagement on these issues to support communities through any future potential changes.

Climate change implications

52. There are no specific climate change implications over and above recommendations and responses to these recommendations.

Resource implications

53. There are no additional resource implications not already described in the above recommendations and responses to these recommendations.

Legal

54. Community schools operate under a distinctive governance structure, with a dual employer system comprised of the governing board and the council. In line with its statutory duty, the council delegates the financial responsibilities to the governing board, granting them the authority to make crucial employer decisions. This includes the appointment of staff, including the headteacher.
55. Most governing boards delegate staffing decisions to the headteacher. Therefore, the governing board, or as may be delegated by them, the headteacher, assumes responsibility for a spectrum of decisions, ranging from day-to-day management to overarching strategic choices.
56. The council has a range of statutory employer functions it performs. For example it confirms the appointment and dismissal of staff, following the governing board's decision, but plays no other part in that decision making process. The local authority also sets the terms and conditions for which staff employed in these schools are appointed on.
57. In summary, the governing board of each council maintained community school is legally responsible and accountable for staffing decisions. These are not the responsibility of the council. The council is an arm's length employer in those schools where it is also legally the employer and does not become involved in day-to-day operational decisions.
58. Voluntary aided schools are often, but not always, church or faith schools. Although these schools are maintained and receive funding through the local authority, the local authority has no employer responsibilities. Voluntary aided schools have greater autonomy than other maintained schools in terms of admissions, employment of staff and religious education. The Diocese is the responsible body for voluntary aided schools.
59. Academy schools are funded directly by the Department for Education (DfE) and operate independently of the council. The council does not have any statutory employer responsibilities.

Consultation

60. The responses to the recommendations of the scrutiny committee are drawn from a number of ongoing improvement activities which have and

continue to be undertaken in partnership, consultation, co-design and co-production with relevant and affected groups. Including for example the Southwark Independent Voice – Parent Carer Forum for children with special educational needs and disabilities, workshops and surveys open to all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their parents and carers; and school leaders and the school workforce.

Other officers

61. There are none.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet – 6 December 2022 Closure of St Francis Cabrini Primary School https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7760	Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654
December 2022 – Individual Decision Maker decision Approval to consult on the proposed closure of Townsend Primary School from 31 August 2023 https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7780	Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654
March 2023 – Individual Decision Maker decision Approval of Publication of Closure Proposals for Townsend Primary https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7834	Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654
Cabinet – 13 June 2023 Closure of Townsend Primary School https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7881	Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet – 6 March 2024 Closure of Ann Bernadt Nursery School https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=8044	Children and Families Directorate, 4th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654
March 2024 – Individual Decision Maker decision Comber Grove Primary School - publication of closure proposals https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=8055	Children and Families Directorate, 4th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654
Cabinet – 17 June 2024 Closure of Comber Grove Primary School https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=8111	Children and Families Directorate, 4th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654
Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-for-public-authorities	Children and Families Directorate, 4th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654
Cabinet 22 July 2024 Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Review of School Amalgamations and Closures https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s121633/Report%20Education%20and%20Local%20Economy%20Scrutiny%20Commission%20School%20Amalgamations%20and%20Closures.pdf	Children and Families Directorate, 4th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet 22 July 2024 Southwark 2030 https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s121640/Appendix%201%20-%20Southwark%202030%20strategy.pdf	Children and Families Directorate, 4th Floor, Children and Adult Services, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH	Alasdair Smith 020 7525 0654

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Jasmine Ali Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Refugees		
Lead Officer	David Quirke-Thornton Strategic Director of Children and Adult Services		
Report Authors	Michael Crowe Strategic Programme Lead Alasdair Smith Director of Children Service for the Children and Families Directorate		
Version	Draft		
Dated	3 October 2024		
Key Decision?	Yes		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance		No	No
Strategic Director, Resources		No	No
Cabinet Member		Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			4 October 2024

Meeting Name:	Cabinet
Date:	15 October 2024
Report title:	Response to Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Community Wealth Building and Youth Employment
Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Batteson, Climate Emergency, Jobs and Business
Ward(s) or groups affected:	All
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/a

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR JOHN BATTESON, CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE EMERGENCY, JOBS AND BUSINESS

We welcome the recommendations made by the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission which stem across different strands of work. There is much work already underway to make sure the council is delivering social value and supporting people into work, especially young people given the hurdles they face starting their careers. East Street Market has been on this commissions work plan for a couple of years now and we are committed to improving it so those who live locally and others from further afield see it as a desirable place to visit, spend time and shop which will ultimately support the economic enhancement of traders.

