

GLA Oversight Committee – 28 November 2012

Transcript of Item 5: The Mayor's Mentoring Programme

**Len Duvall (Chair):** The starting point for us is many people round this table personally want to see this project succeed. We have made that clear in a number of forums. We are quite committed to this programme, want to see it succeed and recognise that you took over in the autumn of 2011. Amanda, you weren't fully involved or were you involved?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** I was not involved in the initial procurement of the Mayor's Mentoring Project.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Fine. We recognise that some of the issues and some of the problems that you have been tackling you could describe as challenging. I described it as poorly implemented in the past. You are not guilty of that. Some of those problems you have inherited and we should place that on record. We can say really from autumn 2011 you have been there trying to get to grips with this project. Is that fair?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. Fine. Let's go back then. I want to remind you, Munira, of some of the things that you said back in October 2011 in terms of where we have led to some of the changes that went on. You did an interview on the BBC Politics programme where there were questions, and rightly so, being raised not just here in City Hall but within the wider community and amongst other professionals that have got some expertise on these matters about the programme. In response to a question that was raised to you, "Is this programme able to deliver?" This is, presumably, the old programme led by the University of East London (UEL) and its programmes. "I can deny it's running into the sand. It's running well. The programme is effective and we're going to do a lot of good in most communities, and I can use this moment to assure those people, who may be concerned, that the programme is going in the right direction".

Now in response to a second question put to you that is on the record, again in October 2011, in fact the same interview. The question that you were asked, "You have an election coming up in the spring. How many mentors will you have by then?" Then you say, "We are estimating 350 pairings. It is a three year programme. It is a large programme. It takes time to get the right people, to train them properly. I'm not going to apologise for it taking some time to do that. The last thing we want to do is rush in to putting mentors who are not properly trained in with quite vulnerable people. If they have a bad experience, even more damage can be done."

So what went wrong between when you took over that project, when you thought that it was going well and you thought you could deliver the numbers, to the changes that you have instituted as of a month, four weeks ago? I think it was roughly that. What went wrong?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Amanda [Coyle] can talk a bit more about the very minute detail of the programme because she has been tracking that. The top lines are the training was very good quality, the feedback from the mentors, the mentoring and the mentoring relationships was positive. However, we found that the model that we had developed and designed was not delivering swiftly enough, which is why we have come up with this new design version in order to try and get the numbers up. We felt the quality of the work was good but it was not really delivering at the pace that we wanted which is why we did not meet the targets that I had originally said in my interview. I think, overall, the programme is still a very strong programme and is a very good programme. We are still very committed to delivering it and that is why we have redesigned it to try to deal with some of the 'clunkiness' of the way that it was being delivered.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** You have not just redesigned it, have you, because you have told UEL, "Thanks very much, you can only do the bits that we want you to do? We are going to try a different tack completely and bring in, or open it up, to other potential partners with a new management agent." As UEL have failed, in that sense, why have you not been able to restructure the work that UEL have been doing and get them to change to deliver to a more swifter programme, if that is what the objective is?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I think our view was that the design of that model, of having a single organisation being the bridge between us, the delivery partners, between the delivery partners and the mentors, was creating too much slowness in the system, which is why we decided to change the design of it. The fundamental goals, 1,000 vulnerable black boys to be mentored, is still there, so it is still the same programme in that sense. It is still trying to deliver that objective. I do not know, Amanda, do you want to just say a bit more about the detail of that?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes. I Essentially, we did a very thorough root and branch review of the programme after the first year of delivery and we had detailed conversations with UEL about the right approach that we should take to actually accelerate the programme. We felt that we needed to bring more local delivery partners to increase the swiftness of delivery of this particular programme. UEL conferred with us on that, and we both agreed that the GLA was best placed to run a mentoring fund.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Sorry, just being very clear. UEL, in terms of what my understanding is, are still going to receive money for some of the work that they have done. That is their bit completed. As a management agent they are no longer required, nor are their partners underneath them. You are going to appoint a new management agent with you taking a more interventionist approach, I take it from the words that you just said, a more hands-on approach with a number of other potential partners. Or is it much more complex than that?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** It probably hides some of the added value that UEL did bring in terms of the academic input into the training approach of mentors and also in terms of their approach ensuring the quality of the mentoring relationships. I think that UEL actually have made quite a significant input into the design of the new programme as well.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** They have also had input not just into the failed programme before, but had input into new arrangements that we are going to discuss in a moment as soon as we get into detail.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Well, as I said before, we did a full root and branch review of the particular programme. What we were very keen to do was actually learn some lessons about what had happened in the first year. We wanted to use UEL's academic evidence base and their experience to inform our mentoring fund moving forward.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** If that is the case though, why isn't UEL then developing a new working role using the evidence that they have uncovered, using the skills that they have got? Why are they not then working in the new arrangements? Admittedly you have done the evaluation and you want to try something different in terms of getting the numbers up. Why are they, then, not there in the driving seat? Sorry, I do not quite understand that. They are either that good, as you are trying to tell me, I think, they are that good that they were part of the failed programme. They are now part of developing a new programme but they are not that good because they are not going to be part of a new programme. Their key role, in terms of the management agency, is no longer required and they are only doing half the programme. That is probably for good reasons that, administratively, you would not want to move it to somewhere else.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Well, let me be really clear, we currently have, and will continue to have, a contract with UEL.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** All right.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** In terms of what we learned through the review that we took on the programme was -- one of the key learnings was that it is actually really beneficial that the relationship between the local delivery partners and the mentors needs to be closer. This is really to ensure that we get a swift and supportive management and matching process between mentors and mentees, that we avoid any unnecessary duplication in terms of mentor screening, and also that we provide appropriate support to the mentors as they start the matched relationships, and continue that over the 12 month period. It was felt that we needed to have local delivery partners who had that closer link with the mentors. That was actually one of the key learnings that we wanted to make sure that was reflected in the new model.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** I am going to bring in some other people, but, forgive me, we had a number of expert witnesses at the Time for Action Panel that actually raised very similar issues in commenting about the GLA process back prior to the procurement process, pointing out those issues. They were people commenting on that so that was then. This project has been around since 2008 in terms of timelines. Now, you are not responsible for the earlier part of those issues but this has been going on for some time. Some of that is not new, what you are saying. Can we have a copy of the evaluation process that we went through? I think we would like that as a check.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** I think you said that part of the reason why UEL failed was because of the slowness and it had a very academic approach. We have actually reheard evidence early on they have no track record at all of delivering programmes such as these. Do you think that was a mistake, in hindsight?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Can I answer that? This is a work in progress. A programme of this scale has not been tried before in London so, inevitably, some programmes when they are first tried work better than you expect and some do not work as well.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** There were people giving you those warning signals early on that they had not got a track record.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** From what we have seen when we did the review there is not any evidence to suggest another delivery partner would have achieved a different result. It is only to say that the design of the model did not work and we realised that, or did not work as well as it could have done. We realised that after having done it, so that is why we changed the model and the design bit.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** I hate to rehash what we had in the Time for Action Panel but, actually, there was one leader that did score highest in the rounds and is well recognised as having capacity to deliver. What criteria are you using now in choosing your new delivery partners? Have you got a set of criteria now?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We do have an application process and we have a scoring mechanism within that. Clearly we will be incorporating some of the learnings that we have had through the first year of this particular programme, so, yes.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Is this going to be a contract situation or grant funding?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Grant funding.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** It is grant funding. OK. Can you just remind me what procurement rules you have to follow for grant funding?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** The procurement rules are outlined on the GLA website and I can get you a copy of those.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Well I am going to be specific. There are differences, I believe, between the grant funding and if it was a direct contract.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes, absolutely. Absolutely.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** I am just wondering what the difference is and why you have chosen to go down the grant funding route as opposed to a direct contract?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** This is an innovative programme so we would look at it in terms of grant funding to organisations to deliver outcomes versus a specific contract for services whereby we have very defined services that we want to actually deliver. It would be on that basis we would look to grant fund.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Actually I have covered all the questions I can. When you are choosing the new delivery partners are you asking for them to work in specific geographical areas of London or ...?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** It is. Do you have a list of your priority areas and can we have that? That would be useful.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Thank you. I also wanted to ask about Ray Lewis, the Mayor's mentoring champion. When we questioned Ray Lewis a couple of times on the Time for Action Panel, he surprisingly said to us that he did not have a clue what his role was because the Mayor had not really told him, which I think all of us found quite surprising. Does he now have a defined role? Is it written down somewhere?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Ray has been involved in the design of the original programme and the redesign and helping to think about how the training is incorporated in the new model because the delivery is slightly different as I have already explained.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Does he have his description of his job description written down so we can all see it? There were issues last time as to whether he was blurring his responsibilities and his, shall we say, his powers or not.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I am not sure. I cannot say if there is a written job description for him at the moment. There is a description of his role on the GLA website which I could give you.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** I think that would be useful if we could have some further clarity on that. I know Ray Lewis's letter of appointment said he was not to take part in any decision-making process so some of us were quite surprised he was on the original Panel making the decisions as to the awarding of grants. This time around can I assume that he will not be part of the decision-making process? I cannot assume that?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor):** He will not be part of the decision-making process.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** He will not be. That is quite clear. I suppose my final point is really to say that we are supportive of this scheme. It did raise a great deal of expectation, certainly in some of my communities, but it failed to deliver and you have got, I think, a lot of trust to rebuild in certain communities. Are you confident of rebuilding that trust?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** I think it is fair to say that the response we have had in terms of expressions of interest to the new fund has been extensive. I am absolutely confident that there are local delivery partners who have the links to the communities that we are trying to reach and who will bid for the fund. In that respect, that will help rebuild the confidence of the programme at the local level.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Thank you.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Yes, I think, initially, a question is of the officers who prepared a report for us. Can I ask if there is a direct link to the numbers we have on this report from the numbers of people who are going to be helped by the My Capital Men programme? In other words are these two completely different programmes or are they the same programme described differently because, in this report, there is no mention of My Capital Men but in the next report there is.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I am sorry. I do not know which reports you are referring to.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Well we have two reports both of which are from you, on the education inquiry, which is agenda item 6. Under Mentoring.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is mentoring.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** There is a mention of the My Capital Men which has a target of 1,000. I want to know whether that is the same programme as the one we are discussing.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Yes.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** All right. Thank you for that. It is interesting that there is no tie-up between them because they could quite easily be different. Can I probe the numbers then which we have on this report? If you look at paragraph 3.3 the numbers altogether, it is 100 in the first paragraph, 300 in the next and 250 in the third paragraph which, by my reckoning, adds up to 650, but we are told in paragraph 3 that the budget of £720,000, the new fund, is going to finance at least 650 boys who are at risk of offending. Does that mean that the number of mentees in the first two paragraphs is in addition to that 650?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Well if you add up the sums this is an extraordinary coincidence isn't it? The number in the first three paragraphs adds up to the total of 650, which you mention in the third paragraph, and on 400 of those, we have already paid for them. Is my maths wrong?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** I do not fully understand your question.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** My question is, were you saying that the remaining funding of at least £720,000 is to fund 12 months' mentoring relationships for at least 650 boys who are at risk of re-offending, but in the previous paragraph, since we have established these are all the same boys, we are providing £260,000 to provide the funding for 300 of these people? What I am saying is that there is double counting here and it looks as though we are funding the mentoring of these boys twice.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** That is not my understanding of what we are proposing to do. The first paragraph relates to the numbers associated with the current UEL contract.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Yes.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** The second paragraph relates to contracts we have directly with the local delivery partners, and the third, how that relates to the new mentoring fund.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Right. I have already established that the 650 people are the total of the people who are mentioned in all of these paragraphs added together.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** No, the 650 relates to the new mentoring fund.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Right. So the first answer I got was different.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Sorry, excuse me if I have misled you.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** All right. So the cost of funding each boy under each of these programmes is quite different, isn't it?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** It is.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Why?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** With respect to the UEL contract, we used to actually set up a basis for the particular project we needed to outline, the training we used to do, particularly of mentors, and we needed to put in place the quality frameworks upon which we would actually look at the quality of these mentoring relationships, and then the subsequent contracts we have gone into. We have been very successful in delivering better value for money and that, essentially, is reflected in the numbers that you are seeing in the report.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** OK. The tone of the two reports, the one that I have already mentioned which talks about My Capital Men, and the tone of this report under mentoring, is quite different. Here we say, "This will, if successful, ensure the overall programme target to support 1,000 black boys is achieved", but in the next report, talking about the same -- because that was my very first question, I asked if these were the same thousand. We say, "Will UEL provide mentors for 1,000 black boys?" I think it sort of vaguely relates to Joanne's line of questioning and what level. Perhaps we were a bit mesmerised, were we, by this very round figure of 1,000 when no proposal was first put before us without establishing whether or not to achieve 1,000 mentees? Do you think that might have been the case?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Well we still have the objective of 1,000 mentoring relationships. I think the difference between the two reports is not as large as you say so. We are just stating the objective which we have outlined here. Whether you think that is unrealistic or not, I suppose, is a different question.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Of course.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We have not deviated from the original objective.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Of course it is but when the proposal of 1,000 came along how did you test the likelihood of achieving that if you have already established that the UEL programme has not been nearly as successful as was anticipated, the report says. None of this is a new idea. Ought we not to have thought that 1,000 was overly optimistic at that time?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I do not agree. I think it is possible to do it and I think it is possible to change the design of the programme to achieve that.

