

Essex County Council
Schools, Children & Families Directorate
School Improvement & Early Years
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Clive Harrison
Performance Manager
Audit Commission,
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7 Lewis Court,
Grove Park,
Enderby, Leicester, LE19 1SU

Our ref: RAH/AY/BSFR
Your ref:
Date: 16 June 2010
Enquiries Anna Young
01245 4434164

Dear Clive

Re: BSF Review

I have set out below a brief response to your report on Building Schools for Future. Can I first of all thank you for the time and care you took in the compilation of the report and in particular the importance you attached to understanding the underlying features of the Essex programme.

Main Conclusions

We are pleased with the very encouraging conclusions which we feel broadly reflect our own evaluation. We would just add the following points for your information

(Para 16)

We did indeed recognise the importance of the need to make more “systematic connections with wider regeneration issues”. In order to tackle this

- We appointed to the Strategic Development Team a “ Partnership Officer” to develop work around this area through increased engagement with partners, agencies and wider shareholders
- During competitive dialogue significant focus was put upon ensuring that the LEP would be fully committed to identifying and delivering regeneration opportunities. This is now a strong element of our Partnering Services Agreement (PSA) and is coherent with our approach to tackling the barriers to children achieving their potential e.g. through delivery of the collaboration charter and the setting up of a Community Regeneration Innovation Trust (CRIT)
- We are now engaged with the Castlepoint and Rochford Regeneration team, and the Haven and Thames Gateway Partnerships
- Links are being forged with local Councils around the Sustainable Communities Strategies



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(Para 17)

We are pleased that our focus upon learning and teaching “came across” and there is recognition that we have identified change management as a key factor in achieving our objectives. It would however be more accurate to say that the school change implementation plans driving the training of teachers is only now underway and is something that we recognise as being a long term programme.

(Para 18)

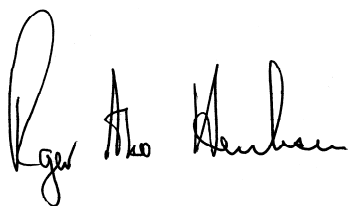
We have indeed taken considerable effort on ensuring that our methodology for pupil place planning is as robust and secure as possible. We spent considerable time prior to our OBC for Wave 4 in discussion with PfS and DFE to ensure that planning in relation to the complexities surrounding projections for our NMSS were sound.

We have undertaken independent and internal reviews about how we wish to best provide for pupils with complex and additional needs.

Work being undertaken generally to review provision for pupils with SEN and additional needs does not have any particular implications for SEN provision in BSF waves 5 and 6, which are aligned with the proposals that are being progressed (cf Para 4.3) and will be driven predominantly by our waves 7 and 8. In relation to the funding proposals which would also drive R2 recommendations we have commissioned Mouchel to undertake some work which will be taken through consultation with the intention of being able to implement proposals for the 2010/11 financial year.

With regards to the sections in your detailed report can I commend you on the ways in which you have captured both spirit and detail across the various substantive areas.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Abo Henriksen'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Roger' being the most prominent.

Roger Abo Henriksen
Head of Strategic Development