We recognise the importance of creating a social value framework, not just to ensure the council obtains value for money, but also maximising the benefits for residents and businesses. This social value function has already been established and is currently working on a whole council approach which connects the Southwark 2030 goals with Council Delivery Plan commitments.

Our careers support offers young people the opportunity to develop invaluable employability skills while at school. This is vital for those who may not have existing networks to rely on who can help open opportunities for them later in life. Our internship programme then provides penultimate year university students and graduates with the chance to start their careers with good employers.

Southwark Works, the council's flagship employment support programme, continues to support residents at different stages of their career development. We know how important the employer engagement side of the service is so local people can not only access advice and guidance but then use it as a stepping stone into employment with Southwark based businesses and organisations. The recently established Employer Engagement and Relationship Management Service will identify more work placement and entry

level jobs for people to access. Having celebrated the twentieth anniversary of Southwark Works in July where we heard from many who have benefited from the service, we know how important it is to continue promoting it so more people across our borough access the excellent support on offer.

I am proud of the work already taking place and look forward to delivering more over the coming weeks, months and years ahead to ensure there is equal access to opportunity and that local people benefit from living and working in such a diverse and vibrant borough.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the cabinet approves the response to the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission recommendations on community wealth building and youth employment, as set out in paragraphs 7 to 62.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2. This report sets out responses to the recommendations set out in the Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Community Wealth Building and Youth Employment.
3. The commission's recommendations impact on various departments of the council. As such, relevant service areas have contributed to the response set out in this report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

4. None - The council's constitution requires that a response to scrutiny recommendations is made to cabinet within two months.

POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

5.

Scrutiny commission recommendation	Key Activity	Target completion date
1	Establish a Southwark Social Value Framework	January 2025
2	Deliver Southwark's Paid Internship Programme over municipal year 2024-25	Contracted for delivery up to August 2026
3	Develop a more joined-up approach to the delivery of careers information, advice and guidance within our schools and colleges, particularly for young people at greater risk of becoming NEET	Ongoing

Scrutiny commission recommendation	Key Activity	Target completion date
4	Engage partner organisations to create more opportunities for Southwark residents within the Southwark 2030 delivery plan. Review viability of ringfencing job opportunities for Southwark residents.	Ongoing
5	Deliver Southwark Works initiatives to support residents into better work over municipal year 2024-25	Contracted for delivery up to June 2025
6	Deliver Wi-Fi and new gazebos under capital programme to improve East Street Market over municipal year 2024-25	March 2025

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report – Community Wealth Building and Youth Employment, was received by cabinet on 22 July 2024 (agenda item 29). Six recommendations were made. This report sets out a response to each recommendation.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- Recommendation 1** – That the Cabinet commission officers to research into the methodology (knowledge base) for creating a central social value framework and policies; which would aim to drive the procurement of social value contracts; and also that the Cabinet aim to initiate this work within the municipal year 2024-2025.

Response to Recommendation 1

- Cabinet accepts the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission. Work on developing a social value framework is in progress.
- In line with the recommendation from the Scrutiny Commission, the council has established a social value function within the Planning and Growth department of the council. This new team will lead on the delivery of a two-year pilot to develop and trial a whole-council approach to social value. This includes the development of a central social value framework informed an in-depth knowledge base drawn from research into Southwark's current practices, local needs and good practice across the UK. The framework will be the golden thread which connects the Southwark 2030 goals and the Council Delivery Plan to the achievement of social value from commissioning, procurement and contract management practices.
- A comprehensive, whole-council approach to delivering social value will benefit

both the council and its suppliers. For the council, it will ensure suppliers deliver value for money, whilst maximising the potential to benefit residents and businesses. For suppliers, it provides an opportunity to differentiate themselves from competitors, build stronger relationships with the council, and demonstrate a real and measureable commitment to social responsibility. An effective approach to social value will also secure benefits for Southwark's communities over and above that of existing planning policy frameworks (CIL and S106) to create positive and lasting impact.