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Thank you. Well, I hope you are right. Thank you, Chair.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Let me just clarify in terms of numbers. Thank you for that. Between pairings - which is some terminology I have seen used - and matching people to active mentoring relationships. Can you clarify that? What are the active mentoring relationships that are going on at this moment in time? Are these figures here active mentoring relationships or are they just matches? Also, what is going on on the ground at this present time?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** The figures that you are seeing reflected in these reports are the active mentoring relationships. When you talk about matched relationships --

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It will be. At the moment, we estimate we will have around 200 active mentoring relationships by the end of December.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** The end of December this year?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Yes. The figures that Tony Arbour AM has just raised are how we are projecting the number of mentoring relationships that come on-stream. I think mentoring relationships we can use interchangeably with pairings.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** How do we audit that in terms of the money we are paying to other people that that is actually what is going on on the ground?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We do have an outputs handbook that all the delivery partners have. That is the document that we use at the inception meeting. Within that, that defines how we define the project milestones. It also defines what paperwork and



evidencing we need to see so that we can audit these projects and ensure that they are delivering against what they are being paid for.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. We would like some commentary on justifying the difference in costs and why they are. I think we would like to see that, as a Committee, in writing in terms of that bit more detail in the future of those. We may come back. I would like you to also put in writing to the Committee about the auditing arrangements, what is actually on the ground and how sure you are of those.

I have seen a number of people. We will take people in turns and some people may want to come back for seconds.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Although I was not invited I did actually go along to the community meeting that Boris Johnson [Mayor of London] spoke at in Peckham which was part of the initial outreach programme that went on, and I have to say it was really well attended. There were a lot of people whose expectations were raised that there was going to be serious help for a critical community problem. £1.3 million goes into a programme and disgracefully little is achieved in three years. Disgracefully little. Is Boris, or are you, going to go round those communities now, where you raised expectations, and explain what has gone on and what will be available in the future to help with the young men in that community? That is the thing that really gets me about this, that the money has disappeared into a bureaucratic black hole when there are communities and people on the ground asking for help who had goodwill and support for this project. Are you going to do another outreach programme locally?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The programme was first announced in 2008. As I explained in previous Committees there were delays, partly because of the uncertainty around the London Development Agency (LDA) funding, so the programme launched last August. We are a year into a three year programme. It was announced during a very extensive community consultation where the Mayor went round to a number of communities. In fact it was the largest ever community consultation ever done in this building.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** It was, and it looked as if it was going to be very successful.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** There was a very positive response. The team here have gone round and visited each of the delivery partners that were involved in the original programme, have gone and talked to many community groups whom we would encourage to bid into the fund, which is still open - the deadline is still some days away - and had extensive conversations. We are talking to the different communities and ensuring that they are consulted and involved in the design of the new programme.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Do you understand and accept that the broader communities that were involved - because they were really large meetings, some of them - people have been left hanging, not knowing really what is going and what is being made available?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The £1.3 million is still being spent. We have outlined how that is being spent here and we would continue to consult with those communities and talk with them. I fully understand where you are coming from.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Well there is a generation of young boys who have gone from childhood into young manhood during that period. Can I ask you about the mentees and we will talk about Ray's expectations. I seem to remember there was, at some point, a figure that said there is quite a lot of people who want to be mentors and who have had the training, and you said that it was good quality training. How many people do you know are on a list of willing, trained mentors?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor):** Trained mentors?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Yes. People who want to be trained. What is our potential pool of mentors?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** There are approximately 280 trained mentors and we are continuing to get the public calling us to tell us they are available for mentoring. We have been capturing and we have been communicating with those people who have expressed an interest. We will be allocating those mentors that have expressed an interest to mentor to the new delivery partners for training and onward matching.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** So you will be passing them on?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Absolutely, yes.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** What about the people who expressed an interest and have not yet been through any of the processes? How many were there, roughly? I thought we had heard a figure of over 1,000 at one point. Did I dream it?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The number that registered an interest I cannot remember. I think it was approximately 1,000.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** There is a big bank of people who got excited by the outreach and want to help, who can see the problem, who were sitting there, waiting to hear, to get the training, to get mobilised to help our young community, and what are you telling them at the moment?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** My understanding is that the initial call for mentors, that list, was handed to UEL. They did correspond with those people who had expressed an interest and sought applications. Of the 1,000 plus people who had expressed an interest approximately 400 people actually filled in an application form and a significant number of those have been trained, have been matched, and are actually mentoring through the UEL programme.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** So there is nobody you offered to help who has not had a proper contact?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** All those people who approached either the LDA or the Greater London Authority (GLA) have been communicated to, with either a referral on to UEL or communication from us to say that their details will be passed to a local delivery partner.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Did UEL do anything to try and find out why there was attrition of over half of the initial applicants and why they did not fill in a form? Were there language bars? What happened? I would not expect all of them to come through but that is quite a lot to fall out of the process isn't it?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Certainly in conversations with UEL I am reasonably satisfied that they did actually communicate to those people who did express an interest, and not just on one occasion. I do think that they did make a genuine effort to convert expressions of interest into applications.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Do you mean, then, to do another recruitment round?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** I think that is something that we want to assess with the new delivery partners. Initial conversations at the expression of interest indicates the type of organisations who are expressing an interest in the new fund. Do they actually have local relationships with communities of the boys that they would be targeting their programme at? I think we will need to make an assessment with new delivery partners as to whether a pan-London recruitment drive is required or, indeed, if these delivery partners are able to source some of the mentors from their own communities.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Have UEL accounted for all of the expenditure of the money that they have had and have you audited what they have accounted?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We are in the process of finalising the grant addendum and once that has been completed we will undertake the audit of UEL.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** You will undertake an audit. You will undertake an audit, yes?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** You will. Thank you.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** The Time for Action Panel received evidence around some of these issues about keeping in contact with people or not. Some people have been waiting in excess of two years between being matched or even considered, their initial response, remembering they had already done some pre-training before they did the training. Have you got any evidence or any of the tracking of that? One or two people have come back and said they have dropped out because they thought they were never going to be used. We may have lost some very good quality people because of the follow-up or the lack of follow-up as they perceive it, whether it is a letter or not. What audited evidence have you got around that process in terms of imagining -- in fact I think one of the former mayoral advisers talked about the importance of keeping in contact with people. Have we got any?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** In terms of the work that my team has been doing, we have been looking solely at the contracts in terms of the fact that we went into a contract with UEL in August and it was at that point that we passed over the potential mentee list.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. But in a client/contractor relationship there are things that you asked UEL or other providers to provide evidence of for follow-up and evidence back of how long people have been on the waiting list, I presume. Was that ever requested by GLA officers of UEL or the other providers to see how long people had been on the waiting list to be matched?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** That's not my understanding of ...

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Do you know?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The point that had been made just before was that we had asked UEL in their contracts to make sure that they had followed up with all the registered interest for those who wanted to become mentors, then those who then sent in a form would be contacted and offered training. That was our ask of UEL. Obviously, those people who did not fill in the form we do not know, but we have asked them to make repeated contact with them.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Right. I suppose the thing I am asking you is have you seen evidence that UEL did this?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Yes.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Can you produce the evidence? Did you ask of evidence of UEL or any other providers that UEL were using that they actually did this?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Through our contract management meetings with UEL we saw confirmation that they had been in communication with the mentors who expressed the interest.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. Were those contract meetings minuted? Those contract meetings with UEL were they minuted? Is there a record taken of the discussions of any request made of UEL or anybody else about performance of the contract and how the contract is working? I think there should be. I know you are searching for it, but ...

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** There are records of some of the contract management meetings we had with them from the point at which I was taking over responsibility to complete the project. I just cannot answer for some of the earlier contract management meetings that happened before I took over. I am sorry.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Can we have a list of those meetings that have taken place, even the ones prior to this, with UEL and others in terms of the service contract? We are not interested in commercially confidential information but we would be quite interested in seeing what is redacted and see the justification of it. I think we would like to see the copies of those meetings as well and see what was asked and requested. OK.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** I was quite amazed by your confidence, still, in UEL and they are going to be getting another £51,000 in the next financial year. I have not seen any evidence today that they really have delivered even a minute fraction of what you were hoping they would. As Val [Shawcross] has picked up, I am really concerned about the thousands of people who expressed interest, communities that were excited about this, to then have seen it just fall off. I have no confidence that contact has been followed up, really vigorous contact with people who have expressed an interest in getting involved with this.

