

**Full council: 31 October 2017**

**Opposition Motion: Cllr Pauline Coakley Webb**

**Planning school places in Barnet**

Council notes that the strategic planning of school places seems to have been replaced with random placement of free schools controlled by chain academies through deals done in Whitehall, with no control by Barnet Council and no guarantee that schools will be established where they are needed.

Council also notes that at the most recent Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee members were advised that:

"The free school programme is a central government programme administered by the Department for Education. The council has no role in assessing or approving free school applications. In more recent years, the Department for Education has invited the council to provide a view of the local need for school places."

Council believes that Conservative-run Barnet Council should be providing this view and ensuring that school places are properly planned in the locations where they are most needed.

We call on Barnet Council to take a more proactive role by:

- 1) Instructing officers to meet with the EFA to establish a strategic planning approach to schools.
- 2) Identifying possible sites for new school development close to areas where it is known numbers are increasing.
- 3) Consulting with local residents on possible developments in advance of any formal planning application being made.
- 4) Developing and adopting a Planning for Schools DPD, as LB Ealing has done, to help plan for the provision of primary and secondary school places in the borough to meet identified need.