11. Established in February 2024, the social value team has set out a structured approach to developing the framework.
12. As part of the initial discovery stage, research has been undertaken to identify key areas of challenge and make initial recommendations for the programme and framework.
13. These findings will be used to draft a social value framework which will govern the council's approach to securing meaningful social value contributions from suppliers by setting out a methodology to be used by commissioners. It will articulate priorities and objectives, and the intention to work collaboratively to drive social value outcomes.
14. The framework will be accompanied by an action plan outlining the steps to be taken over two years to embed the framework across the whole council and build a more targeted and meaningful approach.
15. Delivery and implementation of a Southwark Social Value Framework and Action Plan will signify the council's renewed commitment to unlocking maximum impact through all council activity in support of the Southwark 2030 goals.
16. **Recommendation 2** – That the Cabinet make changes to the paid internships in Southwark; wherein current undergraduate support for internships and placements should start in the summer of the penultimate year before graduation.

Response to Recommendation 2

17. Cabinet accepts the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission. The council's funded graduate internship scheme already focuses on securing internships for undergraduates in their penultimate year.
18. Southwark's Paid Internship Programme aims to help improve the social mobility of young people who may not have the family or social networks to help them to get a 'foot on the ladder' with good employers. The programme consists of three principal strands:
 1. Schools
 2. Graduates
 3. Council
19. The **school scheme** supports eligible sixth form students to develop their employability skills through activities such as mentoring, masterclasses and

work visits. Students will then complete a paid summer internship (between academic Year 12 and 13) lasting between 4 and 6 weeks, which provides valuable work experience. The school scheme is delivered by Career Ready.

20. The **graduate scheme** supports undergraduates and recent graduates from Southwark (those who graduated no more than 12 months prior) to secure paid internships. Support is provided by Gradcore Ltd via the SouthWRK programme, which includes mentoring/coaching, CV, application and interview support, and relevant internship/graduate job identification.
21. The programme primarily supports undergraduates in their penultimate year at university, in line with the recommendation from the Scrutiny Commission. This is generally when internships are considered to be most effective, as they provide a springboard for students to make the transition into a graduate job (or equivalent) the following summer, after graduation.
22. The programme also provides support for up to 12 months post study, so that those from less advantaged backgrounds including those unable to secure a paid summer internship prior to their final year of study are provided with ongoing support to help them to prepare for work after graduation.
23. In line with the Commission's recommendation, the graduate programme will continue to focus on securing internships for undergraduates in their penultimate year.
24. **Recommendation 3** – That the Cabinet develop a plan to build pathways for career development for young people, including young people with special needs in schools; with an aim to provide career guidance and aspirations, focusing on mainly short-term career goals; and also that the cabinet aim to develop this plan within the first half of the new municipal year 2024-2025.

Response to Recommendation 3

25. Cabinet accepts the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission. Work is underway with partners to develop a more joined-up approach to the delivery of careers information, advice and guidance within our schools and colleges, including for young people with special education needs and disabilities.
26. In line with the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission, the Southwark Skills Partnership of skills and employment providers, large employers, business groups and council teams is committed to "develop a more joined-up approach to the delivery of careers information, advice and guidance within our schools and colleges, particularly for young people at greater risk of becoming NEET." Under this headline commitment, a working group of skills partners has begun exploring opportunities for improvement on the current system.
27. The working group has identified special education needs and disabilities (SEND) schools as an area of focus for the above work with SEND pupils currently at greater risk of becoming NEET.
28. All Southwark Secondary Schools offer Career Guidance to young people.

The Southwark Education Business Alliance also works in partnership with a variety of businesses and charities across a diverse range of sectors to deliver high-quality and targeted work-related learning programmes and activities for Southwark schools and colleges.

29. Career guidance is currently provided by education providers directly for SEND Young People. Many of the specialist providers in the local area and settings young people may attend outside of Southwark provide specialist career guidance which supports young people, and their families think about their next steps.
30. Work is underway to improve the coordination of services. Education Services and Adults Service working closely together to co-deliver a Transition Fair for young people with SEND and additional needs. This fair will offer discreet and targeted career guidance and offer opportunities for signposting to some of the voluntary sector who deliver specialist career guidance.
31. In addition the council, in partnership with secondary schools, is offering targeted training and series of events to work with their career leads, Special Educational Needs Coordinators and Teaching and Learning Assistants in schools to support their understanding and knowledge about what is available for young people with SEND, who may not be taking a traditional academic route. This will inform a programme to increase the number of supported Internships funded through a grant from the Department for Education.
32. **Recommendation 4** – That the Council within the next municipal year 2024-2025, review its progress on ring-fencing employment and work placement opportunities for residents of Southwark, with an aim to create more opportunities; and also review how more entry level jobs can be created by working with partner organisations in the borough and advertised through the Southwark Works programme.