What I want to understand is we have suddenly got this new managing agent, Rocket Science. I do not know anything about them and they are going to be running this new venture. Can you tell us about them and why you think this is the way to deliver part of this programme?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** OK. We ran a procurement exercise with Transport for London (TfL) for a contract for services to provide a managing agent for the new fund. We were clear that --

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Why did you feel you needed a managing agent? Why did you feel you needed to go down that route?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We felt that a managing agent would provide a more cost-effective and efficient way of actually running this particular fund, rather than the GLA itself administering this particular fund. We, with TfL approached the market and sought applications from seven organisations. These are organisations that we have worked with before who have a track record of delivering programmes of this nature. As I say, we ran a competitive procurement process and Rocket Science was the preferred candidate.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Tell us about Rocket Science. Other people might know them. I do not know them. There are lots of people in the room, tell us about them, please.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Rocket Science has a clear track record of managing projects. They managed the Team London Small Grants Programme and they also demonstrated that in their partnership with the Black Training and Enterprise Group. They hope to demonstrate their ability to actually communicate with the relevant community groups, that we would look to seek applications from for the new fund. They have a track record of grants administration. This is their core business so they do monitoring meetings. We also expect them to support our existing mentoring grant agreements and also provide the monitoring and the co-operation with the evaluators that we would appoint for this contract.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** OK. An organisation that sounds like they have got a good track record in this area. Are they going to have any links in terms of -- I know it is separate parts but you have still got some UEL money going on. Are they going to be monitoring that because, effectively, you are giving money to UEL? Are they going to be monitoring that as well as part of this because they have been monitoring all the other groups they have been giving funds to?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We are currently in discussions with Rocket Science over the set up of the new fund. Other monitoring agreements that we put in place once the new fund is in place we have not finalised those discussions.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Potentially, they could, effectively, monitor the grant that you are going to be giving to UEL so there is some consistency in the monitoring arrangements?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** That is something that we have not made a decision on.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** But it is an option that you might consider?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** That is something that we have not --

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Yes or no? Is it something you will consider or is it not something you will consider?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** I guess it is something we could consider.

**Caroline Pidgeon:** Is it something you are interested in, Munira, perhaps having this organisation who seem to have quite a lot of experience perhaps also monitoring the work going on at UEL and the administration of that grant?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I will take the advice from the officers who are working on the project closely. I can see that there may be advantages and disadvantages and adding additional layers of bureaucracy in auditing may not be viable, but I am happy to get advice.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** I am not sure that we are convinced here that they have delivered so far, so it might be useful to have.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** What, Rocket Science, are you --

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** No, UEL, which is why, if Rocket Science is as good as you are saying - they have done Team London and so on - then it might be advisable that they could oversee that, potentially. I will leave it there. Thank you, Chair.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Just for clarification, Rocket Science is a contract, or is that grant aid?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is a contract.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** That is a contract. OK. TfL oversaw that procurement project. Well in light of what has happened in the past I think we would like to see what that procurement arrangement was and the times and who was involved and all the rest of it. We would like to see the full details of that, and

also the record of Rocket Science. They are project managers, in a sense, aren't they? They have got a track record. They are project managers.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** They are contract managers.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Contract managers. OK. All right. So we understand that. We will go into detail about the grant aid because that is quite a significant thing in terms of the other contract, the other grant aid, the deliverers. Let's call them the deliverers of local delivery partners about works later on.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** I am trying to understand the problems with the original model. You recognise there were problems with the original model. Was the problem that it was over-centralised and not as devolved as it could be?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** In essence, I think really the key learning was that we needed that closer relationship between the local delivery partners and the mentors to ensure that that matching process was implemented in a swifter and a more supportive manner.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Sorry, just to add, one thing that we did learn which works very well was the consistency and the quality of the training. That is something we transferred from the original model to the new one. We are asking the local delivery partners to take charge of that, but we have designed a training manual. We have worked with the existing delivery partners and with the new ones on what that training will be, so it is a more decentralised model. One of the things that was innovative about the original concept was that you would have a very high quality training approach which had certain elements to it, which we are continuing.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** So it was about being, effectively, more localist and recognising relationships that already exist between current organisations out in the field rather than playing to the centre and allocating funds directly from the centre? Have I got the drift of that? Effectively it was too centralised to start off with, and a more decentralised model, I understand. Thank you very much.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** Yes, Chair, thank you. The question that I wanted to explore we just got to. The training model, Munira, that was devised and put together by UEL for the original programme. You are saying that you are staying with that programme. Is that what you are saying? I am just wanting to hear what was good about how it was done, because to read all of this, it seems like a total disaster, and I do not believe it is any such thing. There were clear mistakes and there are all sorts of problems, but can we understand what was good that came out of the relationship between all of these people with goodwill, they have really set out with goodwill. Are you saying it is the training programme that came out of it, and the cost of that is quite high?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is very expensive; training. The original way in which the training worked is that that was entirely managed by UEL. The design and the content of the training, and the delivery of the training, and the screening took place centrally and what we decided in the design --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** Sorry, when you say centrally, what do you mean by that?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It was all co-ordinated by UEL.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** Right.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** In the new model we have taken the content of the training, which was very high quality and we had extremely good feedback from people who had been on it, and the design and the approach of it. We have transferred that into a training manual which we can send you a copy so you can see it. It did have very strong academic underpinning, had a very strong selection underpinning, which UEL helped to develop along with others, and we have turned that into a manual. We would ask the new local delivery partners that are coming on board to use that and to work with them on the delivery of that. There was an issue about how the screening took place, and making sure that we were not duplicating the screening, but we can send you more information about the actual training so you can see it.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** It is just to get my head round this thing. Could we look back at the planning and the thinking? Is it possible to show that maybe there was a misunderstanding about the cost of that? When you look at this, the spending programme that was allocated, was that underfunded and that, then, has taken up a lot of the money? I am just trying to understand where the money that was spent went. The majority of that money went to that element of the programme, is that right?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** There was some academic input that we simply wanted from UEL to help us design things like the training manual and to ensure that we got the quality of the relationship mentors correct. Yes, some of the funding that went to UEL was that investment in terms of the academic expertise into this line of that part of the programme.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** We are saying then, having bought that, that anything that follows would clearly be cheaper, or you now have a package and you are now talking about delivery partners. I would like to know more about those in a moment. So your delivery partners will be given the package and they can continue to do the work that they are doing, if they are at local level, because this is their business. Is that what you are saying?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes, the new fund will reflect the ethos of what we were trying to do originally, but deliver it a very local level.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** OK. Now, let me just be clear. I am passionate about mentoring. I have been mentoring for the last 40 odd years. First I was mentored myself. That is one of the reasons why I am sitting here. I have continued to mentor, so I am passionate about mentoring, but it is not cheap. Everybody thinks it is cheap, and if you are going to do it, you have to do it well. Now, if I walk up any of my high streets in my three boroughs, I am inundated with people saying they are trainers and that they can mentor young people. It seems to be that this is the new cash crop out there. How are you going to evaluate and make sure that the delivery partners locally have the integrity and that their work is of quality? Who is going to be charged to do that?



**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** I think we will approach this in three ways. Clearly through the application process we ask very specific questions to do with what the track record of any organisation that we would award a grant to is. We also propose to have an interview process as part of the application award process. Then clearly, once we award contracts, we do have a contract management process that allows us to do the checks and balances, and allows us to look at the quality of the provision that they are providing.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** Everyone who applies for something has to provide references. Would it be useful to ask for references from the local authority? For instance their business is young people and they are already involved in office funded programmes. I am sure that we are going to see that many of the young people they are dealing with may well fall into the same category. What is going to be the relationship with the local authority and who will you be seeking validation or references from locally?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We will request references from the applicants. We have not considered, at the moment, references from the local authority. Perhaps it is something we could look at.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** They have not put it in writing but I know a number of organisations who it is felt may well be in systems that they as a local authority would not touch with a barge pole. It always strikes me as odd that a local authority whose responsibility it is for these young people – some of the most vulnerable, some of them leaving care -- those local authorities would not give funding to that organisation yet they may well be on the GLA list or on TfL's list. It always strikes me as odd that you do not actually know that until maybe after. What I am suggesting is maybe that is something you could take on.

Then going on to transparency this has just been so contentious given that it is such a good thing and given there is so much goodwill. Can we have total transparency? Why can't we see the short listed candidates posted and then the successor candidates of the local delivery agents? Certainly as an Assembly Member, if I was to be able to go on there and say, "Such and such a local body is the delivery body" I could then be part of the ambassadorial team to say to young people, "Go down to that organisation". How much transparency can we get on this?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Clearly I am bound by the GLA procedures with relation to the awards of grants.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** How does that curtail you?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** I think to answer your question what I would like to do is seek some advice about what degree of transparency we could offer and come back to you.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** All the questions that we have heard this morning and what we have raised before, and even from the first scoping of this document where there were concerns there -- I am on record and that is why I am in a very difficult position -- if I picked up a penny I would never give it to Eastside Young People. That is my personal view, yet it is regarded here as an organisation that

is receiving money. It seems to me if we could get as much transparency so that communities can see who is applying, who is being shortlisted and who has got the contract. There may be a point during that process that somebody can say, "Do you know what? This organisation has let me down. We're involved with them. They've let me down. So why have you shortlisted them?"

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Can I just say, in the interests of fairness, there is a reason why the GLA does not publicly announce shortlisted candidates and organisations because it might not be in their interest to have it known publicly that they did not receive a grant. We respect that, and various other people more expert than I can explain that. We would generally follow the procedure.

I think your point about the view of the local authority is an important one and an interesting one. We can look into whether we ask local authorities or other references, but generally when we do invite applications we ask the organisation to put forward their references and they may not be the local authority. It might be because they have not worked with the local authority or it is true that the local authority does not like their approach, but that would not necessarily deter us if we felt that their approach was convincing and compelling and they gave good references.

What I do not want to do is commit to not supporting an organisation unless they have the explicit support of the local authority. I would say that we would certainly be interested in looking at that and we would not discount it.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** I hear what you are saying. I am saying here that this is public money. Maybe we might have to look at GLA procedures. Maybe it is the procedures that are not allowing the transparency that is required. There is a pound of public money being spent and I think there is an argument to say as much transparency as we can get is what we should be seeking. I would like to hear from you in writing what it is that you are saying that would stop you from announcing the shortlisted candidates. In your own department if you are doing something you are going to spend money on you issue a public call for applicants. Some of those things are advertised.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We advertise. We do not necessarily publish the names of the organisations that did not get through. I think it might be better for somebody from the GLA finance team or the procurement team to explain the rationale, rather than me doing it.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** We will follow this up outside this meeting in terms of transparency but, given the things that have arisen historically which have got nothing to do with you, you can understand the anxiety of Members round this table. There will be some further questions I am going to pose to you that may give clarity to that anxiety around some of the approaches.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Just on that, I do not think you should assume just because there are poor relations between an organisation and the borough that that organisation is in some way bad. Cite the example of the Pedro Club which had to evict Hackney from its premises because of their interference in their mentoring programmes and yet it is a marvellous organisation. Just because there is a bad relationship between the borough and the organisation does not mean that that organisation is not a good organisation. You have been to the Pedro Club.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** I absolutely take that point but I am just saying what we should be seeking here, given that we are all committed to this, is the best way forward is as much transparency as possible. I think it is odd that a public body that has responsibility for some of these children up to 16 or 18 are out of the loop. It would make sense for us to make some links with them. This £1.1 million, huge as it is, is just a small part of the spend on these young people.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** I wanted to go back to some of the figures we had earlier. There are 279 trained mentors now and 122 established mentoring relationships. When were those 279 mentors trained?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** That is the total from the beginning of the project, from August 2011.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Until when?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** To Q2 this year.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** They are still being trained this year. How many young black boys have you had referred to the mentoring programme?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** The referrals come to the local delivery partners (LDPs). I am sorry I just do not have that information to hand but I can get back to you. I just do not have it in front of me.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** That would be very useful to have to see how many black boys are in need of assistance and how many are actually paired up. That would be useful. One point of clarity, Chair. You asked for details of the review that the GLA did --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** The evaluation.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** We need the interim evaluation report that the Mayor has promised the Time for Action Panel. I want to check if there are two reports or ...?

