

ITEM 4

Time commenced – 6.00pm

Time finished – 8.15pm

EDUCATION COMMISSION 21 FEBRUARY 2005

Present: Councillor MacDonald (in the Chair)
Councillors Hird, Latham, Liversedge, Khan
and Wynn

Co-opted Members: Mr T Johnston, Dr K Devendra (Parent
Governor), Ms N Iqbal (Parent Governor)

Also in Attendance Mr D Wilkinson (NASUWT)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dhamrait and Winter, Mr J Honey (Roman Catholic Diocese), Mr D Edward (Church of England Diocese)

Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items. The Chair reminded the Commission that there would be a tour of schools on Thursday 3 March 2005. The schools to be visited included Normanton Junior School, Boulton Primary School, Chellaston School, Griffe Field Primary School, Ashgate Primary School and Lees Brook Community Sports College. It was hoped that the tour would highlight the condition of some of the buildings and show where major investments had been carried out. The tour would start at the Council House at 9.30 am and return to the Council House at around 3.30 pm.

Declarations of Interest

Name	Type of interest	Reason
Councillor MacDonald	Personal	Governor – Lees Brook Community Sports College
	Personal	Member of National Union of Teachers
Mr T Johnston	Personal	Vice Chair Governor – Murray Park School
		Chair Governor – St. Clare's School

Councillor Wynn	Personal	Chair Governor – Beckett School Chair Governor – Bemrose School Wife a teacher employed by the LEA Governor – Nightingale Junior School Son employed by Woodlands School.
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38/04 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Education Commission held on 17 January 2005, were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Items for Discussion

39/04 School Funding 2005/06

The Commission considered a report of the Directors of Education and Finance, which set out a report which would be considered by Council Cabinet at its meeting on 22 February 2005. The report set out proposed changes to the formula for the funding for schools, which would be subjected to the Council's final budget decisions. These included

- Implementing the new banding system for funding special and enhanced resource school places and nurture groups
- introducing a revised formula for the remainder of the special schools budget and delegating the budget for self-prepared and residential meals
- increasing the new special school formula factors by 5%
- increasing age-weighted funding for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 2 by 2.62% to support primary and nursery schools in implementing workforce reform
- adding £178,000 to funding distributed through the English as an Additional Language factor
- adding £150,000 to the catering allocation through a factor for paid meals
- introducing a factor to support primary schools which had a net inflow of pupils with statements from outside their normal area
- introducing a "PFI factor" as a technical measure to comply with passporting requirements
- introducing a temporary PFI factor for da Vinci Community College from 2006/07 to support the school as it built up its numbers
- applying 17% of the remaining growth above inflation to the Foundation

Stage, 7% to Key Stage 1, 40% to Key Stage 2 and special schools, 21% to Key Stage 3 and 15% to Key Stage 4

- exempting the special schools formula, enhanced resources school places and nursery schools transitional protection from the minimum funding guarantee.

The report also set out the principles of allocating Standard Funds and distribution of teachers' pay and threshold grants on the basis of actual numbers and proposed changes to funding schools relating to contract procedure rules and buildings issues.

Resolved to note the report.

40/04 School Place Planning Strategy

The Commission had previously undertaken a substantial topic review on school place planning and had produced separate reports relating to the primary and secondary phases. The Commission made a total of 30 recommendations although there was some overlap and duplication between the two review reports. The two topic review reports were considered by Council Cabinet and referred to the Director of Education for further consideration and responses as part of the process of preparing proposals for a place planning strategy.

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Education which stated that the last inspection of the Council's Education functions concluded the Council was well positioned to manage secondary school places efficiently in the foreseeable future. However, it recommended that the Council should publish a clear statement describing its views of the number and location of primary schools required to meet the forecast numbers of primary aged pupils; and to take action to ensure improved management of places in schools approaching or above 15% surplus places.

The report detailed the actions taken since the topic review reports were referred to the Director of Education by Council Cabinet. The Director of Education reported that revised guidance from the DFES on surplus places was currently being consulted on and would be released in due course. He also reported that in respect of Building Schools for the Future, Derby was likely to be in Waves 4 to 6 and the earliest this could start was 2008. The Council were currently lobbying to be included in Wave 4, rather than Wave 6. It was hoped that by Easter, the Council would have a clearer idea both of guidance and the programme for Building Schools for the Future.

Councillor Latham was concerned that a policy needed to be in place to enable Building Schools for the Future to be considered. She felt that Council Cabinet should consider a policy so that as and when resources became available, the Policy would be in place to implement the proposals. The Director of Education reported that primary school places were included in the School Organisation Plan. The Commission was concerned that where new schools were built, they should be built on the basis of complete forms of entry. The Director of Education reported that some data gathering work had been completed, which would assist the strategy when it was developed. He also reported that whole

form entry had been incorporated in the Council's School Organisation Plan. The ideal was two form entry, where pupil numbers justified this. Whilst some schools, including within the PFI programme, had not been built in whole forms of entry, plans had where appropriate been made for later expansion to meet the needs of possible housing developments."

Resolved

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. To refer the comments of the Commission to Council Cabinet for consideration.**

41/04 Performance Eye

David Romaine, Scrutiny and Complaints Manager, updated the Commission on information on Performance Eye. He circulated some figures obtained from Performance Eye which showed historical information on the level of exclusions.

The Assistant Director explained that Performance Eye information was not fully representative of the current position regarding exclusions. Some more representative information was circulated and the Commission was told that there were difficulties with the level of exclusions and lack of central support services for schools with children with challenging behaviour. The aiming of reducing exclusions was based on the considerable investment in such support strategies. It was noted that there had been 93 secondary exclusions and 12 primary exclusions and that schools were being consulted on ways of reducing exclusions. There was a general discussion about exclusions from the point of view of both the schools and the Local Education Authority.

The Director of Education reported that Performance Eye was quantitative and that strategic planning performance measures would be put on to Performance Eye, which would make the information more meaningful to the Commission.

Resolved to note the report.

42/04 Grouped Schools PFI - Future Oversight and Management of the Project

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services on behalf of the Project Board. The report had been considered by Council Cabinet at its meeting on 8 February 2005. It was noted that an additional recommendation was proposed at the Council Cabinet, namely that one of the 5 ward members referred to in paragraph 1.6 of the report should be nominated to become a member of the project board as described in paragraph 2.2 and 3.1 to 3.3 of the report. The proposal was agreed and arrangements were in hand to identify that nominee. The signing of the Governing Body Agreement between the Council and the five governing bodies of the Schools concerned, took place on 30 November 2004 the subsequent signing of the Project Agreement

between the Council and Derby Schools' Solutions Ltd on 23 December 2004, signalled the start of the next phase of the project – the construction of interim services - and necessitated arrangements which represented a balance between those required by the Project and Governing Body Agreements and those internal to the Council in order to safeguard its best interests.

Resolved to note the report.

43/04 Self Evaluation of the Education Functions of the Council

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Education, which set out a report which would be considered by Council Cabinet at its meeting on 22 February 2005. The report gave details of a self-evaluation exercise undertaken by the Education Service. The self-evaluation exercise marked the final check on progress through the post inspection action plan, after the inspection carried out by Ofsted and the Audit Commission in September 2002. It provided a secure basis for benchmarking the quality of the Council's performance as a Local Education Authority, in preparation for the new regime of inspections and assessments of children's services. Action planning would address the findings of the self-evaluation and ensure work towards even higher standards.

Resolved to note the report.

44/04 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

The Commission considered the Council Cabinet Forward Plan for March 2005. No new items were selected for consideration.

Minutes End