

# **LEARNING AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

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**DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO SCHOOL GOVERNORS  
FOR THE SUMMER TERM 2011**

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## **1. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN LEARNING & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

In March 2011, The South London Partnership agreed a Memorandum of Cooperation. This recognised the political and public expectation, combined with the financial imperative that new ways of working should be developed which ensure good outcomes as well as financial savings are achieved.

Within this context, Learning and Children's Services have been exploring potential Partners to work with, with a view to sharing provider functions whilst retaining the Commissioning responsibilities within the local democratic context.

Following this work, it is proposed that we formally explore developing two separate, but collaborative, organisations:

- An Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) with Richmond upon Thames to deliver a number of services jointly
- A Joint Trust, in partnership with our schools to deliver school improvement

### **1. An Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) with Richmond upon Thames to deliver a number of services jointly.**

Learning and Children's Services must reduce expenditure by 20% over the next four years. This equates to an £8 million reduction. For the year 2011/12, £1.8 million worth of savings have been identified and the budget has been realigned. This leaves over £6 million to achieve. We are currently undertaking a review of all our services and developing a series of 'menus' which will describe what we are planning to offer and the evidence base of the 'menu of services'. Richmond Children's Services are doing the same exercise. This will enable us to reconsider the services we offer, compare them and ensure that we are providing the appropriate support within the resources available.

We believe there are efficiencies to be made by developing an Arms Length Organisation in partnership with Richmond, which will help protect front line services. The savings in management costs could be in the region of £750k. Additionally, there is potential for further savings through the freedoms to focus on delivery and outcomes that an 'arms length' arrangement would offer; as well as the potential to redesign services over a larger area. This will allow greater resilience, flexibility and economies of scale.

In commissioning Learning and Children's Services, the Council will agree the expected outcomes and the resources available. The commissioning role will have a clear framework by which to monitor progress and hold the ALMO to account. The Council will remain the champion of children and families' and will maintain accountability for outcomes, ensuring that the needs of Kingston's residents and pupils are met.

Significant work will need to take place to scope what services should be included in the ALMO, as well as the HR, financial and Governance issues that will need to be addressed. A dedicated Project Board will undertake this work. The Director of Learning and Children's Services intends to request that the Council supports this work.

Discussion with schools has begun and communication and consultation with all stakeholders will be a priority for the project.

The proposals for a Shared Service have been discussed at the Children's Trust Board and Partnership meetings. There is full support for the proposal and the Children's Trust Board has helped develop and guide the developments thus far.

## **2. A Joint Trust, in partnership with our schools, to deliver school improvement**

The context of developing a separate Trust for school improvement is the changes in school improvement responsibilities. This means that we need to develop a different, but collaborative, partnership with our schools with the aim of securing the excellent outcomes Kingston pupils enjoy. This will not only support the Borough's aim to be the best place to live and work, but also support our 'narrowing the gap' agenda by improving educational standards and life chances.

The White Paper and the Education Bill 2011 require Local Authorities (LAs) to reconsider how they provide school improvement services. Schools are to gain extra freedoms to determine for themselves how to solve their challenges. LAs are to have responsibility for championing educational excellence, providing good schools and advocating for vulnerable pupils but will not receive additional grant funding for school improvement. LAs retain powers to intervene in failing schools.

Good schools are known to strengthen communities and the success of Kingston schools is widely recognised. Kingston has some of the best academic results in the country, excellent attendance, the lowest proportion of young people not in education, employment or training and much better than national success rates for children and young people who are entitled to free school meals. Parental confidence is high and approximately 90% of schools are good or outstanding. Our challenge is to sustain this quality, ensure all schools are good, raise standards and close achievement gaps.

The LA's strategic role and impact on school improvement has been praised in external inspection and is valued by schools. Schools and LA officers have considered the potential impact of the Education Bill and have collectively agreed to pursue the development of an educational trust partnership between schools and the LA. 'Destination Kingston' aims for residents to live in a prosperous, inclusive and safe borough; for educational standards to rise and attainment gaps to close. The proposed strategy is entirely in keeping with these aims and the goals of One Kingston and the Children and Young People's plan i.e. to have better schools and services; to prevent failure and to maximise efficiency savings.

The Coalition government requires LAs to review the ways in which they provide school improvement services. School improvement is no longer the statutory duty of LAs. They can choose to provide it within their own geographical area and beyond but LA grant funding, which previously supported this work, has been cut. Some, but not all, of the funding for school improvement has gone directly to schools, which are expected to secure improvement services from whatever suppliers they choose in the 'market'. Schools have always been able to purchase improvement services but previously there was also LA provision which provided services at no cost or at a non-profit making rate and all services were quality assured.