**Len Duvall (Chair):** They may be one and the same thing. I think, Munira, you are on record as saying, in the autumn of last year, that there would be an evaluation within a year. I presume that evaluation report was done much earlier than that and that is the evaluation of the UEL progress and the root and branch review that one of you earlier indicated. Is that true, or are there two reports?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Can we just be clear about what is an evaluation and what is a review of a project. We undertook a project review after a year of the particular project. We have not started the evaluation of this particular programme. We are in the process of commissioning that evaluation now. The evaluation of this programme will start in line with the new fund.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** So that would be a year from the beginning of the new fund? How are you going to do the evaluation of the new arrangements?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We are in the process of commissioning an evaluation of the programme and that will be in place from January which is the start of the new fund. It will evaluate the impact of the previous 12 months.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** I think what we would like then is we would like the review project document, just for the sake of clarity, and then we would like to see what your scoping is of the evaluation and the background papers and how that evaluation -- presumably you are going to commission someone to do that or are you going to do that in-house with the GLA?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We will look to commission that externally.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. You will go out through another procurement this year? That will not be grant aid; that will be a contract?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes. My understanding is that will be a contract.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** I am a little confused about what parts of the whole programme are covered by payment by results. I am not quite sure. If we are not wasting money if we are on the basis of payment by results it means we are not meeting a need but at least we are not wasting money. So which elements are payment by results?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** The contracts with the mentoring organisations are payment by results so they are paid on the results that they deliver.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Sorry, Andrew, just for clarity, UEL only received payments on the payment by result contract that they had and its partners. Is that correct?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We do a contract with UEL which has payment triggers which are triggered as a result of things that they do. For example, they are paid in terms of a matched relationship that is a payment trigger, and that is outlined in their contract.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** That is with UEL, not with the UEL and its partners. It is just with UEL?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** With UEL.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** So you do not know, in the performance of UEL's partners, which ones were producing the matches, the pairings? You are just relying on what UEL bill you for?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** They submit quarterly claims to us and those are claims against the contract terms that we have in place with them.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Sorry, I will ask it again and be clearer. Does UEL, in submitting the invoice to you, say, "This is in respect of pairings in X borough or pairings undertaken by X project on our behalf"? Do you get that level of detail? I am trying to get to the bottom of who is performing and who is not performing in terms of some of these organisations that UEL had as partners that they had commissioned to do mentoring work. Do you have that information? Was that in the invoice? Do you know what you were paying for?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We have a contract with UEL. Within that contract there are payment triggers. How UEL deliver against those payment triggers is commercial to their arrangements --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** So you never asked --

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We do know. It may not be in the formal contract arrangement for them to tell us but they do tell us roughly where matches are taking place, which boroughs and so on.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We do know because of delivery partners in certain boroughs, but we do not stipulate any contract terms between them and their sub-contractors.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Can I have some following information? Who is being paid what, UEL, and what is being passed on to other partnering bodies? Who is being paid what for ongoing work? Can we see a breakdown of that in terms of by results?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Chair, that is why I was asking specifically if there was going to be an internal audit where we would be able to look within this. We ought to be able to pore over all of that stuff --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** We will pick up. Andrew, you were in full flow and I interrupted you.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** I was trying to figure out if the partners fully delivered to the programmes they aspired to what would that total figure be? We are told that the programme spend to date is -- what is the total spend on this project to date? Sorry, I am confused with the figures.

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** £217,000 was the expenditure last year.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Last year was £217,000 and this year projected ...?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** This year the projected spend is £51,000. £51,000.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** For this year?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** Yes.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** That is just UEL. If we were to have fully achieved our targets what would that look like? Would that be the full £1.3 million in one year?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** No. What you see in the report in front of you is the profile of expenditure of the project over the three years.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** But presumably we must have budgeted to succeed and get the full 1,000 young people matched. On that basis how much would the expenditure be if we had that 1,000?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** The maximum of £1.3 million.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** It would be. So it would be the £1.3 million we would be talking about. We are not talking about £1.3 million at the moment because of payment by results we have not spent. It is a great advance on previous schemes which just allocated money and possibly did not see results. At least now we know that we are getting the results. Not as many results as we wanted to. Would you say that we are getting value for money on who we have matched to date?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** It is probably worth pointing out that there are payment triggers and some of the triggers are to do with matching. Some of the payment triggers come in at 6 months and at 12 months. Clearly this project is only a year old and a bit old. It is too early to see what those results are in terms of the 6 and 12 month relationships. However we will be looking to drive value for money throughout the contract.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** This is such an important scheme. Everybody in this Committee actually really wants it to work. I asked some questions at the start whether or not mentoring works. I know there have been academic studies. In some areas mentoring schemes do not work. We know mentoring works because we have many examples of where mentoring itself has worked. Are we being too hard on you because it is only a year do you think? When should we start giving you the heavy pressure for non-delivery? When are we going to get our thousand?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is a three year programme. We are a year in. We know that we have not met the initial projected targets which is why we redesigned it. In truth the full evaluation comes towards the end of a three year programme. However we would hope that in the next year we would be able to catch up and add new value to the way the programme is delivered.

I feel confident that the way that we have gone through the process in the last four months - what Amanda and her team have done - is that they have learned the lessons and they have not released any money that they did not feel was genuinely going towards those young people. You are right; there is certainly better value for money than previous schemes that have been initiated where you write the cheque and you hope for the best. What we are doing is trying to create the incentive in the system for the delivery partners to deliver and to work proactively with us.

I go back to the point that it is an innovative programme and it is on a very large scale. We are doing it in this way in order to ensure that it does deliver. We have learned some of the problems that even come from the first year and tried to change it for that reason.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** If we come back in a year's time and we have got that shortfall again it is going to be hard for you to explain that.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** You would be perfectly within your right to call us up again and say, "Why hasn't it worked" and unless I have a very good reason then you would be right to call me up about it. The reason we have redesigned it in this way is because we feel that this is the best way to do it. Because it is a new programme it is very difficult to predict how these things work. We are very concerned about protecting the voluntary sector that has engaged with this so it is important that we design it in a way that does not harm them as well. This is one of the reasons - I go back to Jennette's point - about not publishing organisations that have not got through. Certainly in a year I hope that we can show that we have made progress and that we have addressed some of the problems --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** In a year we have had 215 successes. We would like a few more of them. Thank you.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. So December 2013 how many will we have? What are your milestones in a year's time? I know it is a three year programme and I am not expecting 1,000 but what will we have in a year's time?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** It is difficult for us to answer that at the moment, Chair, simply because the fund application has not closed. We would need to look at the applications and the profiling of what they are proposing to achieve. We need to do some investigation as to the capability of those organisations to be confident that the grants we are awarding are going to be able to deliver against the contract that we would put in place. If you are OK with that, Chair, what I would like to do is be able to cover that at a later Committee once the Mentoring Fund application process has closed.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** We might have you back when we come to a round up. I have got some very quick questions. Some are not to answer now but maybe flagging up some issues. In terms of the relationship with Rocket Science they are your contractor and they are going to be managing the process, are they going to be the people with the key relationship with the local delivery partners, are they administering the grant aid or is it you?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** The GLA remains the decision maker but Rocket Science will administer those grants on our behalf.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. Going back to the grant aid approach - and we want to be supportive of the voluntary sector and protect it - some of the voluntary sector you are going to encounter are not going to be able to do payment by results so what flexibility have you got within that? They might be producing a good product but they have not got the money or the cushion to do payment by results. What thinking has gone into that?

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We have worked with Rocket Science to provide some information sessions for bidders. Within those information sessions we have tried to facilitate smaller organisations forming consortia bids such that we would be able to get really grass root local delivery partners but within a framework of other organisations who have the financial history that we would need to pass due diligence etc and also be able to provide capacity building for those smaller organisations to ensure that they are able to deliver on a public sector contract.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** That is a very good approach but this is where we got into difficulty before, so learning lessons before of bringing people together -- in fact one of the questions of Ray Lewis before was he was warming up the market. I noticed in an earlier answer to a question you talked about officers going into the boroughs and encouraging projects to come forward to bid. Going back to an earlier question that Jennette Arnold raised about publishing and upholding the integrity of the grant aid process that you are about to do, so you are picking and choosing and you are maintaining the quality approach that I think, Munira, you tried to outline in October by saying, "Maybe we shouldn't rush this. It's an approach that takes time to do". What are the key principles that you are telling officers? Presumably Ray Lewis does not warm up the market any more? I am looking to you, Munira, to answer that. You have given him instructions not to warm up the market?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We held formal warming up events where we have gone out and spoken to --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** What role has Ray Lewis played in that?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** He has not warmed up the market.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** You have not asked him to in any way?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Fine. So there have been official events all above board all recorded --

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is possible that he may have spoken to people. I cannot say that he has never spoken to anyone but he has not been asked by us to warm up the market.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** If he has spoken to someone do you not think it is wise that he should report that to you?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** He generally talks to us informally about --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** We have got a list of people that he would have spoken to then, if that has taken place? Do you not record that? Do you not think you should record that for integrity issues? Someone



might declare an interest, “I’ve spoken to X, Y Z or I’ve been approached by people who might be bidding for public money”? Do you not think that is appropriate?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** He is the Mayor’s Mentoring Champion so he talks about mentoring --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** The Mayor is constrained by it and he [Ray Lewis] is free to go out and talk to who he likes. That is not right is it?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** He is free to tell people that the Mentoring Fund exists but he has not been asked by us to make specific approaches to organisations to ask them to apply.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Given that special designation by the Mayor and in his condition of contract for that appointment it says that he should make it clear to you, or the Mayor’s office, who he is talking to about these schemes or who approaches him. In fact there is a specific issue about declaration of interest and issues around that. Why at this stage is there any question about Ray Lewis’ role? It is quite clear cut. You are the Deputy Mayor overseeing this project. He should be reporting to you about any of those contacts to avoid any of the issues that we had before in people raising questions about the process and who gets awarded this public money. That is down to you. No one else. No good looking to him.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** There is no conflict of interest. He has not made a formal approach to any organisation. He does meet publicly and talks to people. He tells us informally that he has spoken at events but he has not encouraged or been involved in bids to this fund.

**Jeff Jacobs (Head of Paid Services, GLA):** I think Munira has already said that there is no expectation that Ray Lewis would be part of the recommendations made on who gets awards in this next decision making process.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** For clarity you are going to provide us with a narrative about the quality control of the people that are going to be doing this at local level. I presume that is one of the issues why you instituted some of the changes, to get a handle on, in terms of making sure that they have a proven track record in the mentoring that Andrew Boff described - there is mentoring and there is mentoring - in the type of mentoring that we want to see? It does seem that this approach could lead to fragmentation. Presumably you have thought through those issues in learning the lessons and there is probably a risk assessment of this project is there? Fine. Can you share that with the Committee so we can have an understanding of the risks that you think you will be facing in the coming months and years in implementing this project? I think that those are about the issues that we want.

In December we have agreed a date with Ray Lewis because he could not come to this meeting with you. I would not wish to keep him on standby for that but it may well be appropriate that one or both of you might wish to attend that December meeting, dependent on the information you provide. We will try to negotiate that with you if you are not able to do that. I do not want to get into summons as this is informal but we will talk to you immediately in the days following this meeting to try to see if that is possible or not possible. At least one of you might need to make yourself available.

