



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM:

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 JULY 2004, IN SEMINAR ROOM 1, GREEN PARK TRAINING CENTRE, ASTON CLINTON COMMENCING AT 2.30 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 5.45 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Schools Group

Jenny Wainwright, Angela Coneron, Chris Brownlee, Katy Simmons, John Beardsmore

Buckinghamshire County Council

Bruce Allen, Margaret Aston (Vice-Chairman), Pam Bacon, Marion Clayton, Clare Martens,

Oxford Diocesan Board of Education

John Loarridge OBE (Chairman)
Roy Davey

Northampton RC Schools Commission

Barry O'Byrne
Maggi Bull
Frances Image

Learning and Skills Council

Andy Croft

Officers Present

Nick Powley – Head of Policy, Planning and Performance (Schools)
Paul Holmes – Group Manager, School Organisation
Rebecca Cooper – Project Manager, Special Education
Raj Popat – Group Solicitor, Education and Litigation
Gill Callaghan – Democratic Services Officer
Olwen Stovold – Childcare Development Manager
Joanne Cayless – Legal Assistant (Education)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Betty Lay (BCC), Mary Baldwin (BCC), Doug Richardson (Schools Group), Lesley Stephens (Oxford Diocesan Board of Education).

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The following declared an interest in Item 4 Sixth Form Provision at Highcrest:

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| Katy Simmons | Chair of Governors, Cressex School |
| Angela Coneron | Governor, Kynaston and Stoke Leys Federated |
| Maggie Bull | Governor, St Bernard's Catholic |
| Frances Image | Governor, |

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2004, copies of which had been previously circulated, were agreed a correct record.

Minute 3.6 – Post 16 Provision Local Learning and Skills Council

Margaret Ason reported that she was a regular attender of LSC meetings and was involved with the post 16 SEN programme.

Minute 3.9 – Correspondence

The Committee noted that a letter had been written to Oakridge School and discussions were taking place which could result in an extra classroom.

Minute 3.10- Update on Action and Monitoring of School Organisation Plan

Nick Powley reported that the letter sent by the Chairman to the Chief Officer and Cabinet Members had not been received and possibly gone astray.

Minute 4- Post 16 Provision – Local Learning and Skills Council (Standing Item)

Andy Croft reported that he had spoken with Alan Mander to confirm the methodology for Post-16 funding of pupils with special needs. He reported that a new mechanism for pass-porting funds was being introduced in the Autumn.

Minute 6 – Aylesbury Vale Primary Complex Needs School

Nick Powley reported that although there was currently no funding for a respite care block, this was in the planning and would be moved forward as funding became available.

Minute 10b - Correspondence

The Chairman reported that a letter had been sent to Derrick Fiske as requested by the Committee.

4. SIXTH FORM PROVISION AT HIGHCREST

The committee received and noted a report from Nick Powley, Head of Policy, Planning and Performance (Schools) on the request from Highcrest school to confirm the schools status as an 11-18 school in order that from September 2005 the school can introduce a sixth form. Members noted that Highcrest is a designated 11 – 18 school but currently only teaches 11-16 year olds.

Nick Powley reported that Highcrest Community School, formally Hatters Lane School, was established as a fresh start school in September 2001.

During lengthy discussion a member of the Schools Group raised concern regarding provision and retention in neighbouring schools. In response it was reported that the County Council policy was for all upper schools to be 11-18 schools. The establishment of a sixth form at the site would create an opportunity for otherwise disadvantaged groups. It was further noted that there may be some overlap in subjects offered, but work would be undertaken with schools to ensure the viability of courses. The representative from the Learning and Skills Council reported that the LSC had been involved in the process from the beginning and confirmed that talks with neighbouring schools had taken place and collaboration on courses had also been discussed and the LSC would help shape provision. The Legal representative reminded the Committee that as the school was already designated as an 11-18 no further consultation was required.

The Chairman and Committee passed on their congratulations to the Headteacher of Highcrest for the good work undertaken.