The new requirements and their potential impact have been discussed with schools since early summer 2010. Schools have unanimously agreed that schools and the LA should pursue working in partnership to develop a new way of working that preserves the best of the previous School Inspection and Advisory Service in a new model of school improvement. The new model must put responsibility and governance firmly in the hands of schools while recognising that the LA has responsibility for championing excellence, supplying good schools and intervening in failing schools.

Recent changes to the schooling system also include encouragement for all successful schools to become non-maintained academies and for providers to open 'free schools' which are also non-maintained. For the residents of Kingston, the status of a school is likely to matter less than the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour in the school or children's progress and academic success. Any new way of working must therefore allow for all schools to be able to easily access the support they need. The government's initiative of 'teaching schools' which are expected to harness the support of other schools and be involved in initial teacher training to support school improvement are also important to any new collaborative way of working.

In recent years, Kingston has developed strategies to enable schools to support other schools. Expert teachers, intensive support programmes, advanced skilled teachers and transformation groups have been successful and supported by careful planning and management by the LA. National research and local experience shows that this is an effective way of working and any new way of working must prioritise opportunities for school-to-school support. Kingston schools' commitment to supporting the improvement of other schools is essential to any new way of working.

Financial constraint, cuts to school improvement grants and expectations of cuts to school budgets requires any new way of working to be highly cost effective and sustainable. The gross budget for School Improvement and Advisory Service is £1,597,000. This is unsustainable and the goal is to develop a collaborative trust with schools, which will reduce the Council budget by more than 50%.

Schools and the LA intend to ask the Council for support to pursue work to develop a school improvement trust between schools and the LA. The work will include developing a firm proposal, an operating model, a quality assurance framework, a financial plan, a risk register and an equalities impact assessment, including consideration of the impact on children, young people and staff.

This work should be completed by September 2011 when individual schools and the LA will be able to make decisions about whether or not they feel able to subscribe to the new way of working. This work will require advice from financial, legal and personnel services as well as a project management board and a project manager. The proposal asks for permission to resource the project at a maximum cost of £20,000.

The working title of the trust is Education Kingston (EK). The proposed operating model for EK will have six main elements:

- a. School improvement is operated for schools by schools with LA support and challenge
- b. LA invests £750,000 each year for a period of five years to commission a service so that the Council knows its schools well and support and challenge is provided for school improvement, including CPD

- c. Schools' invest approximately £300,000 to ensure that there are sufficient central resources to respond to schools' development and improvement need
- d. A commitment from schools to provide school to school support for each other in a systematised way (estimated value £250,000)
- e. An agreed basic school improvement allocation for all schools
- f. A leadership and governance structure which is efficient and effective and includes a challenge process.
- g. Recognition that the relationship with Kingston's other children's services and Council services is critical to the success of schools and the development of structures and systems for liaison

Formal commitment will be required on 18 October 2011. For the plan to be successful at least 90% of schools will need to be committed to the Trust. Governing Bodies will be supported to make informed decisions through Partnership meetings and a special meeting(s) prior to decision making, if appropriate.

The proposals for the development of the School Improvement Trust have been supported by the Children's Trust Board. The Board has helped develop and guide the developments within the overall proposals for the commissioning and provision of services to children and their families.

**NB. This item was discussed at the Partnership meeting and colleagues requested more information and a timescale to support governors' discussion and decision-making. Please use the timetable below to inform planning at your school:**

- Summer Term 2011, Paper on 'Future Developments in Learning and Children's Services' published in Director's Report to School Governors
- Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011, discussion about 'Future Developments in Learning and Children's Services' at Governors' Partnership meeting
- Governing Bodies requested to discuss the paper in their meeting(s)
- 10<sup>th</sup> June 2011, further information on school improvement and Education Kingston sent to Chairs of Governors to aid discussion
- 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011, Governors' meeting at KCC to discuss draft proposal
- 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011, final proposal sent to Chairs of Governors for decision making
- 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011, Governors' meeting at KCC to discuss final proposal
- 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011, deadline for responses to RBK
- 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011, paper representing school views presented to Council

**For further information on the above, please contact: Duncan Clark, Director of Learning and Children's Services on 020 8547 5220, or email: [duncan.clark@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:duncan.clark@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 2. HEADTEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The statutory role of the School Improvement Partner in advising the governing body on Headteacher's performance management is expected to end in due course when the Education Bill 2011 comes in to statute. However, until new regulations come into force, likely to be September 2012, the DfE has advised LAs that current arrangements will continue to apply for maintained schools.