Are there any other questions in following up? We think we got there in the end as to why you made some changes. I think we understand the changes and we are probably supportive of those changes. The thing for this Committee is it was there in the process in the autumn of 2011 that there were going to be problems with this contract. In fact there was a recommendation saying that we needed to up the game of contract monitoring to sort some of these issues out. There were issues about grant aiding versus contract issues. Let's hope that the initial implementation is not bedevilled by some of the problems in terms of the new arrangements.

You can understand why we are asking loads of questions because we are not clear why at this stage, and maybe by December when we have seen some further information you have provided to us, why these new arrangements are not going to meet the objective that we all want and which the communities of London are looking forward to accessing. We wish you well in that. We thank you for the way that you have answered the questions in this session. We really are very grateful in the answers you have endeavoured to provide to us but we will be coming back and finding out some of these issues. Thank you very much.

GLA Oversight Committee – 28 November 2012

Transcript of Item 6: The Mayor's Education Inquiry

**Darren Johnson (AM):** Can I first ask about the issue of free schools. The Mayor said he had identified ten sites on the GLA estate for free school development. How many sites have you identified so far?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are going through the entire estate. It is taking some time to work through the process. We cannot announce any individual sites at this stage.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** Have you been contacted so far by any community groups who have specific proposals and specific suggestions for sites?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Yes, for GLA sites as well as non-GLA sites.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** How many of each so far?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I am afraid I cannot tell you off the top of my head but a few dozen have been in touch generally since the Mayor announced this.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** One of the issues that you raised in the Commission in the report was that there may well be a mismatch between where the actual places are needed and where there is enthusiasm for a free school. How are you addressing that?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We recognise - and London Councils recognises - there is a serious problem of school place shortages in London. We would argue that it is very important that we build school provision in those areas. The Government has made a presumption and asked the boroughs to presume that any new schools that are built are free schools and academies. We are offering to assist matching up free school groups that are looking for sites with those facing need. However, we also recognise that free schools are intended to be demand led as well and that there may be many parents in London who want a new school in their area. There is existing provision but they are not satisfied with the provision and therefore we are happy to support groups that want to set up even where there is not a basic need shortage.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** Even where we do not need them.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Parents would say that they do need them and they would have to demonstrate that there is demand in those areas.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** One free school that was being set up – and I think the inquiry actually pointed to this as an example – in an area where there was already a surplus of school places and the schools were graded outstanding, yet that was where the demand – the problem with this completely demand-led approach is that it could well lead to a mismatch because there may be places as well where there is an absolutely dire need for a new school for additional school places but there is not necessarily the community infrastructure and knowhow and so on to campaign or put in a proposal or a bid for a free school. There could be a complete mismatch. We could have schools in areas where we do not need them and no demand for schools in areas where they are desperately needed.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** A few things I would say in response. The first is that we have argued, along with London Councils, to Government and we supported the Department for Education's (DfE) proposal to Government for more funding into London to deal with the basic shortage. We recognise that there needs to be an injection of funds into the system.

The second thing is that it is true that some communities are well equipped to argue for free schools, which is why we are very keen to encourage more communities to come forward. We have met with a number of free school groups. We want to support their applications. The New Schools Network, which is funded by the DfE, to also encourage applications and to support people in doing what is a quite challenging process. We want to encourage more parent groups and more communities to come forward.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** There could be a big imbalance here because, say, there is a local neighbourhood that has maybe a well known journalist and novelist, for example, with access to the media and many legal friends and so on. There may be other areas, say parts of Thamesmead for example, where there might not be as many lawyers and journalists and people with the right connections to get things moving. How are you going to address that imbalance, that basic justice issue that there will be an imbalance between schools, in one community to another?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The number of groups that have come forward are from across London and they come from disadvantaged communities as well as from, what you might see as more affluent communities. From their perspective it is a very popular policy. They want to see the schools in existence. I think you are referring really to Toby Young's [British journalist and author] school, the West London Free School, which is massively oversubscribed in the area and so these schools demonstrate that there is a demand in these areas.

I think you are right that we need to support the pipeline. We need to encourage more community groups to come forward if they feel that there is a need and they are not satisfied with local provision. We are looking at how this new unit that we have set up will do that.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** You are going to support a demand-led approach regardless of whether there is a surplus of places in the area and regardless of whether the existing schools with surplus places are regarded as good schools?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is Government's policy to support free schools so that they respond to parental demand so, yes. We also recognise --

**Darren Johnson (AM):** We know that is a Government policy but there is also the issue of releasing GLA property and providing GLA resources in infrastructure and officer support and so on. Is the GLA going to be supporting either by providing infrastructure, funding, expertise or whatever? Is the GLA going to support applications for new schools in places where there is already a surplus of places and in places where the existing schools are deemed to be of very good quality?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** When it comes to the GLA's sites we will make decisions over the next few months about how we would allocate those.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** That could be a fairly common sense starting point though, could it not, to say that if there is not a need for new places and the existing schools are already deemed academically very good there is no need to throw GLA money and resources and buildings at it?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I think parental demand is a key factor so I would not discount that.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** Even where parental demand is completely irrational?

**Tony Arbour (AM):** That is ridiculous.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** Can we just ask how many officers will work in the New Schools for London unit that is being headed up at the GLA?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are working on the proposals.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** When will we know that?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I cannot put a specific deadline on it because we are talking to DfE. We have to work that out. I would say in the next few months we would be in a position to announce it.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** The overall cost of the unit?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Again, we are working that out.

**Darren Johnson (AM):** OK. Thank you.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Just for clarity, on the primary school places coordination, is that an informal role of the Mayor or has the Mayor been asked by the DfE to take on the tsar? Did we not have a tsar for primary school places at one stage coordinating across London the boroughs in terms of their asks of Government?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** The London Research Centre used to do some.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Subsequently certain educationalists were called in to lead that process with London boroughs about either surplus places or lack of primary school places. Has the DfE asked the Mayor to do this?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The GLA already has, in its Intelligence Department, officers serviced to boroughs currently which is to monitor where shortage is, what projections are. We are looking at how we can improve that. The admissions process, which is a separate thing, still takes place at the local boroughs. There are lots of inter-borough agreements. We think that we can enhance the process and give boroughs more information that they have told us that they want.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** I wanted to follow up these questions about the GLA estate. The Mayor said apparently he is going to identify ten sites on the GLA estate for school development and that they are going to be *pro-bono*. Can you confirm whether or not those potentially include police and fire stations?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** You said *pro-bono*?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Yes.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** As in they will be provided for free?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Yes.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No, that is not the intention. We did not announce that.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Right. So he is going to make it available for sale?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Yes.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** At market price?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Whatever the criteria is for sale. I do not think it is market price. I think it is red book value or ...

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Red book value.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I cannot remember off the top of my head. I can get that information to you.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** If they are not being competitively tendered they are potentially not going to be sold at full market price?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** OK. Can I just go back to this point about --

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Not necessarily but obviously it is for the people to decide --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Can you confirm whether or not potentially police stations and fire stations could be included in this?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The Mayor has already said that all the GLA Group's estate will be looked at.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** OK. The police service and the fire service are both going through processes of examining their property portfolios. The police apparently in relation to the policing models that have been defined and their community access policies, and the fire service have just taken a big document through the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority [LFEPA] looking at attendance times. None of these documents and none of the discussion within those services, as far as I am aware, discusses whether or not these sites are potentially suitable for schools. Is there going to be any influence on the outcomes of the property decisions taken by the fire and the police service made in accordance with the Mayor's policy on education? Is it going to be influencing which stations are closed?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** My understanding is that the functional bodies are developing their own strategy regarding their estates. The Mayor has said that he is asking all the functional bodies to audit their estates and for a single property unit to be set up here at the GLA that will publish a list of sites. Then it is for discussion for functional bodies, different agencies, and for the Mayor to look at how those different sites are maintained or disposed. It is part of a wider picture that the GLA has certain obligations and certain commitments for the public good, for housing, for schools and for any other uses. You would have to ask the functional bodies really on their decisions on different buildings.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** OK. In terms of the decisions being made by the fire and the police services at the moment to conform to their budgets, are you saying that there will not be any buildings which are closed because they are potentially a school site?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I would be surprised if that was the only reason for it --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Can you confirm that there will be no police stations or fire stations closed because there is an aspiration to turn them into a site --

**Tony Arbour (AM):** LFEPA has already said it is for the benefit of the fire service.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** This is why I am asking what the policy is because if the Mayor has said he is going to make some sites available I want to know whether those are going to be sites available

because they have been closed for service and budget reasons or because they have been identified as potential school sites.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I understand what you mean. They would be closed for operational reasons. The decisions would be made by the functional bodies. What then happens to those buildings, the functional bodies would develop the strategy for their disposal.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** OK. In terms of the budget impact on those functional bodies obviously they are still separate organisations; the police service and the fire service. They have fiduciary duty to deliver best value and they have operational standards to deliver. What would happen if a site is disposed of at a red book price when in fact it could have been disposed of at a higher level of price and could therefore have made a higher contribution to the service budgets of those organisations?

**Tony Arbour (AM):** Before Munira answers that do you think we could ask Martin [Clarke] whether or not it is a fact that these sites are to be sold at a discount?

**Martin Clarke (Executive Director - Resources, GLA):** I do not know if it is a fact. I do not know, is the answer. The legislation to sell below market price is still in place so, therefore, it would still bring into play a Secretary of State decision if you were to sell at a discounted price.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** Presumably if there is a decision to sell to a particular organisation - the DfE, a free school or whatever - that must mean that we are not going out to a full competitive tender process. Therefore there is some risk that you would be selling properties at a red book price which could potentially fall below the market value for those properties. The question is, if there is that gap, who is going to make it up for the functional bodies who have lost that potential capital income?

**Martin Clarke (Executive Director - Resources, GLA):** At present the Mayor sets borrowing and spending limits for the functional bodies. It would have to come into that process if there was a shortfall of, say, capital receipts to fund the capital programme. That decision would have to be taken within this building.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** It is potentially something that could happen?

**Martin Clarke (Executive Director - Resources, GLA):** Quite clearly. The legislative consent regime remains in place if selling below market price.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** When will we know what the sites are that have been potentially identified for sale to the education sector?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I think the intention of the single property unit is to publish a list of available sites not just for sale to the DfE or specific agencies, but just generally. I do not know how long it will take to identify which buildings would be used for schools or housing. I cannot put a date on that. I know that the intention is to publish some time either at the end of this year or the beginning of next year.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE (AM):** This calendar year?



**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The single property unit - which we can get you more information about - is being led by Richard Blakeway, the Deputy Mayor for Housing, Land and Property. The intention is that the functional bodies will publish a list of their data. I think that would need to go through some process of refinement. I can ask him to write to you with more detail. Does that sound correct to you?

**Martin Clarke (Executive Director - Resources, GLA):** The New Year.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The New Year. OK.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** I had a few things I wanted to pick up. Interesting in this report is it identifies there is this huge issue that there are 90,000 school places that will be short by 2016. I am not clear what the Mayor and your team are going to do in the short term to help try to find those places. Even if you are going down this free school route they are not going to be open in time for that number of pupils.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Free schools are opening quite quickly so they can potentially help address some of that issue. The other thing that we are doing is --

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Not the full 90,000.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No. However, we have also argued and lobbied Government, alongside London Councils, for sufficient funding for basic need in London. Last year we received a fairly good tranche of money to try to address that.

