

## **INPUT ON BEHALF OF RICHMOND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN TO LBRuT CONSULTATION ON RE-DEVELOPMENT OF RICHMOND COLLEGE**

Overall, the Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign team welcomes the proposals. Focussing on the proposed new secondary school, we welcome in particular:

- The contribution the school will make to meeting the growing demand for secondary school places in the borough.
- Its fair admissions policy.
- The benefits of co-location of the school and the 6<sup>th</sup> form college on the site, with shared governance arrangements.
- The continued role for the Council in the governance of the proposed new school.

However we remain concerned that the decision to give away by far the best, and the lowest cost, secondary school site in the borough to a religious school with a highly exclusive over-subscription policy, while failing first to ensure adequate provision for the increasing numbers of children coming through the borough's primaries, continues to involve an avoidable and irresponsible risk for the borough's secondary school provision.

This is further compounded by a misleading statement in the current consultation. It is simply not true to say that *"...the Council's pupil forecasts indicate that there would be enough secondary school places within the nine state-funded secondary schools in the borough over the short- to medium-term..."*.

The Council has admitted that there are no new secondary school forecasts, beyond those issued in October 2011 in order to justify the Clifden Road decision.

And even those forecasts, with their questionable assumptions about reduced out-of-borough demand, indicated that a new inclusive Free School would be required in addition to the existing secondaries. While that may well happen - albeit a year later than assumed - it is factually incorrect to claim that the forecasts, such as they are, indicate there will be enough capacity just in the existing "nine secondary schools" – unless, that is, the arguments put forward to justify the Catholic school are shown to have been false.

RISC will continue to monitor the situation and hold the Council to account.

10 Mar 2013