The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, The Northampton Diocesan Board of Education, the Schools Group and Buckinghamshire County Council voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the Committee, although supporting the establishment of a Sixth Form at Highcrest Community School, AGREED to defer the decision until September 2004 and further data on the movement of pupils was available.

5. STATUTORY NOTICE-CHANGES TO PRIMARY SPECIAL SCHOOL PROVISION IN AYLESBURY VALE

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Directors for Children and Young People and, Schools on the Statutory Notice-changes to primary special school provision in Aylesbury Vale.

It was noted that one objection had been received from the parent of a child attending Furzedown School, Winslow on travel.

Nick Powley explained that the proposal would mean the provision of high quality education for children with special needs and that the provision of high quality transport was important to ensure children arrived at school fit to fully benefit from the provision. It was further noted that at present there were some children living in the Wycombe area who attended Furzedown.

During discussion it was noted that the LEA were working with parents to resolve their concerns and full support for the project had been received from staff and governors.

The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, The Northampton Diocesan Board of Education, the Schools Group and Buckinghamshire County Council voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the Committee considered and AGREED the proposals as detailed in the statutory notice.

6. STATUTORY NOTICE – BOUTON MEADOW SCHOOL, BUCKINGHAM, CHANGE OF AGE RANGE

The Committee received the report from the Head of Legal and Administrative Services on the statutory notice to change the age range at Bourton Meadow School, Buckingham to admit 3 year olds.

The Committee noted that one objection had been received.

The Headteacher, Chairman of Governors and a parent of the school attended the meeting to speak in favour of the proposal.

A parent and representative of the pre-school playgroup attended the meeting and spoke in objection to the proposal.

The Committee discussed the report and the presentations they received. Members discussed all the issues and implication surrounding the application. Olwen Stovold, Childcare Development Manager, stated that the Early Years policy was not to support a change where there was already adequate provision.

Members were concerned about the increase in rent that the school had levied on the playgroup for the rental of the community centre, as this would undoubtedly make the playgroup unviable. They requested that the Community Centre Constitution be further investigated. It was noted that although the centre was attached to the school it did not belong to them, and remained Council property. Paul Holmes agreed to look into this matter. Members felt that consultation with primary schools and all pre-school providers, in the area, should also take place.

The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, The Northampton Diocesan Board of Education, the Schools Group and Buckinghamshire County Council voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the Committee unanimously AGREED to defer the decision to approve the statutory notice until the spring term 2005.

7. STATUTORY NOTICE – TWYFORD CE SCHOOL, BUCKINGHAM – CHANGE OF AGE RANGE

The Committee received the report from the Head of Legal and Administrative Services on the statutory notice to change the age range at Twyford CE School, Buckingham, to admit 3 year olds.

It was noted that no objections had been received.

Olwen Stovold reported that Twyford had no 3+ provision and there was an identified need. The local Mother and Toddler group had been consulted and did not object.

The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, The Northampton Diocesan Board of Education, the Schools Group and Buckinghamshire County Council voted on the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the Committee considered and **AGREED** the proposal to determine the statutory notice.

8. ADMISSION: REVIEW OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CATCHMENT AREAS FROM 2006 ONWARDS

The Committee received and noted a report from Paul Holmes outlining the details of the review of primary school catchment areas.

Members noted that the public consultation period ran from 1 September 2004 – 13 October 2004. Information was available on the County Council's website. The LEA would be consulting on behalf of most of the school concerned. Members were shown a draft copy of the booklet for parents.

9. OFSTED FEEDBACK

Nick Powley updated the Committee on the recent OfSTED report. He explained that the findings had not come as a surprise. He suggested, and it was agreed, that issues pertinent to the Committee would be submitted to the committee for information.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 29 September 2004, Green Park. Following discussion it was agreed that the meeting would begin at 12.30pm, instead of 2.30pm, with pre-meetings at 12.00pm.