It is not the Mayor's statutory responsibility to deliver those 90,000 school places but we do think we can help in terms of making the case for London. Also helping to improve the data and projection using our own subscription service to boroughs and working with boroughs, particularly on cross-borough mobility which is a real issue in London.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Fine if you are a free school and you are going down that route of lobbying Government but there is a crisis fast approaching and I do not think that is going to resolve it.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** For instance we have had conversations with some boroughs that do not have available sites where they would like schools and they are coming to us and they are talking to us. Free school groups are coming forward. I think we can start to help even with sites that are not owned by the GLA but which we are aware of which obviously, because of the role of the GLA, we are familiar with land owners and with different developments that are going on around the city. I think we can play a strategic role in helping.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** One of the things that is referred to in this report, but also there have been other press reports, is around the idea of shrinking schools. I know the challenge in London is very small sites sometimes. The new boys' school in East Dulwich is a very condensed site and there are challenges there. What I am concerned about is the idea that you might actually shrink things like classroom sizes to try to get more schools built into smaller sites. Is that something you are also concerned about?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is not mentioned in the report. I do not think we have ever said that we would want to actually shrink either in the physical space of the classroom or the numbers of people in the classrooms. I know that --

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Architects are being asked to creatively look at rebuilding schools and looking at space and stuff. I think it is an issue and it is starting to come out in the press as well.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** That does not necessarily mean that you would see a shrinking in teaching space, it just means using the space in schools intelligently. Lots of schools were built in a different time and there are things that architects can do, creative ways in which they can use the space, which I think it is right for us to explore. We have attended various events. We have met with people who have got ideas for how to do that.

We are facing - I do not think it is an understatement to say - an emergency in London and there is a serious shortage of places and we need to accommodate these children.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** It is a huge issue. One of the other issues I wanted to pick up, looking at the inquiry, is one of the recommendations is around giving children in care and care leavers extra priority in apprenticeships, mentoring and so on. You may not be able to give me a figure today but could you let us know, through the Mayor's programme so far, how many of the people involved have been looked after children? Unless you have that figure to hand.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I am not going to have the precise figure. We have done quite a lot of work in this area. My predecessor, Pam Chesters, initiated some programmes and we have worked with London Councils both in terms of providing specific mentoring support through the London boroughs for children in care and also organising events here at the GLA where children in care met with leavers who have gone to university, so encouraging and inspiring them. The Mayor has also supported a London-wide foster campaign to encourage more parents to foster and to adopt.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** It would be useful to have the figures because if that is a recommendation the Mayor says he supports, how many to date have we seen in those programmes and perhaps in the information on mentoring what you are doing specifically around those groups.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** One of the things that was very clear in the Panel's report and in the discussions that we had was a feeling that we need to raise the game for all groups. Whilst it is important to have dedicated support for particularly vulnerable groups it is also important to see how support can be mainstreamed into wider educational practices. We will talk about specific work that we are doing in that area but we would also like to talk about how the things that we want to do with the Excellence Fund and with the Gold Club schools can also address some of those issues.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** If I pick up this Gold Club for schools, can you tell us what the point is of establishing a Gold Club of state schools?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** A point of clarity; they would be state schools and independent schools. There are two purposes. The first is to identify those schools that are doing exemplary practice in terms of their teaching and learning, and in terms of their ability to include children of all backgrounds and set the criteria in different ways for different types of school. What we want to do is identify those schools that are bucking the trend, so they are getting good results for children on free school meals, they are ensuring that they are teaching the core subjects, EBac subjects, to children even in disadvantaged areas and that we use those exemplary schools to show that can be done. We know from talking to head teachers and teacher training organisations that that is a very powerful way to inspire and motivate other schools to see what is possible and to compare data between schools in similar circumstances.

The second thing that the Gold Club will do is that in order to be part of the Gold Club, schools that are identified have to be willing to contribute back by working with other schools in similar circumstances to share the lessons that they have learned. It is about celebrating and showcasing the great work that happens in London and spreading that good practice in a way that is led by the teaching profession. We have had a really positive response from everyone we have spoken to so far about the potential of that.

**Caroline Pidgeon (AM):** Some teachers might just see this as yet another thing they have got to aspire towards when they are trying to get on with the day-to-day teaching in our schools. Have you actually got any evidence that this new elite, if you like, will actually improve standards overall? What is your evidence base for this?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We know that the London Challenge which was one of the programmes that we learned a lot from did have a very deep impact on the performance of schools and particularly on the leadership in schools. London Challenge ran for a number of years at a certain level of investment. We have therefore talked to different teaching organisations, teaching unions and schools about what they think would most help them. It is important to recognise success and to celebrate that so the schools that get into the Gold Club would value the chance to celebrate it.

There is evidence that peer-to-peer learning, teachers working with each other, observational classes and workshops spreading good practice does have a real impact on the quality of teaching and motivating teachers.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** I have a couple of questions. You have just talked about independent schools. Can I ask the definition; what do you mean by independent schools? Does that include all of the academies and private schools? In my constituency we have lost count of the number of independent private schools there are in Stamford Hill? In fact I do not know if anybody knows the numbers. Would that be private schools/academies?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** All of those, yes. The Panel felt it was important to show that there is good practice across the state and the independent sector in maintained and non-maintained schools and that there is learning that can be shared between them.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** The only thing I have with that is that academies are not private schools --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** State schools.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** They are state schools and get their funding through a different way. Sometimes in putting them in with private schools we get a little confused there.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Sorry, I did not describe them as private schools. When you ask what do you mean by private schools primarily most people will refer to independent schools as private schools but you could also talk about non-maintained schools and independent.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** OK. Let me check what our relationship with academies is. If you are assuming you have a relationship with a local authority and with London Councils and that is going to give you a relationship with academies then as someone who has just stood down from governorship of an academy that is not how it works. So what relationship do you have with academies across London?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I am not assuming that the local authority is the gateway into academies. For obvious reasons; they are not governed by local authorities. We received responses from 500 schools to our survey. That was a mixture of schools --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** How many academies?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I do not know if we actually had the details of how many of those were academies but a large group of them would have been. I think through the Gold Club a number of them will be academies so we would have a relationship with them directly. We also talked to the people who run the large academy chains in London as well as, of course, the local authorities.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** I have no problem with excellence. More of it. That is why, even though some of my family members and colleagues do not support the academy movement, I do. I do not have a problem with choice in that area or schools which look to promote excellence. What I have a problem with is their funding base is different and the way that everybody runs towards them and gives them the extra like you are planning to do with the Gold Club. In doing that what you are doing is widening the difference between academies and the community schools. Do you recognise that that could be one of the downsides of the work that you will be doing with the Gold Club and this gold star, if you are giving them to academies that are already, in my constituency, are performing and are bucking national trends. You are going to give them yet another star. They have already got three or four stars. You are going to give them a fifth.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The Gold Club is not just for academies, it is also for maintained school so it would help any school that is performing extremely well.

Just to clarify, the Gold Club is also asking schools to give back so they are being required to contribute to schools in similar circumstances.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** They are already doing that now. One of the problems in your document is I did not actually get anything new that I did not know that was not going on out there. What I did identify were a couple of gaps. The document did not speak about the problems that schools having lost their Building Schools for the Future programme have. That could have been one of the recommendations that we could be asking the Mayor to lobby the Secretary of State to restore the Buildings Schools for the Future (BSF) certainly to those schools where it was cancelled and certainly to those schools in areas of need where they have a shortage of school places. Are we doing anything? Are you planning to urge the Mayor to lobby Michael Gove [Secretary of State for Education]?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We have already - as I mentioned earlier - urged Government to recognise the shortage in London. The Government has permitted and created a new capital programme. It is not BSF because if you read the Sebastian James review about BSF there were problems with it. Local authorities themselves would recognise that there were some problems with how it worked and the delays and so on. The new capital programme is intended to try to address some of those problems and to make it a much easier process. Obviously, it is a very difficult economic climate but we would make the case for London and obviously schools need capital repairs, they need to expand and they need places in certain areas. That is why we have announced the things that we have to try to support that.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** One of the things, if you ask governors and teachers, that they have a real problem with is the careers service. It has never been as good as everybody would want it to be and indeed now it is under attack and its funding is reduced. It seems to me that would have attracted attention by the Panel and there was no mention at all in the document about careers. If you were looking for a London-wide or even an area approach, the careers service is something you could really have added value to. Did you discuss the careers service in any way? Do you think the careers service is useful? Given that it is under attack is there anything that you can do to urge the Mayor to support a service or the development of a London-wide careers office?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** If you look at Recommendation 6 that is exactly about careers, pages 44 to approximately 49. There is a huge section there on careers advice and careers education. We have committed to working with London Councils, the Young People Education and Skills Board and other agencies to look at feasibility and how we can support the careers service.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** That is not my Recommendation 6. My Recommendation 6 is the Mayor should bring together schools, further education (FE) and higher education institutions. It does not say anything there about the careers service.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Also Recommendation 7. We may not have the precise words careers service in there but it is about careers. If you look at the report there is a fairly large section about careers.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** That is an objective of yours; to look at that service?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** To look at what support we can bring to enhance the careers service that is offered by schools. What came through clearly in the consultation is that people are concerned and they do think careers advice is very important. They also think that the

quality has been very patchy – mediocre in some places. The old Connexions model had some strengths but it also had some significant weaknesses. It was felt that the new requirement for schools to monitor the destinations of young people was a real opportunity to embed good quality careers advice in schools, new models and new ways of doing that.

One thing that was very clear in the consultation and in the Panel's view was that teaching good quality subjects, good quality teaching in core subjects, is a gateway to good apprenticeships for FE and university and we make that point in the report. It is about recognising that careers advice and education, alongside very good quality education generally, is the way to try to improve people's pathways.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** Who doesn't know that? Thank you for confirming it through your Commission.

The one area that I would also have liked to have seen more on – and it is a growing group of young people I meet – is young black graduates who do not seem to have enough networks and are scattered all across London. Is there any thinking about how, through your work, you could help support -- I say young black graduates because they are the ones that present to me? Did that area come up in your work and discussion? Is that something that I could draw your attention to?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Thank you for drawing my attention to it. We did not talk about graduates in the report because really we were focused on the school age children but the Mayor is obviously doing a lot of work in terms of apprenticeships and encouraging employers to take on more young people to work. I am happy to ask my colleagues to compile some information about what we are doing in that area.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** That would be lovely. Lastly all of this work has got to be scrutinised by us. I am just not clear what timescale you are working to with your work. It is because you have got this mountain of work and pull the odd tree out. I am really not clear where the timeline is and when are we going to be able to see something of substance about the Gold Club and about the Mayor's relationships with free schools? For instance, I would have liked to hear about a register where the Mayor's discussions with free schools could be shown so that we would know who the Mayor is talking to about free school development, just for general information. Where are you in your timeline about producing action plans for the work that is coming out of the Commission and all of these many recommendations? There are a good few.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** When the report was published the Mayor gave a response to say that he accepted the recommendations and there would be a delivery plan produced in the next few months so we are hoping that that will be complete -- it is not something that we intend to publish with any fanfare; it is just really for our own purposes to set some milestones for the various actions that we are going to do. That will be some time in the New Year. The plan is that the Gold Club, the Excellence Fund and the Free Schools Unit will be announced in the next few months. Obviously, we are now working through the delivery. We are talking to the DfE and we are talking to different organisations about what that will look like. I am very happy to send you, probably some time towards the end of January, a bit more detail about what we intend to do and when.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** That would be great but it is beyond being happy for us to be cosy altogether; it is about how we are going to scrutinise the body of work. It is something that we will have to discuss offline because, as a scrutineer, I am not clear how that work is going to be done. Maybe a conversation with the Chair, our Head of Scrutiny and yourself or somebody We need to talk to in order to understand what that timeline is about. Thanks.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** What do you get for being a member of the Gold Club?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Recognition, which I think does matter to schools from the conversations that we have had and the response that we have had. You also have an opportunity to share what you do with a wider field. The thing that has really struck me is how much schools in London do genuinely want to share good practice and want to be a part of the London scene.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** They do share good practice.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** They do.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** My partner, as a teacher, is constantly in other schools. Either learning or showing.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** This Gold Club will also support them to do that with some funding. Just enable them to do that. As we know a number of schemes that existed like London Challenge no longer exist and schools need some extra support and resource to be able to do that facilitating. We would host events, we plan to do a conference here as well, just to share that good practice.

