



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: **3**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 25 APRIL 2001 IN THE IRELAND ROOM, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 2.30PM AND CONCLUDING AT 4.40PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Schools Group

Mrs P Mc Neish, Mr R Priest, Mrs J Wainwright, Mr G Woodruff OBE,

Buckinghamshire County Council Elected Members

Mrs M A M Aston, Mr B G Allen, Mr M C Appleyard, Mr M Brand, Mrs E M Lay and Ms S Lee

Oxford Diocesan Board of Education

Ms E Cracknell, Mr D Sullivan, Mr J A Loarridge, OBE (in the Chair)

Northampton RC Schools Commission

Mr B O'Byrne

Officers Present

Mr D Ayres – Head of School Organisation
Mr R Popat – Senior Solicitor Education
Mr P Holmes – Education Officer (Capital Programme)
Mrs H Wayland – Committee Administrator

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Mrs J Bray, Mrs M Bull, Mrs M Hinds (Mr R Priest substituting), Mr J Howe and Mr P Niekirk.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 February 2001, were confirmed. A member, referring to the closure of Hatters Lane School, requested that more details of a comparable debate be included in future minutes.

2 REVIEW OF THE SEN PROVISION IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE – UPDATE

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education which set out recent developments related to the SEN Policy and Strategy. It was noted that the report was an initial update and that further reports would be submitted to the Committee as work progressed.

It was reported that the outcome of the consultation on MLD/SpLD delegation was that agreement had been reached for children to be placed at their local school, this would take place over a transitional period of 5 years. Consultation was still taking place on Special Schools with two consortia formed which were discussing models for future design and support mechanisms. The support mechanisms would involve building in facilities for Social Services and Health to enable support to be given to the child in the school in a more integrated and holistic way. The Committee was advised that setting up clusters of mainstream schools for the sharing of knowledge and expertise was being investigated and consulted on. In addition, the Committee noted that a number of new departments in individual schools had been identified for September 2001

Following discussion a number of points were received which included:

- A member asked for research evidence on which HMI based their current support for "wide spectrum" special schools.
- Regular data was requested detailing the impact of the reduction in the number of statements.
- Information on funding within the capital budget for SEN Departments was requested. It was noted that the majority of new Departments identified had been identified in the Capital Programme. Concern over future funding provision of SEN Departments was expressed whilst being protected in the first year may lose out in the longer term
- In terms of presentation of data, block diagrams showing trends over a five-year period were requested.
- The Cabinet Member for Schools commented that he had recently heard a strong case for significant inclusion of more SEN pupils into mainstream schools and suggested that the speaker might be invited to speak to the Committee.
- The new SEN Policy was likely to involve the closure of some special schools.

3 DETERMINATION OF STATUTORY NOTICES; STANDARD NUMBERS

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Education which provided information relating to a changes in standard numbers for several Buckinghamshire

Schools, which were published in the Spring 2001, and requested the Committee's determination of the statutory notices.

The Committee noted that objections had been received relating to proposals from Stone CE Combined School, High Ash CE Combined School and Great Kingshill Combined School.

Stone CE Combined School – Proposal to increase the standard number at 4+ from 25 to 28 and at 7+ reduce the standard number from 12 to 6

It was noted that the governing body at Dinton CE Infant School had expressed concern that a decrease in numbers at 7+ would not ensure that there were sufficient places for children transferring from Dinton. A paper was tabled which set out pupil projections from Dinton CE School.

Following discussion the proposal was agreed subject to the assurance from Stone School that there would be flexibility in admitting in excess of the number if required. The Chairman agreed to write to Stone CE Combined School with a copy to Dinton CE Infant School outlining the committee's decision.

High Ash CE Combined School– Proposal to Increase the Standard number from 22 to 30.

The Committee discussed and agreed the proposal which reflected an increase in demand for the school. It was noted that the increase would not necessarily lead to an increase in class size. The Chairman agreed to write to the objector detailing the decision of the Committee.

Great Kingshill CE Combined School– Proposal to increase standard number at 4+ from 33 to 45 and reduce standard number at 7+ from 30 to 20

Members discussed the proposals at length including the effects the proposals would have on Hughenden School, which was showing more positive signs of recruitment. The Committee was advised that agreement to a proposal would need to be reached by 25 June for intake in the Autumn Term 2002. It was agreed that further discussions were required with the schools and that the decision should be delegated to the Chairman of the Committee, following consultation with the spokesman from each college, at a date prior to 25 June 2001.

