

ITEM 4

Time commenced – 6.00pm
Time finished – 7.25pm

EDUCATION COMMISSION 7 NOVEMBER 2005

Present: Councillor MacDonald (in the Chair)
Councillors Afzal, Allen, Higginbottom, Hird, Khan and Latham

Co-opted Members: David Edwards – Church of England Diocese
Dr Devendra – Parent Governor

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from John Honey (Catholic Diocese) and Nasreen Iqbal (Parent Governor).

Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

David Edwards, Church of England Diocese, advised the Commission that he was retiring from the Commission and this was his last meeting. The Commission thanked David for his work over the years that he'd been appointed to it.

Declarations of Interest

Name	Type of interest	Reason
Councillor MacDonald	Personal	Governor – Lees Brook Community Sports College
	Personal	Member of National Union of Teachers
Councillor Higginbottom	Personal	Vice Chair of Governors – Ashgate Primary School
Councillor Allen	Personal	Chair of the Management Committee at the Pupil Referral unit
		Governor at St Clare's School
Dr Devendra	Personal	Governor Chellaston Junior School

Mr D Edwards	Personal	Chair of Governors – St Peters, Littleover Vice Chair Governor – St James' Infant School
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22/05 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 19 September 2005 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendments:

Page 2 Declarations of Interest – to amend David Edwards' 'Declaration of Interest' to read Vice Chair Governors at St James' Infant School.

Items for Discussion

23/05 Integrating Children's Services

Members received an update on the Integrating Children's Services agenda from Andrew Flack, Director of Education. Andrew Flack advised that there had been an inter-agency planning event working towards the Children and Young People's Plan. This included a presentation on the views of children and young people which was a comprehensive view of what they wanted and needed in the city. There was very strong spirit of interagency working. The parent and carers forum in October yielded information to feed into the consultation and there were a number of other groups contributing to the planning.

There were still a lot of questions regarding the integration of front line delivery but the executive had determined that there would be a pilot in one area although staffing had not yet been determined.

There had been a Senior Staff Day where they had examined common core services provided, where the aim was to ensure the right balance of integrated services and ensure the clear definition between services offered by each agency. There were concerns regarding mental health such as bullying and domestic violence and the Health Services needed to be accessed for support on this.

On 15 and 16 December there would be further staff briefings at 12pm and 1.30pm and all members of the Commission were invited to these briefings. There was a newsletter produced that gave details on latest developments in the Integrated Children's Services which could be obtained from Keith Watkins, Administration Office Manager.

Today was the official launch of the protocol for information sharing. A group in Derby had worked very hard to solve issues and today had launched the protocol which each agency had signed up to. The next stage was to develop a technical solution and it was expected that a software supplier would shortly be commissioned.

Regarding the Children's Trust Board, there was no specific reference to the Director of Children's Services being the Chair, so it would probably be more appropriate that the Director of Children's Services would be the advisor to the trust instead. This was part of the governance issues that were being worked on. Andrew Flack advised that he had formally been appointed the post of Director for Children and Young People and would formally take up this post in January 2006.

Tony Walsh stated that the information protocol was interesting and asked if this could be shared with the Commission. Andrew Flack suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer speak to the Integrated Children's Services Team to get a copy of this.

Councillor Latham asked a question relating to the previous minutes of the Commission where it stated the Trust Board would be made up of staff with appropriate seniority. She asked for clarification on what appropriate seniority meant and how many staff there would be and would Councillors also be involved. Andrew Flack responded that these issues were part of the next stage of the development. This needed to be worked through and he would come back to the Committee with the proposals.

Councillor Latham also commented that it would be interesting to see what other authorities were doing in relation to integrating children's services.

Councillor Latham asked how these new developments would affect the Education Commission and would there be a restructure. Councillor MacDonald responded that she would investigate this and report back to the next meeting. Andrew Flack added that it may make sense to have a Commission for Children's Services and co-opted members to reflect this. The statutory positions of some co-opted members were acknowledged.

Resolved to note the update.