We are obviously not suggesting that this never happens but, from our conversations, we have been told that this would add value.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** These gold standard schools are they ones that are going to have really good GCSE passes?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Exam results will be one of the factors that we will look at certainly, yes.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** So schools that have been good for many, many years, well established, nice middle class catchment, well motivated, none of these irrational parents which the Greens seem to think there are around but actually well motivated parents who are teaching their kids, those schools could become part of the Gold Club as well?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** What we are looking at at the moment is differentiated criteria for different types of schools. Obviously non-selective schools have a very different catchment and very different intake to selective schools, for instance, so it would not be fair to just apply a blanket criteria to everybody.

The point is that we recognise that there is good practice across London.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** You are going to exercise some particular judgement as to who is in the Gold Club and who is not? How will you exercise that judgement?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We have also talked to Ofsted and we have made sure that these schools have similar kinds of verification for their success.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** From an Ofsted inspection?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We have not quite worked out exactly how it will work with Ofsted but --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** The 15 minutes that Ofsted spends in a class to judge whether or not the teacher is a good teacher or not.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** You would have to ask Sir Michael Wilshaw [Head of Ofsted] about how he is changing the process of Ofsted.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** So you are going to exercise some judgement about who is in the Gold Club and who is not in the Gold Club?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It will be based on objective criteria and we will check certain things like --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** What are those objective criteria?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are working those out now but once we know them we will obviously publish them.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** How do people stop being in the Gold Club? How do they drop out of being in the Gold Club? It seems that you are trying to establish a group of schools that have good practice or have good practice against the odds?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is both. The Gold Club will be decided every year so you cannot stay in it indefinitely. It is judged on the most recent results and outcomes.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Would schools have to change in order to keep in the Gold Club?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Change?

**Andrew Boff (AM):** As you admitted, recognition is a major part of the Gold Club and it would be pretty awful for a school, once it has been recognised to be part of the Gold Club, suddenly the next year to realise they are not in the Gold Club.



**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is based on exam results which schools will be working towards improving anyway so I do not think it is adding any extra burden onto schools. We are not asking them to do anything outside their core business.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Are you aware of the damage there is to a school when it stops being excellent and only becomes good, as an awful lot of schools have recently?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** If their exam results go down would you expect us to keep them in the Gold Club?

**Andrew Boff (AM):** I do not know. Are you saying that all schools that are good enough -- you are just going to look at exam results, Ofsted inspections and an idea that they might be improving and you are going to put those in the Gold Club on the judgement of the Mayor of London?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** They are judged by data that is objective that is already out there.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** That is not fair. The data is objective but the criteria that you establish for being in the Gold Club is not. That is a judgement of the Mayor of London.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** One of the reasons why it takes time to work out the criteria -- I think it is a fair point; how do you decide what is a good school and what is not.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Absolutely.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** In truth those judgements are often made already so we know that there is a floor target for what are considered failing schools. You could argue that some measures like the EBac which have only recently been introduced will grow over time so therefore you might want to raise the expectation over time. We are making judgements based on what we think -- we are not talking about a very large number of schools; we are talking about the best and what would be manageable in a scheme. I think that schools themselves, who we are consulting with, teachers and teacher training type organisations that we have consulted with, see the value of it and see the purpose of it. That is as much as I can say. Obviously if you want to scrutinise the criteria we choose in the end --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** We certainly will. Now that we have established that the Mayor of London will be making judgements about assembling groups of data on which they will be awarding a Gold Club status to schools and with the clear intention of making those schools better than other schools in other people's minds then we most definitely will be scrutinising it.

Why does the centralised approach work for the Gold Club but it did not work for the mentoring scheme?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is not about centralising.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** It is. It is the Mayor taking the decision isn't it?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** There is a consistency in the use of the criteria, so we are applying criteria that has been decided by -- Obviously it is not just the individual Mayor; there is a team of people. We are talking to the data people at DfE. At the time --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** No, it will not be the individual Mayor; it will be future Mayors as well.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** There are members of the Inquiry Panel who have been very involved in the development of this scheme - directors of children's services, head teachers - who have been involved in helping us to shape it so it is not arbitrary in that sense. It does have some informed guidance.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Of the people who have decided, how many of those irrational parents have we had on the Board deciding what would be good criteria?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I am not sure if your question is one about the general concept, the idea, that you would point to schools that are successful and say they are successful and ask them to share good practice - which was the London Challenge model and it worked extremely well - or whether you are just questioning what the criteria will be which we have not published yet. I completely accept --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** It is the very principle of having it.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** OK.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** We are going to obviously quiz you about what goes in it because you are intent on having this, and the Mayor is intent on having this. Does the Mayor recognise that that entails a complete sea change in what schools will now have to -- schools currently have to set curricula that are appealing to the Government and to the parents. You are now saying that those curricula now have to appeal to the Mayor's idea of what educational excellence is.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No, we are saying that they would have to be measured on their exam results, which is something they are already doing. We are very clear that this is not adding any additional new objectives to what schools do. It is their core business to help children learn --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** They will not scrutinise the criteria that you are going to be using for being in the Gold Cup and they are going to skew their curricula in order to hit those criteria?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I do not understand why they would change their curricula. Their curricula are already oriented towards teaching and learning and the qualifications.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** We know that schools change their internal curricula in order to get the best exam results so they can appear good on the league tables. It is no great secret. That happens. You are saying that in order to get in the Gold Club they are going to have to hit certain criteria, therefore they

are going to have to change their curricula in order to make sure that they do not slip out of that Gold Club standard. Isn't that the case?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It might be easier when you have the criteria in front of you. The way that we envisage it is that it is not criteria that would conflict with the already high expectations that are being set on what schools should achieve. For instance the number of children getting five good GCSEs, that is already something that schools work towards. What we are saying is that we would recognise those schools that achieve a very high rate of that. We are not asking schools to teach anything differently to what they are already teaching or ask --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** You are. You are because you are setting criteria for measuring excellence. The education of our schools, I believe, should remain firmly in the control of schools, parents and, where maintained, in local authorities. I have no problem with the GLA and the Mayor offering support to those who ask for it, as in the providing of land for free schools, but there must be no return to the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) where schools are dictated to from the centre. That is our Group's line in the sand. There are many people who have spent decades of their political careers trying to get rid of the ILEA. It appears as though you are trying to set one up here.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The ILEA ran schools. They employed the teachers, they set budgets and they were directly involved in the operation of schools. There is no suggestion of that in this report or in any of the things that we are saying.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Can I seek clarity on this then? If the Mayor is offered a role over the academies and free schools in oversight and pay rations or whatever it is from the State because they are being run centrally by central government at the moment, the Mayor would refuse that offer? He would not accept any issue around the Ofsted inspection role, the accountability role of academies or free schools if central government devolved that down to him?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The offer has never been made. There is no discussion about middles here.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** He would refuse it if it was ever made? He would not want that power?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** I have not actually talked to him about it because it does not seem even feasible that it would happen.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** It was feasible because we heard it on the grapevine that there was a discussion going on. So what is the Mayor's position? You are the Mayor's adviser --

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are not interested in creating middles here.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** You are not.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** You would not take it. If it was offered you would not want it?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are not interested in setting the pay and conditions of academies or of monitoring the quality of academies – that is Ofsted’s role. We are not interested in taking on any of the functions that are being done by other agencies in that way. That is a middle tier which is I think what you are driving at. I know that that is the concern about the recreation of ILEA. We have said that is not what we intend to do.

We do want to play a strategic role in supporting schools. I think that they are two different things. Playing a supportive role --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Chair, sorry, it is not a supportive role, is it? If you are determining criteria by which people can be rewarded then you are judging those schools. You are making judgements about education.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Teaching awards make judgements as well. There are a number of judgements that people make about schools but we are not obliging schools in a compulsory way to participate. We are talking about recognising excellence.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** The best thing a school has got is its reputation. It really matters to a school; its reputation. You are going to be making centralised judgements about that school and you are going to be awarding a standard that parents are going to look to. You can be certain they are going to say, “Here are the exam results. Now is it a Mayor’s Gold Club standard school? No, it is not. Oh well”.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Forgive me, if it is about school improvement, and I am all for giving recognition for those who are doing well, but actually there is no mention of those schools that are not doing well. Surely, if we are going to play a strategic role in supporting local authorities or the schools it is the ones that are not achieving the issues. The equivalent of a detention room, I do not want to get into that. If you really want to drive up education standards isn’t it those ones if you start to target and change. So you use the good practice of the ones that would have been in the Gold Club to raise standards? Why is there no issue around the targeting and support for poor performing schools where you are raising standards? I do not understand that. Where is that in this agenda?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** That is the purpose of the Gold Club. The Gold Club schools do not just talk to themselves. The whole purpose is they talk to schools that want to improve their practice. We have had a very positive response to that idea, particularly from those teachers who either were involved in running London Challenge and were themselves mentors in other schools or who benefited from participating in the London Challenge by having a mentor for others or working in collaboration.

The Gold Club is not a new model as such. The focus, the criteria and the shaping of it is designed by the people on the Panel who have been involved and fed back into it. The entire purpose is to spread good practice to raise the standards of everyone. The recommendations throughout the whole report are about raising the game for all schools. We recognise that there has been good practice in London and really excellent change and improvement but that there is more that can be done. Our approach is not to try to dictate from here what we think a good class looks like and what good school leadership

looks like but to encourage those schools who have done very well to help others to do better. It is very much supporting the profession to lead itself and to lead each other. That was received very positively in the consultation and in the conversations that we had.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** I said it before. That is stuff that is going on if you look and that is why it was fed in. The leading head teacher or head teacher who has achieved the best results last year are asked to work with their neighbouring school to help them. In fact there are some schools that are not appointing heads of those schools but have got a super head who is supporting a number of schools who have got deputy heads. Anything that can be done to support that that is great.