Response to Recommendation 4

33. Cabinet partially accepts the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission. Plans are in place for a review of policy options for the council as an employer and work is ongoing with partners to increase opportunities for Southwark resident and improve connections to the Southwark Works programme.
34. The council works closely with local partners, including Southwark Works, to promote job opportunities to Southwark residents. However, the council does not currently have a specific policy of ringfencing job opportunities for Southwark residents and further work is required to assess the viability of any such policy, including whether it constitutes positive action, which is lawful, or positive discrimination, which is not. Officers in Human Resources and Legal Services will conduct a full review of the position.
35. In the meantime, it should be noted that the council has recently established a new, professional recruitment service and an early careers team focused on internships, apprenticeships, and graduate programmes. Objectives for the new recruitment service include greater local recruitment to permanent and temporary roles at the council. In addition, the early careers team plans to

deliver 60 paid internships between 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2026, with recruitment to the next round of internships due to commence in October 2024. The early careers team is establishing relationships with local schools and universities, including through attendance at career fairs, and this will continue to be a priority. These developments form part of the council's ongoing transformation of its HR and Organisational Development service.

36. The council is delivering a comprehensive transformation of its HR and Organisational Development service. Progress to date includes the establishment of a new, professional recruitment service and an early careers team focused on internships, apprenticeships, and graduate programmes. Objectives for the new recruitment service include greater local recruitment to permanent and temporary roles at the council. In addition, the early careers team plans to deliver 60 paid internships between 1 October 2024 and 31 March 2026, with recruitment to the next round of internships due to commence in October 2024. The early careers team is establishing relationships with local schools and universities, including through attendance at career fairs, and this will continue to be a priority.
37. The early careers team recently trialled a new approach to recruiting young people on to the council's graduate management scheme, which included a particular focus on local recruitment. As a result, of the eight graduates currently on the scheme, five, or 63%, live in or have a connection to Southwark.
38. To further improve opportunities for Southwark residents with partner organisations, the council has created a dedicated Employer Engagement and Relationship Management Service as an integral part of the Southwark Works employment support programme. This service is delivered by Good People, which is contracted to develop a strategic approach for employer engagement across the Southwark Works Network.
39. This service builds on the work carried out in 2022 and 2023 by the then Deputy Cabinet Member for Employment via the Southwark Anchor Network to review how more jobs at all levels can be created within Southwark's largest employers. This project piloted successful jobs and careers fairs with NHS and Higher Education partners and developed an integrated approach with Southwark Works, Southwark College and DWP for supporting local residents into opportunities with Guys and St Thomas' NHS Trust.
40. Local jobs are also secured for residents through the council's Section 106 agreements with developers, both during the construction phase and in the end-use of new developments. As set out under the response to Recommendation 1, the council's merging Social Value Framework will also increase the range of employment and work placement opportunities for residents of Southwark within our larger contractors.
41. These efforts all support the Southwark Economic Strategy 2023-30 vision for 'an economy of good work with 'More opportunities for local people to secure good jobs and apprenticeships with leading employers and fewer barriers for the most disadvantaged'
42. The development of the Southwark 2030 delivery plan over coming months

presents a further opportunity to secure commitments from partner organisations in line with the Scrutiny Commission's recommendation.

43. **Recommendation 5** – That the Cabinet review and revise the specific definition of job progressions within Southwark Works, with an aim to meet the varying needs of residents; and also review the progress of better work, delivered through the tri-borough partnership with Lewisham and Lambeth post-pandemic, within the municipal year 2024-2025.

