1. **Decision required**

This report makes the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1.1 Cabinet is asked to receive a document from the Lead Member for Children and Schools and consider and agree the approach to promoting the benefits of being a maintained school in Greenwich – “Greenwich and Proud”.

2. **Purpose of Report**

3.1 This is a document entitled “Greenwich and Proud” that outlines the benefits of being a maintained school.

3.2 Head teachers of local authority schools and unions have welcomed the development of an active statement from the Council of the benefits of remaining a local authority school.

3.3 It is proposed that the document would be widely circulated to community, voluntary controlled and voluntary aided schools and would be used in discussion by governing bodies who may be considering options as to whether to convert to an academy.

4. **Introduction and Background**

4.1 The Royal Borough of Greenwich is proud of its relationship with all schools and settings in the borough. There is a positive and mature relationship between all schools regardless of their status and we want this to continue.
4.2 The Council is pleased that the current policy position from central government is no longer about the academisation of all schools. There is an acceptance of a ‘mixed economy’ education system that consists of local authority schools and academies, within which the local authority holds overall responsibility for academic outcomes in the borough. However, we remain concerned at the impact of fragmentation and, in particular, the retention of forced academisation under the 2016 Education and Adoption Act and the inability of academies or free schools to convert to Community Schools.

4.3 Royal Greenwich intends to be more assertive in promoting the benefits of being a maintained school as outlined in the document - Greenwich and Proud. We believe the support we give to our local authority schools provides opportunities for all pupils to achieve well and promotes positive outcomes for all children and young people particularly those who are most vulnerable and who benefit from an inclusive community school.

4.4 Royal Greenwich supports and is committed to individual and self-managing schools and settings that can benefit from the autonomy of their school whilst at the same time benefiting from being part of the local authority. Greenwich encourages schools to remain as LA maintained schools. We believe that this is the better way of ensuring that Greenwich schools continue to work in a close, co-operative partnership, now and into the future.

4.5 Royal Greenwich, however, continues to want to work in partnership with all schools in the Borough whatever their status to achieve the best outcomes and highest standard of education for our young people as part of the “Greenwich Family of Schools” and to promote a wider Greenwich Standard covering adoption of the Royal Borough of Greenwich admissions policy, healthy schools meals, costs of uniform, recognition of trade unions and national terms and conditions and adoption of the London Living Wage among all staff and contractors.

5. **Available Options**

5.1 Following discussions with Headteachers of LA maintained schools it was agreed that the benefits and choices made by schools who have not converted to an academy needed to be publicised in a positive way. A number of options were considered:

(i) To produce a document, in consultation with areas of the council working directly with schools, namely Children’s services, finance and HR, to outline the benefits to Headteachers and Chairs of Governors.
in remaining as local authority schools. This option would enable all the benefits to be seen in one document and would be seen as supporting the actions that Headteachers asked us to take.

(ii) We could do nothing and take no further action. This would not be supportive of the Headteachers who have spoken to the Director of Children’s services and would not collate all of the information that Headteachers and Chairs of Governors need in order to make informed choices and decisions about the designation of their schools.

6. **Preferred Option**

6.1 In order to promote the benefits of remaining a Local Authority school it was decided that option (i) above would be the best way forward. A document entitled Greenwich and Proud would be produced. This would be distributed to all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of LA maintained schools and would be available to all schools, regardless of designation, through the schools bulletin. This document would be a source of information and an item for discussion for schools and governing bodies.

7. **Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 Producing a document entitled Greenwich and Proud would seem to be the most positive way forward in regard to providing Heads and Governors with the information they have asked for in a format which is accessible and easy to update, on an annual basis, or as necessary.

8. **Consultation Results**

8.1 A number of Heads have been consulted with through the Headteacher’s Executive Group of the Schools Partnership. The Heads discussed with the Director a number of points they wished to be raised in the document. They spoke specifically about Greenwich’s improvement journey, education outcomes especially at Early Years and Primary. They also raised issues regarding finance, pensions and building maintainance.

9. **Next Steps: Communication and Implementation of the Decision**

9.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, this document will be emailed to all Head teachers and Chairs of Governors of LA maintained schools. Following that it will be sent to all schools and all governors via the school’s e-bulletin. The document will also be shared with the trade unions and any other partners as appropriate.
10. **Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications**

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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Sign-off</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal</strong> including Human Rights Act</td>
<td>The report raises no specific legal issues. The Head of Legal Services therefore has no comments to add.</td>
<td>John Scarborough, Head of Legal Services, 5 November 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finance</strong> and other resources including procurement implications</td>
<td>There are no financial implications arising from this report.</td>
<td>Damon Cook Assistant Director - Corporate Finance &amp; Deputy s151 Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equalities</strong></td>
<td>The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users.</td>
<td>Tracy Russell Senior Assistant Director Inclusion, Learning and Achievement</td>
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11. **Report Appendices**

11.1 The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Greenwich and Proud: The Benefits of Being a maintained school
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