The point that we would like to get some clarity about is the point that Andrew is making. Why are you not able to accept that this star, or premium star, or this additionality that the Gold Club brings to the piece has problems related to it? Is it an annual award so they only get the star for a year? If that is clear then you get it and it is bit like the restaurant club where you have got the Mayor's Gold Club star for 2012 and then you keep that and you cannot apply again, or you are not in the pool again, and so each year these awards would be made. It is that sort of clarity --

**Andrew Boff (AM):** That would be all right. That would work. If it was like you had 20 gold stars to allocate in a year that would be quite a good incentive because it would not mean that people would drop out of it.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** Is that sort of thing you are talking about which is what we cannot hear from you? Is it that you have not done the work yet? Is it that you are not leading on it and that we really need a session with the educators who are leading on it? It would be nice to get a sensible feel of this because there are many of us who are school governors and parents who are interested in this. The idea that we are sitting here and not fully appreciating that the Mayor of London's endorsement to something is valuable and can throw the whole thing up in the air is incredible. That is what I am hearing you say. Andrew asked what is this going to bring to a school. It is going to bring prestige and if it is going to bring prestige then for how long and if you lose that prestige how do you deal with that? These are really serious issues I do not think you are dealing with seriously.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are working through the criteria now. That is why I cannot talk to you in detail about what that is --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** Who is working through it? Who is leading it?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** My team. Caroline Boswell [Manager – Children and Young People, GLA]. Amanda Coyle [Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA]. The Panel is Frankie Sulke who is the Director of Children's Services in Lewisham. Erica Pienaar who is Executive Head of a number of schools in Lewisham, The Prendergast schools. She runs a Federation [Leathersellers' Federation of Schools]. She is the Head of the Federation. Both are excellent educators. They have a very long track record. They understand the maintained system --

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** This working party that is dealing with this now, when will that criteria be ready for us to see a copy of?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** As I said earlier we are working that through. We are hoping in the New Year we will be able to give you more detail about that. We are also talking to the DfE about the different data that they have. We are running different scenarios for different criteria precisely because we want to test it and we want to make sure it is robust and it will stand up to scrutiny.

It is possible that a school will get Gold Club status one year but not the next because their exam results are not as good, for some reason they have not kept up the standards, or they may continue to be in it for a number of years because they stay at the same level.

**Jennette Arnold OBE (Deputy Chair):** This will be awarded by the Mayor. This particular Mayor, we know, has a love of Latin and has a love of literature. Will that be a criteria? Clearly if he sees a school which is teaching Latin is he not going to be in his wide and woolly way going to say, "Oh they must have a star, not one star, the biggest star"? How do you stop that subjectivity from Mayors?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Which is why we are identifying these criteria. We are not envisaging the criteria will specify particular subjects like Latin. It will specify the EBac subjects as one of the factors that we would look at, and the teaching of the EBac subjects, whilst recognising that it has only recently been introduced so it will take some time for those numbers to increase, although the evidence shows that they are starting to.

I recognise the concerns that this is not just a subjective finger in the air we, like the school/we do not like the school and there is not a good reason because these things matter. It is precisely because they matter, because we think that schools value the status because it helps them to motivate their own staff, that we want to do this properly.

I take your point that we need to take it seriously. When we report back about the criteria we can come back to you and you can talk to us. I do not know what the rules are about whether Frankie or Erica could come and speak but perhaps I can ask them to respond in writing to some of the things you have said as well to help us to inform the response.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** We might well consider that.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Just on this point. I am quite surprised I wholeheartedly agree with Andrew Boff in almost everything he said. The concern about it is a yearly award because Ofsted do not look at exam results on a yearly basis at all; they look at trends over a period of time. Those of us that have been chairs of boards of governors or governors in general know that one year you can have a particular cohort that actually do not perform and that is particularly true in areas of London where there is a great deal of churn, for example. A one-year request for exam results will have many schools going in and out. Andrew's point about the dangers of that I think are very real. Ofsted do not do that. Ofsted rankings go on trends and that is what you need to look at if you are going to go ahead with this.

I want to go back. I think this scheme is actually duplicating a national scheme. Michael Gove has set up teaching schools now. He has got 100 he wants this year. 500 by 2014/15. Across London these teaching schools are teaching alliances that are being set up in every borough. My own borough of Enfield has got an Enfield Teaching Schools Alliance for those outstanding schools with outstanding

teaching practice, both secondary and primary, has formed them into an alliance and they are working with other schools. This is already there. It is national policy. This seems to be duplication of national policy but with the Mayor's gold stamp on it, which seems to be a total waste of time because that is already happening.

My question is, if the national Government is setting up an award in teaching school status, which is what it is called in schools, and currently bidding for this teaching school status, are they expected to bid separately for the Mayor's gold status for exactly the same reasons?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** They are not being expected to bid into this so we would analyse the data and then approach them. It might be --

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Why not do it through the Mayor's criteria? If he says they are worthy of teaching school status just give them stars as well.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are ensuring that the Gold Club aligns with other schemes of teacher/peer support and we recognise that there are other things going on. We think that we can add value by ...

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** This is what the teaching schools are meant to do.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The teaching schools are based on slightly different criteria. What we are also looking at is those schools that have perhaps a very disadvantaged intake that have done very well for their free school meal children. That would not necessarily be caught by the teaching school model. We recognise the teaching school model is a very good one and in fact would like to support it through the Gold Club and through the Excellence Fund. We have talked to people who are involved in setting up the initial teaching schools who have assured us that there is real value to having the Gold Club.

All I can say is that I recognise your concerns but I have also heard back from people who are very prominent and experienced in the teaching profession who have told us that there is real value to doing this and that they do feel that the London Challenge made a difference. There are some elements of that that can be taken further, built on and we can add value. I completely agree we do not want to duplicate and we do not want to waste resources. I do not think we will.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Those same teaching professionals were the ones that used to say, "Don't worry about exam results, added value is there". They were wrong. I am sorry. I am a great believer in involving professionals but there is another side of the debate. The trouble with this proposal that you are bringing through is there is an element of duplication but it is neither one beast nor the other. I am supportive and I think there is a role for the Mayor to provide added value in education. I might go a little bit further -- I do not want to replicate ILEA, because I think there was a lot wrong with ILEA, but somehow if it is about raising improvement, and just picking it up and raising improvement and targeting the right issues.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Michael Gove has got a national initiative which is setting up teacher networks to raise standards from those lower performing schools. Are you envisaging setting up

separate networks? How are those going to be aligned to the teaching school alliances that are happening throughout our London boroughs?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We are talking to the people who are involved in the teaching schools precisely to ensure that they are aligned. We envisage a slightly different model which will involve workshops and events and a final conference here at City Hall as well. It is possible to increase the amount of teacher-related support, peer-to-peer support. This is something that we know is really needed in London.

Going back to points that people have made earlier, it is not just about centralising and having a dictat about what schools should do and what particular practice they should take forward. It is about ensuring that they have the opportunity to meet outside their individual school environment with other teachers and to learn from them.

All I can say to you, repeatedly, is that we do not intend to duplicate. We will monitor it and make sure that it is not doing that. We have clear evidence that there is a value to this.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** Are you presuming that those in the Gold Club will also attract the London Schools Excellence Fund?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** They would be eligible to apply if the projects were right and if they were developing something that has got the criteria.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** The DfE has given you £20 million. Where has that money come from? Was it money that was already dedicated to London schools' budgets?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** They committed to giving us £20 million in principle. We are just working through the detail. As far as I know it was not from an existing budget for London schools.

**Joanne McCartney (AM):** I know that in the teaching schools there is great concern that there is insufficient money going into that. I would be very concerned if money that could go into that is being directed elsewhere on something that might undermine what is meant to be a national scheme.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** We can ask the DfE precisely where the funding is coming from but, as far as I know, it is not coming from a programme that was already for London schools. We made it clear we wanted it to add value to London; not to shift resources.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Is it for one year or over a number of years?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The Excellence Fund is for three years. We do not know precisely which financial years it would fall into or how that would be paid yet.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** It does beg the question are we establishing a school unit to oversee this fund or are we going to outsource the project management of it?



**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The New Schools for London unit is specifically for free schools which has a --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. So what do you do after breakfast? Sorry. Identifying ten sites that --

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** No, no, it is more than ten sites.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** It is more than that. So what do you do after breakfast? Sorry. Just maintain contact with free schools? There are lots of organisations who do that. Why do we want to duplicate that?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** The New Schools for London unit, one of its roles, will be to identify the ten sites --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** I could do that. You can get that for nothing from me. We will sit down. I am not anti-free schools but I am not exactly pro. We can identify ten sites. Once Mr David Lunts [Executive Director, Housing and Regeneration, GLA] and Mr Richard Blakeway [Deputy Mayor for Housing, Land and Property] get their heads together we could do it together. That is that.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** It is a bit more complicated. Then we have also committed to helping free school groups try to find non-GLA sites and to support them with things, for instance, like the planning and advice --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** There are organisations that receive money from the Department for Education to exactly do that job. In fact one of their mates is a minister who does it. Mr Gove has given money to his mates to do that.

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Can I clarify what the DfE does fund and where we think we can add value? The DfE funds an organisation called the New Schools Network which helps organisations get to the pre-approval stage, the first stage, and it helps encourage the pipeline of schools to come forward. They do a very good job. They have a very small amount of resource and staff. We think we can help them with the pipeline in London particularly where we feel there is a real need to turbocharge the process. After the first stage of approval when they start looking for sites they do get support from the Education Funding Agency to try to identify sites. We know from conversations with them that they would really value our support in London because London is very expensive and there are a limited number of large sites that are available. Perhaps more than the rest of the country there is a real challenge here and we have a basic need shortage.

Our role would be to work with free school groups and to help identify other non-GLA sites around the city. We are looking now about how that will work but we are talking about a new schools programme and a major increase in school provision in London. That is a fairly large challenge that we have in the city and that is why we are setting up this unit.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** That will be the majority of the work of the school unit then?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** Yes.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** In terms of the School Excellence Fund and raising improvement, will it do that or is that going to go somewhere else?

**Munira Mirza (Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture):** That is run by the GLA education team. The same colleagues that ran the Secretariat for the report. They have been involved in all the consultations. They will run the fund and the Gold Club and obviously will be working partners. We are talking to partners already about that. We do not know precisely the detail of how the grants and so on that we manage --

**Amanda Coyle (Assistant Director of Health and Communities, GLA):** We are just in the process of defining the fund, what procurement route we will use and also what delivery mechanisms we will put in place to make sure there is good transparency and the ability for the Assembly to scrutinise what we do.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** OK. We will no doubt return to this subject.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** The point, Chair, is it will require a lot of scrutiny.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** That is a point. We may consider, outside of here, having an interim view about some of this work that you do. We may be too late coming to the table and informing you about how you are scoping some of this work up. We would want to put on record some of our views following this conversation and what we have seen in the report. The aspirations of what the Mayor wanted to do, I thought were quite good and quite exciting. I read the report. I thought that was quite limited. I have listened to the discussion here and I am a bit disappointed with some of the thought processes. We will discuss informally outside this meeting what an interim response may be about some of the points that have been made by Members and just reflecting some of those views. No doubt when you finally come at the end of January to certain milestones that you mentioned we will consider how we do some scrutiny and we will discuss that further with you.

Is that best where we can leave it?

**Andrew Boff (AM):** Chair, I could have spent three hours talking about this. I recognise that --

**Len Duvall (Chair):** It is very important that we get this bit right.

**Andrew Boff (AM):** -- we have limited time.

**Len Duvall (Chair):** Can I thank you both in the way that you answered the questions. Thank you very much in the way that you have answered our points. Thank you.