The DfE advises that Academies and other schools etc which no longer have a SIP will need to make their own arrangements. There are no plans to introduce a new system for accrediting external advisers or to issue guidance on who might be suitable to advise governing bodies.

Until the Education Bill is passed or alternative arrangements apply Kingston LA intends to continue to fulfil its statutory responsibility and provide SIPs to maintained schools. Governing Bodies of maintained schools will continue to receive an LA report and free advice on Headteacher's Performance management. Kingston also wishes to support other schools that want support from the LA. If your school is, or is likely to become, an Academy by the time of the Head's performance review and governors would like to have the advice of a SIP, who knows the school well, please contact Tina Herring.

We are currently reviewing last year's SIP programme and this will influence the Autumn Term SIP schedule. The annual evaluation was sent to Headteachers and chairs of governors on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May. As usual, we would appreciate two returns from each school to reflect the different perspectives of Headteachers and governors. The evaluation form asks schools to identify priorities for school improvement. Answers to this question will help the LA and schools to plan for the future for school improvement.

The DfE has advised that, in due course, it is intending to consult on Headteacher's PM.

**For further information on the above, please contact: Tina Herring, Service Director for Learning and School Effectiveness on 020 8547 5288, or email: [tina.herring@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:tina.herring@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 3. CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY

### **Child Poverty in Kingston**

Kingston has a vision that 'No families will be living in poverty and no children will be affected by the impacts of poverty'. It is estimated that there are 4930 children living in poverty in Kingston. That is why we are developing the OneKingston Child Poverty Strategy, as part of the overall Government commitment to eradicate Child Poverty. It will support us all in achieving our vision.

Children are classified as living in poverty when their family income is below 60 per cent of contemporary median income, equivalised by household type. This is widely recognised as the point beneath which families' incomes fall significantly below those of

others in society and children can suffer from inequality of opportunity, hardship, deprivation and exclusion.

The Child Poverty Act 2010 placed a legal obligation on all Local Authorities and their partners to cooperate in the bid to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty; to conduct a local needs assessment, produce a child poverty strategy and take child poverty into account in the production and revision of strategies and plans. The coalition Government remains 'committed to ending child poverty by 2020' and the requirements of the Child Poverty Act 2010 remain.

A wide range of partners in Kingston contributed to the OneKingston Child Poverty Needs Assessment see: [www.kingston.gov.uk/child\\_poverty](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/child_poverty) . The Kingston Children and Young People's Trust Board has approved this as a robust and sufficient evidence base for the development of our Child Poverty Strategy. It contains useful information for partners.

The following priorities result from the OneKingston Child Poverty Needs Assessment and will be incorporated in the OneKingston Child Poverty Strategy to be published in June:

1. REDUCE HOUSING RELATED POVERTY *to ensure families have sustainable accommodation arrangements and the child's environment supports them to thrive*
2. FOCUS ACTION LOCALLY *and foster community aspiration and decision-making*
3. IMPROVE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS *so that more families are in work that pays and have support to progress*
4. MAXIMISE FAMILY INCOME *so that financial support is responsive to families' situations*
5. ENABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEAD HEALTHY LIFE STYLES *and become healthy Parents with healthy Children*
6. ENSURE PARTNERSHIP AROUND THE FAMILY *giving every child the best start in life and intervening early*
7. RAISE ASPIRATIONS OF THE NEXT GENERATION *so that poverty in childhood does not translate into poor experiences and outcomes*

Tackling child poverty is important to everyone concerned with improving outcomes for children. Schools and Children's Centre in Kingston play a major role in mitigating the effects of poverty. The Child Poverty Needs Assessment indicates those areas in which that there is more to do. It highlights, for example, a significant disparity between those thought to be eligible and those claiming free school meals. This affects the amount of pupil premium that a school will receive, to target at pupils from deprived backgrounds and support them to achieve their potential. Schools are working together to deliver a Pupil Premium Strategy to address this.

We welcome information on any other actions schools plan that will address the priorities above.

**For further information on the above, please contact: Mary Francis, Head of Strategic Projects on 020 8547 6502, or email: [mary.francis@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:mary.francis@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 4. ADMISSIONS AND SCHOOL PLACES UPDATE

### Admissions Update for September 2011

#### Secondary Admissions

For September 2011, a total of 1473 (702 boys, 771 girls), Kingston resident pupils applied for a school place by the 1 March, the national offer date. 96% received a preference offer (95% in 2010) and 98% received an offer (97% in 2010). 63% received a 1st preference offer (60% in 2010).