Response to Recommendation 5

44. Cabinet accepts the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission. This recommendation has been met through the recommissioning of in-work support under Southwark Works.
45. Southwark's Economic Strategy 2023-2030 sets out a vision for an economy of good work where residents have access to higher incomes, better job security and more opportunities to progress in work. Southwark Works, the council's flagship employment support programme, is central to delivering this aim.
46. Southwark Works is formed of a network of specialist providers that offer tailored employment support based on underlying needs. Southwark Works offers a dedicated service supporting those in work to progress to better pay and conditions.
47. In line with the recommendation for the Scrutiny Commission, this service was developed and commissioned in response to the evaluation of Routeways, the two-year in-work progression project delivered by St Giles Trust that ran between January 2018 and December 2019 across the tri-borough partnership area.
48. Thames Reach is contracted by the council to provide the in-work progression service under Southwark Works. Thames Reach offers targeted support to residents in employment who are seeking 'better' work. Aligning with the evidence heard by the Scrutiny Commission, the definition of better work may include hours, pay, location or sector. Training and skills development are a key feature of this support, and the provider is required to work with the council's teams who are also supporting residents on low pay.
49. In-work progression is further measured as an outcome for the programme overall, with all other providers required to provide ongoing support and training to their clients who have found work, with the aim of helping them secure higher paid or more secure employment.
50. Since 2023, Southwark Works has also included an Employer Engagement and Relationship Management Service delivered by Good People, which is contracted to develop a strategic approach for employer engagement across the Southwark Works Network. The provider is responsible for delivering key outputs and outcomes that focus on improving employment practices and supporting residents to secure good work. These include supporting employers with achieving accreditations (such as London Living Wage and

Disability Confident) and running good work standard webinars and workshops.

51. **Recommendation 6** – That the Cabinet with urgency fulfil its commitments to East Street traders on the following:

- Funding the renovation project team as per the council budgetary allocation in the cabinet reports
- Expediting the timeline for this financial support to East Street Market renovation project, in light of significant progress being made
- Provide resources, monitor progress and provide support in kind, to help with development of the project especially in organising meetings and training for traders.

Response to Recommendation 6

52. Cabinet accepts the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission. Work is underway to deliver approved capital improvements to East Street market, alongside additional resources provided through the council's Thriving High Streets fund and Southwark Pioneers Fund.
53. In March 2024 Cabinet approved £100k capital to improve infrastructure on East Street market. Consultation has been undertaken with market traders and East Street Community with a view to identifying the elements on East Street that are to be improved including new gazebos for traders, installation of WiFi and also improved lighting. This consultation will be ongoing throughout the lifetime of the project.
54. The project is being led by the council's market and street trading team who are currently progressing the respective procurements with a view to implementing the new gazebos and WiFi this financial year.
55. The council has also approved further funding of £37k to East St Community under the Thriving High Streets Fund to support the market to revitalise and create a welcoming and inclusive environment that attracts increased footfall and trade.
56. In addition, Trampoline NH CIC and Hatch Enterprise, funded to deliver business support under the council's Southwark Pioneers Fund, have engaged with East St Community and a training session for traders has been scheduled for October 2024.

Policy framework implications

57. The Council Delivery Plan 2022-26 has the following related commitments and milestones:
- i. Ensuring the whole council is focused on closing the gap in life chances within our borough, so everyone can achieve their potential and play their full part in Southwark's future.
 - ii. Working to tackle poverty, racism and discrimination, as well as the inequalities in health, education, housing and employment that hold people

back.

- iii. Launching a new Thriving High Streets Fund to invest in all of Southwark's high streets.
 - iv. Encouraging the expansion of street markets across Southwark.
 - v. Creating more careers and jobs within Southwark's big employers for local residents, including in our council, NHS, big businesses and universities.
 - vi. Delivering free support to get a job for people who face the most barriers, including young people, people with disabilities and parents and carers returning to work and third sector organisations.
 - vii. Creating 250 paid internships for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
58. The Southwark Economic Strategy 2023-2030 sets out how we will work with partners to achieve a fairer, greener and more resilient Southwark economy that benefits everyone.
59. The strategy sets out our vision for Southwark's economy:
- i. A high growth, low emission economy
 - ii. An economy with opportunity for all
 - iii. An economy of good work
60. The Economic Strategy includes the following related ambitions:
- i. More opportunities for local people to secure good jobs and apprenticeships with leading employers and fewer barriers for the most disadvantaged
 - ii. Southwark's largest employers invest in local services and talent, creating social value across all of our communities.
 - iii. Young people have every opportunity to build a successful career, whatever their background.
 - iv. Reduced ethnicity, gender and disability pay gaps, with equal participation and progression in the workforce and an end to discrimination in the workplace.
 - v. A secure and thriving foundational economy of essential goods and services that residents and businesses rely on every day.
 - vi. More businesses and jobs in Southwark's town centres, supporting healthy neighbourhood-based economies.