The Committee agreed the proposals from the remaining schools as set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1 That the following changes in standard number be agreed:

Broughton Infant School	Increase from 56 to 75
Ickford Combined School	Increase from 16 to 18
Quainton CE Combined School	Increase from 15 to 25
Turnfurlong Infant School	Increase from 75 to 90
Haddenham Infant School	Reduction from 33 to 30
Halton Combined School	Reduction from 33 to 30
Stoke Mandeville Combined School	Reduction from 35 to 30
Denham Infant School	Increase from 18 to 24
Newton Longville CE Combined School	Reduction from 35 to 30
High Ash CE School	Increase from 22 to 30

Marsh Gibbon CE Infant School	Increase from 16 to 24
Ash Hill Primary School	Reduction from 35 to 30
Little Kingshill Combined School	Reduction From 43 to 30
Stone CE Combined School	Increase at 4+ from 25 to 28 and reduction at 7+ from 12 to 6 (latter subject to flexibility in admission at 7+ if necessary)

- 2 That the proposal for an increase in standard number at 4+ from 33 to 45 and a reduction of 30 to 20 at 7+ at Great Kingshill CE Combined School be deferred and the decision delegated to the Chairman of the Committee, following discussions with the School and the spokesman from each college prior to 25 June 2001.

4 STATUTORY NOTICE:FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION AT BERRYFIELD INFANT AND ICKNIELD JUNIOR SCHOOLS, PRINCES RISBOROUGH

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Education on the proposals relating to the reorganisation of Berryfield Infant and Icknield Junior Schools, Princes Risborough which were published on 17 January 2001, the documents being supplied to members of the committee in February.

It was noted that that an objection had been received to the proposed amalgamation.

During discussion a member asked why the recruitment of a new Headteacher was being pursued at this time and noted that this was to assist stability within the school.

The Committee agreed that the statutory notice be determined and that the Chairman would write to the objector explaining the decision.

RESOLVED

- 1 That the Statutory notice on the future arrangements for Primary Education at Berryfields Infant and Icknield Junior Schools, Princes Risborough, be determined.
- 2 That the Chairman of the Committee write to the objector outlining the decision.

5 STATUTORY NOTICE : FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION AT THE GREENWAY SCHOOL AND WILLIAM DURRANT JUNIOR SCHOOL, CHESHAM

The Committee received and noted a report from the Director of Education on future arrangements for Primary Education at the Greenway Infant and William Durrant Junior Schools, Chesham which were to:

- a) discontinue Greenway Infant School with effect from 31 August 2002
- b) discontinue William Durrant Junior School with effect from 31 August 2001
- c) establish a new school on the site of the William Durrant Junior School.

In the absence of any statutory objections the proposals had been determined by the Local Education Authority.

6 SPEAKING PROTOCOL LEAFLET

The Committee received an initial draft copy of the protocol which described the general function of the School Organisation Committee and how members of the public may comment on proposals and how to find out about meetings of the Committee.

Members noted that the leaflet would be refined into a A4 folded format and would be distributed to all schools and surrounding schools when proposals for changes in standard number were received.

The Committee welcomed the leaflet which would raise the profile of the Committee, and suggested that it should be distributed more widely, for example within the Governors Briefing. It was noted that details would also be available on the Education Department's Website.

7 SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE: BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2001/2002

The Committee received and noted a report from the Director of Education which set out the outline budget for the Committee for 2001/2002.

A member suggested that an honorarium payment for the Chairman of the Committee could be investigated as the work of the Committee grows, to reflect and recognise the contribution made.

8 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOLS GROUP

Members noted that there were three vacancies to fill on the Schools Group and that nominations were requested for the outgoing members, Mr Woodruff OBE, Mr Howe and Mr Owen.

The Committee noted and agreed that the methodology used previously should be adopted and that the election should take place before the end of the schools term in July. It was also agreed that the elections should be held on a yearly rather than on an ad hoc basis with the Committee holding vacancies if necessary.

RESOLVED

- 1 That the election process be commenced, to be completed by the end of the Summer Term 2001.**
- 2 That elections be held annually, when necessary.**

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None was received.

10 DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates for future meetings were agreed:

11 July 2001 and 26 September 2001
to commence at 2.30pm.

CHAIRMAN

CONTACT OFFICER : HELEN WAYLAND (01296) 382015