

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>General Release</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>The role of the Regional Schools Commissioner</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Ian Heggs, Director of Schools</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	<b>Children and Young People</b>
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Policy Context:</b>	<b>Aspiration</b>
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## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an introductory overview of the role of the Regional Schools Commissioner and links that are currently being developed regarding schools in Westminster.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Department for Education established eight schools commissioner regions across England in September 2014. Westminster City Council is within the North West London and South Central Region. The designated Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for the region is Martin Post, former Headmaster of Watford Grammar School for Boys. The Regional Commissioner is advised by and works with a Head teacher Board (HTB) of elected Academy school head teachers from across the region.

- 2.2 The role of the RSC is to:

- Monitor the performance and to intervene to secure improvement in educationally underperforming academies and free schools and in poor governance.
- Take decisions on the creation of new academies by approving applications from maintained schools wishing to convert to academy status and approving new schools under the 'presumption' arrangements.

- Encourage new academy sponsors and approve new sponsors to operate in the region, monitoring the performance and capacity of existing sponsors and recommending suitable sponsors to ministers for maintained schools that have selected to become academies.
- Make decisions about any changes to Academies that are open.
- Advise on the approval of new free schools and oversee open free schools
- Approve new free schools.

### **3 Local developments**

- 3.1 On behalf of Westminster, the Director of Schools, Ian Heggs and Assistant Director, Richard Stanley have met with the RSC. The performance of local academy schools and all schools where the Department for Education have concerns was discussed. Mr Stanley also attended the recent conference organised by the RSC for the North West London and South Central Region.

### **4 Wider developments**

- 4.1 As part of the Parliamentary Select Committee consultation on the role of RSCs, concerns have been raised by Local Authorities about their lack of capacity to support academies which are in need of support across the broad regions served by RSCs.
- 4.2 The Department of Education has just completed a consultation on the Schools Causing Concern guidance, which proposes a further enhancement of the role of the RSC, including determining which schools meet the new 'coasting schools' criteria and are eligible for statutory intervention.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Steve Bywater, Policy Manager**  
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