On 1 March 55 pupils could not be offered a preferred school. However, since then all have been allocated a school and the numbers of new applications have increased slightly. Currently, there are no children without an offer for September 2011.

#### Primary Admissions

For September 2011, for the first time, primary admissions have been co-ordinated across borough boundaries as a Pan London scheme. Secondary admissions has been co-ordinated as a Pan London scheme since 2005.

The total capacity for Reception in September 2011 is 1905, which includes a total of 330 extra places. As part of the planned primary expansion strategy, an additional 195 permanent places (6.5 forms of entry) have been provided at Alexandra Infant, Fern Hill Primary, Latchmere, Burlington Infant and Nursery, Grand Avenue Primary and Nursery Primary, Ellingham Primary and St Matthew's C of E Primary Schools.

Temporary classes providing 135 places will open at Castle Hill, Coombe Hill Infant, St Joseph's Catholic Primary, Maple Infant and Tolworth Infant and Nursery schools. Each school will provide an additional 30 places, except for St Joseph's, which will provide an additional 15 places.

A total of 1871 Kingston residents applied for a school place by 4 April which was the Pan London allocation date. 80% received their first preference offer (compared to 81% in 2010), 92% received 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences (same as 2010) and 95% received a preference offer (compared to 92% last year).

Of the 98 children without a preference offer initially, 75 were offered an alternative school and 23 (1.2% of total applicants) were without an offer. Of these, only 7 are currently without an offer and are being monitored. There is an expectation that there will be places available for September.

#### School Places Update

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility for the planning of school places to ensure that there are sufficient places available for all pupils wishing one. This has been achieved for 2011/12 and planning and analysis of both potential demand and availability is now taking place for 2012/13 and two academic years after that.

A new group has been formed to oversee this activity in light of the re-organisation of the council, the Commissioning of School Places Programme Board chaired by Duncan

Clark, Director of Learning and Children's Services. The Council has provided £46 Million toward the expansion of the primary phase with £8 Million allocated for the creation of a new two form entry primary school in Surbiton due to open in September 2012. As always, RBK will be working to a clear set of principles.

- maintain outstanding education in RBK
- minimise the use of temporary accommodation
- pupils able to attend a local school (within two miles)
- parental preference - expand popular and high achieving schools which are on sites that are physically capable of expansion
- primary schools should be 1 to 4 fe, infant & junior schools 2 to 4fe
- class sizes should be 30 pupils or fewer
- maintain balance between community and faith schools

It is expected that once the updated demographic data is available, an appropriate report will be submitted to the Council in July, setting out the strategy for providing the additional capacity for the next three years.

**For further information on the above please contact: Hatija Bhatia, Principal Admissions & Governance Officer on 0208 547 5284, or email: [hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 5. DATA PROTECTION

Following an incident, which resulted in a member of school staff losing possession of a memory stick, which held personal data, please can schools re-visit their policies on transportation of data via electronic equipment.

Encrypted memory sticks should be used when personal data is carried.

**For further information on the above, please contact: Tina Herring, Service Director for Learning and School Effectiveness on 020 8547 5288, or email: [tina.herring@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:tina.herring@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 6. PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES ON THE PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE AND SCRUTINY PANEL

The Council has a vacancy for a primary school Parent Governor Representative to be an Advisory Member on the RBK **People's Services Committee** and **Scrutiny Panel** and is currently inviting nominations from primary school Governing Bodies for this vacancy for a Representative, who will be appointed by Kingston Council.

The People's Services Committee will meet approximately seven times per year to make decisions on matters within its remit, which includes education. The Scrutiny Panel will meet less frequently. Parent Governor Representatives will only be asked to attend

meetings if there are education issues on the agenda, and their role will be to comment on those education issues on the basis of their experience as a serving school governor. A small allowance is payable for this role. Meetings usually start at 7.30pm and are held in the Guildhall. Parent Governor Representatives have voting rights when education matters are being discussed on these bodies of the Council.

Governing Body nominations (to include the nominee's name, address and telephone number and, if possible, email address) should be sent to Jean Cousins, Democratic Support, Room 75, The Guildhall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 1EU.

