

REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION REVIEW:
DEVELOPING PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPEECH
AND LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES AND AUTISM**

Date: Thursday 26 March 2009

Member Reporting: Councillor Mrs Quick

Contact Officer(s): Rhidian Jones, Principal Education Officer, Children's
Commissioning (tel. 01628 796779)

Wards affected: All

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 In March 2008, Cabinet approved a public consultation on the outline of a service to replace current arrangements in the authority's schools for children with difficulties in communication and interaction (i.e. speech and language difficulties, autism and related difficulties). That consultation took place in the summer of 2008.
- 1.1.2 This report is to inform Members about the feedback from the public consultation. A more detailed report will be considered in Part 2, which makes more detailed recommendations about the implementation of the new arrangements.

Appendices to this Report

- Appendix A - Numerical summary of responses received to the Consultation
- Appendix B - Tabulated summary of responses

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the results of the public consultation on the Communication and Interaction Review, as set out in the two appendices to this report, be noted.

What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?
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This report is for information only and does not therefore require any decisions. These will be made in Part 2.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background (in addition to information given in the Summary above)

- 3.1.1 The *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice* (2001) categorises various special educational needs, and applies the term 'communication and interaction' to

difficulties and disorders such as autism and speech & language. The experience of this and many authorities is that such difficulties, together with related difficulties, have similarities with each other; that there is an overlap of agencies whose specialisms are appropriate for the children involved; and indeed that there are similarities of approach to many of the children with such difficulties. At present, children with such difficulties are assisted by a number of different agencies within the Royal Borough.

3.1.2 In March 2008 Cabinet approved a public consultation on possible options. This took place between July and September 2008, and it is the feedback from this public consultation that is being brought to Members for their information in this report.

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Options

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
1.	To note the information provided on the responses to the public consultation	Recommended	None arising from this information report

4.2 Risk assessment

4.2.1 Risks are reported in the Part 2 report.

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

5.1.1 Following Cabinet's permission on 27th March 2008, consultation of the public and others took place during the period 14th July to 30th September 2008. The Consultation paper was sent to schools and other organisations, and the summary sent to parents of pupils then in the units at Altwood, Ellington and Furze Platt Senior Schools. A press release was issued. Officers of the authority attended public meetings at the three schools mentioned and attended a staff meeting of therapists of the PCT's Speech and Language Therapy service. Sixty-one replies were received.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6.1.1 *To meet on 23rd March*

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1.1 The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A

7.1.2 *Financial* – not relevant to this information report.

7.1.3 *Legal* – The relevant principal legislation is as follows.

Education Act, 1996, where local authorities are required to promote high standards in primary and secondary education (s.13A); ensure the provision of 'sufficient schools' (s.14); keep under review their arrangements for special educational provision; and identify and be responsible for children with special educational needs in their area (s.321).

7.1.4 *Planning* – not relevant to this information report.

Background Papers:

Review of provision for children with difficulties in communication and interaction – proposals arising from this review: a consultation paper, RBWM, March 2008