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

Community impact statement

61. The actions set out in this report are anticipated to deliver positive impact through increased economic inclusion across Southwark's communities.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

62. The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission report acknowledges the council's work in developing robust local engagement and employment support for Black, Asian and minority ethnic jobseekers in the borough through Southwark Works. The council is committed to tackling the inequalities experienced by young people in the labour market and our employment support and skills programmes are designed to benefit groups facing disproportionately high barriers to securing and progressing in good quality jobs. Monitoring is in place to ensure that this support is targeted accordingly.

- 63. The council's forthcoming social value framework will aim to use social value to address inequalities and support communities across the borough. The framework will be developed in line with the principles of Southwark Stands Together informed by a full equalities impact and needs assessment.
- 64. The Scrutiny Commission report identifies challenges and potential gaps in meeting needs of young people with SEND in relation to careers information, advice and guidance. Paragraphs 28 to 35 of this report set out plans for addressing these issues in partnership with schools and employers.
- 65. The Scrutiny Commission report highlights the importance of good quality employment in respect of pay and hours, but also flexibility and work life balance. Flexible working can be important in enabling people with caring responsibilities, which are more likely to be borne by women, to also maintain paid employment. Paragraphs 49 to 55 set out how the council is promoting access to better work for Southwark residents, which may include hours, pay, location or sector, through the Southwark Works programme.

Health impact statement

- 66. There are no direct health impacts arising from this report.

Climate change implications

- 67. None applicable.

Resource implications

- 68. There are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

Financial implications

- 69. All existing activities set out in the report are currently funded and there are no additional cost implications to the council arising from this report.
- 70. Should the implementation of any activities or recommendations outlined in this report require additional funds in future these will be subject to further decision reports setting out the cost and funding mechanisms.

Consultation

- 71. The Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission consulted St Giles Trust and community representatives from East Street Market as part of their review.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

**Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance REF:
[GOV/NC20240909]**

- 72. This report asks the cabinet to note and consider the recommendations from

the education and local economy scrutiny commission arising from the scrutiny review on community wealth building and employment in the London Borough of Southwark, in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules (15.3).

73. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
74. The cabinet's attention is drawn to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED General Duty) under the Equality Act 2010, which requires public bodies to have regard, when making decisions, to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

Strategic Director, Resources (FC24/014)

75. The report requests cabinet to approve the response to the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission recommendations on community wealth building and youth employment, as set out in paragraphs 7 to 62.
76. The strategic director of resources notes the financial implications and notes that there are no additional cost implications to the council arising from this report and notes that if additional funds will be required in future due to the implementation of any recommendations, these will be subject to further decision reports setting out the cost and funding mechanisms.
77. Staffing and any other costs associated with this recommendation are to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Community Wealth Building and Youth Employment	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk
Link (please copy and paste into browser): https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s121635/Report%20Education%20and%20Local%20Economy%20Scrutiny%20Commission%20-%20Community%20Wealth%20Building%20-%20Youth%20Employment.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor John Batteson, Climate Emergency, Jobs and Business		
Lead Officer	Danny Edwards, Head of Economy		
Report Author	Nick Wolff, Employment and Skills Manager		
Version	Final		
Dated	3 October 2024		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included	
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes	
Strategic Director, Resources	Yes	Yes	
Director, Planning and Growth	Yes	Yes	
Director of People and Organisational Development	Yes	Yes	
Assistant Director, SEND	Yes	Yes	
Head of Parking Services and Network Management	Yes	Yes	
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		3 October 2024	

Meeting Name:	Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
Date:	4 February 2025
Report title:	Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2024-25
Ward(s) or groups affected:	N/a
Classification:	Open
Reason for lateness (if applicable):	N/a
From:	Scrutiny Officer

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the education and local economy scrutiny commission note the work programme as at 4 February 2025 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 2024-25.