**Please note that Governing Body nominations (to include the nominee's name, address, and telephone number and, if possible, email address) should be sent to Jean Cousins by Wednesday 22 June 2011 at the latest.**

**For further information on the above please contact: Jean Cousins, Democratic Support Officer on 020 8547 5023 or email [jean.cousens@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:jean.cousens@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 7. GOVERNOR UPDATES

### 1. CONSULTATIONS

Currently the DfE is consulting on the following and these consultations can be found at: [www.education.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations)

- **[Academies' Pre-16 Funding: Options for the 2012/13 Academic Year](#)**

This consultation considers options for changing Academy funding for academic year 2012/13 if school funding reforms are not to be in place for financial year 2012-13. This consultation runs parallel to another consultation on school funding "A consultation on school funding reform: rationale and principles".

The current method of replicating local authority formulae and calculating a grant in lieu of central services which a local authority would provide for a maintained school is too complex. It lacks transparency, is prone to error and is administratively inefficient, particularly since the growth in Academy numbers. The proposed option is to roll forward per pupil school budget share figures from the previous year.

**Launch Date:** Wednesday 13 April 2011

**Closing Date:** Wednesday 25 May 2011

- **[A Consultation on School Funding Reform: Rationale and Principles](#)**

This consultation is on the rationale and principles for reforming school funding.

**Launch Date:** Wednesday 13 April 2011

**Closing Date:** Wednesday 25 May 2011

- **[Ensuring Good Behaviour in Schools: Guidance for Governing Bodies, Head teachers, School Staff and Employers](#)**

The purpose of this consultation is to gather views on six revised guidance documents relating to good behaviour in schools and one new summary document. The guidance documents are aimed at governing bodies, head teachers and school

staff and employers. The summary document is aimed at governing bodies, head teachers, school staff, parents and pupils.

**Launch Date:** Monday 4 April 2011

**Closing Date:** Monday 30 May 2011

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- **Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability**
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Sarah Teather, Minister of State for Children and Families has launched a Green Paper on special educational needs and disability. The proposals will be consulted on until 30 June.

**Launch Date:** Wednesday 9 March 2011

**Closing Date:** Thursday 30 June 2011

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## 2. TEACHERS TV

Following the termination of the Teachers TV contract, the Teachers TV website ceased to be available from 29th April 2011. After this date, the Department for Education (DfE) will make all Teachers TV programmes available to distributors on a non-exclusive basis. Any distributor who provides Teachers TV programmes will be required to stream them free at the point of use. Further details of where to access Teachers TV programmes can be found at [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

## 3. GOVERNORNET

Governornet has been decommissioned, but an archive of the site is freely accessible via [The National Archives](#). The link is:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110113101521/http://www.governornet.co.uk/index.cfm?topicAreald=13>

You can also find the archive of The Guide to the Law for School Governors via the same link.

**For further information on the above please contact: Hatija Bhatia, Principal Admissions & Governance Officer on 0208 547 5284, or email: [hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**

## 8. GOVERNOR TRAINING

Please find listed below the Governor training courses that are available for the remainder of the Summer Term 2011. Please reserve your place by speaking to your INSET coordinator and/or Headteacher depending on what the arrangements are for booking courses at your school.

Further details about the courses can be viewed on KIMS at the following link: <http://www.rbksch.org/KIMS/> click View Courses, click Governor Training and Development, click on course. The venue for all training is the King Charles Centre, 19.00pm – 21.00pm unless otherwise stated.

### **NEW GOVERNOR INDUCTION COURSE**

*Date* 21 May 2011 09.30 – 16.00 King Charles Centre  
*Course Code* G10/008C

**Governors to bring with them on the day, a copy of the School Prospectus, a copy of the School Development Plan and the sheet 'Powers and Duties of Governing Bodies Quiz' (appendix 1A). This course is being covered in a single day session and not as 3 separate evening sessions.**

**A sandwich lunch will be provided.**

### **INCLUSION: PUPILS AT GREATER RISK OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT**

*Date* 25 May 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre  
*Course code* G10/007

### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

*Date* 08 June 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre  
*Course code* G10/022

### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

*Date* 13 June 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre  
*Course code* G10/023

### **MONITORING THE SCHOOL'S BUDGET**

*Date* 14 June 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre  
*Course code* G10/018

### **COMMUNITY COHESION**

*Date* 23 June 2011 19.00 – 21.00 King Charles Centre  
*Course code* G10/012

- *SEF – Self Evaluation Form*
- *SDP – School Development Plan (also known as the School Improvement Plan)*

**For further information on the above please contact: Hatija Bhatia, Principal Admissions & Governance Officer on 0208 547 5284, or email: [hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:hatija.bhatia@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)**