24/05 Primary School Place Planning

The Commission considered a report from the Director of Education asking for its comments on the consultation on the Primary School Place Planning strategy. Council Cabinet had approved the draft Primary School Place Planning strategy for consultation at its meeting on 12 July 2005. The consultation period ended on 31 October 2005. Members were given a summary of the responses to the consultation. A further report covering consultation responses and proposals for a final policy would be taken to Council Cabinet on 18 January 2006. Simon Longley, Assistant Director - Resources and Strategic Planning, advised that it was hard to see any area in Derby where there was an excess of schools as opposed to an excess of school places. It was not an easy task to rationalise the system. The intention was to build on and incorporate the recommendations the Education Commissions review on place planning. There had been a lot of response to the consultation and a lot of input to what the authority was doing. The responses were mixed. All of them were positive except question one and question six which had mixed responses. The question of federation needed working on. The notion of federation had a great detail of positive feedback

although a professional input from headteachers was needed before this was taken to Council Cabinet in January.

Councillor Latham stated that these proposals were imperative not just in primary but in secondary schools and at some point the Commission needed a paper on how they were going to address these issues in secondary schools. She also commented that it was disappointing that no parents had responded to the consultation.

Simon Longley responded that cross city boundary areas was a significant issue for secondary schools. On Boulton Moor, developers will be building a new primary school similar to Griffie Field but secondary schooling was an issue. In a sense, this was Derbyshire's problem but this was not a good way to look at the issue. Simon Longley advised that he would be having a meeting with Chellaston, Merrill and Noel Baker Schools to discuss the division of areas. He wanted to see if an agreement could be reached as it might be sensible to redraw the normal areas but this was a sensitive issue. At the moment, all three of these schools accommodated their normal areas but an extra 1,000 houses being built would present an extra pressure.

The building schools for the future programme would deal with many issues that could arise in the secondary sector. Simon advised that he would expect Derbyshire to assist funding for providing places for pupils coming from new developments outside the city, although there were no firm plans yet.

Simon Longley shared Councillor Latham's concerns that parents had not responded but this document was a bit abstract and he felt they would be more suited to respond to the area reviews.

Councillor Latham asked that Parkview Primary School be the first priority, as Oakwood has never had proper Primary School provision.

Councillor Higginbottom asked if there was something more that could be done to engage parents in consultation. Councillor Allen asked how invitations to parents were sent out. Simon Longley responded that schools were asked to notify parents and the media had covered these issues but there had been limited response.

Tony Walsh commented that in some areas there seemed to be a number of schools close together and with regard to the area based reviews, the report mentioned involving local communities and this needed to be tackled in a more pro-active way in future consultations including faith groups.

Simon Longley advised that the areas proposed for the area based reviews were consistent with the area panels which made sense in a range of dimensions. Full account would be taken of structures for area and neighbourhood working.

Simon Longley advised that there was no simple way to involve all faith communities across the city. There was a strong argument to look at the Normanton and Arboretum areas although this should not lead to an assumption that any change would be made. It would be a challenge to engage people without giving unrealistic fears or high expectations.

Full involvement was needed from parents in the next stages and parent governors were bound to give the views of their constituents. In the area reviews, parents would be engaged through school level meetings and they needed to look at getting maximum participation and it was envisaged that each area review would take approximately a year to complete. It was also important to engage parents of very young children and possibly residents who had not yet had children, as the Council were looking at the future.

Resolved

- 1. to endorse the area based approach for reviewing school place planning**
- 2. to reiterate the Commission's original recommendation contained in the School Place Planning Primary Sector topic review report - that the Council undertake detailed consultation with parents in taking forward the school place planning strategy at a local level.**
- 3. to recommend that the consultation of area reviews should make parent and community involvement a priority. The Commission were disappointed that parents had not given comments and the authority needed to ensure that parents were engaged at all future stages of the consultation.**

25/05 Forward Plan

There were no items.

26/05 Call-In

There were no items.

27/05 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission

There were no items.

MINUTES END