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 22 May 2024 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.**

Climate Emergency (green economy), Jobs & Business (Councillor John Battenon)

- **Greening our local economy** - engaging local people, businesses and organisations in action to reduce carbon emissions; delivering more green jobs, promoting climate justice; and reducing the council's own emissions
- **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.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk
Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=550&Year=0		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Work Programme 2024-25

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer		
Report Author	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer		
Version	Final		
Dated	27 January 2025		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance		No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team			27 January 2025

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Work Programme – 2024/25

Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
4 September 2024	Parent Carer Forum Representative (SEND)	To hear from a Parent Carer Forum representative on Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
	Early Intervention and SEND including EHCP's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND IF Formula • EHCP backlog, timelines for processing • No. of Early interventions carried out • Improvements for EHCP Process in Southwark 	To receive a presentation and written/verbal responses on Early Intervention in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); and Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) backlogs and processing timelines.
	Cabinet Member Interview- Children, Education & Refugees	To interview Councillor Jasmine Ali covering a holistic overview of key strategies and projects under the Cabinet member portfolio for Children, Education and Refugees with a focus on key aspects.

26 September 2024	Draft Town Centre Action Plan	To receive the Draft Town Centre Action Plan from Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business, Councillor John Batteson, Danny Edwards, Head of Economy and Libby Dunstan, Principal Strategy Officer.
	Cabinet Member Interview- Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business	To interview Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Jobs & Business, Councillor John Batteson covering a holistic overview of key strategies and projects under the cabinet member portfolio.
Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
18 November 2024	<p>Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on EHCP back logs (challenges faced in EHCP assessments) • Number of appeals cases in Southwark in EHCP compared to the number of appeal cases dropped (EHCP granted). • Southwark Council's Legal team's role in EHCP appeals cases. • Monies spent on SEND places for Southwark Children in schools outside of Southwark. 	To get an update from Anna Chiva, Assistant Director for SEND on EHCPs'.

	<p>Interviewing retired Headteacher (working with SEND) and SEND tribunal mediator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal experience with Southwark • Challenges dealing with SEND in Southwark. • Improvements needed in Southwark SEND based on their experiences. 	<p>To hear from Retired Headteacher, Fran Goggins working with SEND and SEND Tribunal Mediator, Catriona Ogilvy on SEND.</p>
	<p>Inclusions in schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools with high number of exclusions • Demographics of exclusions • Schools with no exclusions • Persistent absences (demographics of schools with absences) 	<p>To hear from the executive headteacher GEM Federation of Schools (primary school) on dealing with persistent absences successfully.</p> <p>To receive reports from Jenny Brennan, Assistant Director, Family Early Help and Youth Justice on persistent absences and permanent exclusions in schools.</p> <p>To receive a presentation from Cllr Jasmine Ali on Inclusion in Schools.</p> <p>To also hear from a secondary school teacher on issues around schools' exclusions.</p>

Meeting	Agenda items	Comment
4 February 2025	Working Links between Education and Health (SEND)	To receive a report from Russell Jones, Assistant Director – (Dual Role) Integrated Commissioning Southwark Council and South-East London, Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) on Working links between Education and Health - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
	EHCP Assessment Processes – Chair’s Feedback	Chair’s feedback from the meeting with officers (SEND) on EHCP Assessment Processes.
	Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Recommendations, 2023-24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School amalgamations and Closures • Community Wealth Building and Youth Employment 	To note the Cabinet response to this commission recommendations from the year 2023-2024.
Upcoming Meetings	Agenda item yet to be scheduled	Comment
8 April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Scrutiny recommendations and report • Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) 	To be confirmed

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024-25

AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)

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

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Electronic Copy		Joseph Brown – Senior Cabinet Officer	
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Councillor Cassandra Brown (Chair)		Sarauniya Shehu- Cabinet Office Manager	
Councillor Rachel Bentley (Vice-Chair)			
Councillor Sunil Chopra			
Councillor Renata Hamvas			
Councillor Jon Hartley			
Councillor Youcef Hassaine			
Councillor Irina Von Wiese			
Education Representatives			
Martin Brecknell			
Parent Governor Representatives			
Marcin Jagodzinski			
Jonathan Clay			
Reserves Members			
Councillor Gavin Edwards			
Councillor Ketzia Harper			
Councillor Sunny Lambe			
Councillor Jason Ochere			
Councillor Victor Chamberlain			
Councillor Adam Hood			
		Dated: January 2025	