

Time commenced – 6.15pm
Time finished – 7.25pm

EDUCATION COMMISSION 1 SEPTEMBER 2003

Present: Councillor Wynn (in the Chair)
Councillors Chera, J Hickson, Hird, Latham,
MacDonald and Winter

Co-opted Members: Mr John Honey (Roman Catholic Diocese)
Mr Ian Samways and Mr Tom Johnston (Parent
Governors)

Also in Attendance: Mr David Wilkinson (NASUWT)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ahern, Mr Balwant
Bubber and Mr David Edwards.

Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

Declarations of Interest

Members declaring interests by virtue of being school governors indicated
that this applied to the report entitled 'Retained Balances in Schools',
recorded at Minute 23/03.

Name	Type of interest	Reason
Mr BR Bubber	Personal	Governor – Peartree Infant School Trustee at the Hindu temple
Councillor Chera	Personal Personal Personal	Governor – Sinfin Secondary Community School Member of UNISON Member of the Sikh temple
Councillor J Hickson	Personal	Governor – Etwall Primary School

Mr J Honey	Personal	Headteacher and Governor – St George’s Catholic Primary School
Councillor Latham	Personal and prejudicial	In all matters connected to the Education PFI Grouped Schools bid, by virtue of her husband’s professional interest.
Councillor MacDonald	Personal Personal	Governor – Lees Brook Community Sports College Member of National Union of Teachers
Mr I Samways	Personal	Governor – Littleover Community School
Councillor Wynn	Personal Personal	Governor – Beckett School Governor – Bemrose School Governor – High View School Wife a teacher employed by the LEA
Mr T Johnston	Personal	Governor – Murray Park School Governor – St. Clares School

19/03 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Education Commission held on 7 July 2003 were accepted as a true record.

Items for Discussion

20/03 Update on School Place Planning Topic Review

The Commission received an update from Lynn Senior, Overview and Scrutiny Coordination Officer, on the progress of the Topic Review on School Place Planning. It was reported that a number of interviews were held on 22 and 23 July 2003. The interviewees included representatives of the Learning and Skills Council, Headteachers, Dioceses, the Education Department and the Council Cabinet Members for Lifelong Learning.

A questionnaire had been circulated to all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors. The results would be analysed by the Education Department, and would form part of the evidence for the Topic Review

The Commission commended those involved in the topic review work.

Resolved:

- 1. to note the report.**
- 2. to note that a primary report of the findings would be available by the end of September 2003 and a secondary report by December 2003.**
- 3. to note that the next meeting of the Topic Planning Group would be held on Monday 15 September 2003.**

21/03 Early Years Strategy

A report of the Director of Education was received which set out the Early Years Strategy that was approved by Council Cabinet on 5 August 2003. The report included proposals on Children's Centres and a wider Early Years Strategy in the City.

The Department for Education and Skills required that a report for a Children's Centre Plan was submitted by 15 October 2003.

A report would be sent back to Council Cabinet on 28 October 2003 and then to the Department for Education and Skills, subject to the final decision.

The Director of Education advised that the amendment made at Council Cabinet meant that while there would still be consultation on the specific proposals for Children's Centres, the consultation about the wider implications for other nursery provision should not include specific proposals.

The Director for Education reported that he would be circulating the Consultation brochure on the Early Years Strategy on 2 September 2003 to Infant Schools, Junior Schools, Health Centres and Libraries.

Resolved to advise Council Cabinet that the Commission:

- 1. welcomes the revised recommendations**
- 2. thanks the Council Cabinet for their due consideration and consultation, and**
- 3. would welcome the early referral of related issues as the strategy develops.**

22/03 Education Service Capital Projects

The Commission considered a report from the Director of Education, which set out Education Service Capital Projects, which had been considered by Council Cabinet on 24 June and 5 August 2003 .

The Commission commended those concerned in the production of such a thorough report.

Resolved to note the report.

23/03 Retained Balances in Schools

The Commission considered a report from the Director of Education, which set out details of the Council's strategy on surplus schools balances.

The report was approved by Council Cabinet on 15 July 2003 and included a list of reasons for schools to hold large balances.

Resolved to note the report.

24/03 Service Area Budget Review 2003/2004

The Commission considered a report of the Chair of the Commission, further to the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Commission on 17 June 2003. At that meeting, it was agreed that all Scrutiny Commissions would conduct an independent budget review process to an advanced timetable, with the budget reviews to be concluded by the end of November 2003. This would enable the recommendations from all Commissions to go collectively to Scrutiny Management Commission on 2 December 2003, and then to be considered by Council Cabinet on 16 December 2003. This would allow Council Cabinet the option of making changes before budget proposals were issued for consultation.

Resolved that the Commission approve:

- 1. a service area for budget review in accordance with the budget scrutiny framework adopted by the Scrutiny Management Commission**
- 2. a timescale for completing the budget review.**

Matters Referred to the Commission by the Council Cabinet

25/03 Best Value Review of Education and Social Services Transport

The Commission considered a joint report of the Directors of Education, Social Services and Development and Cultural Services on the Best Value Review of Education and Social Services Transport. The review was extended to include financial reviews by KPMG.

The review focused on the provision of transport for:

- Children looked after
- Pupils with special educational needs
- Some pupils in mainstream schools
- Adults who are elderly

The Improvement Plan proposed the following in order to address the conclusions of the Review:

- The development of costed proposals for restructuring the current arrangements for managing the service, including financial management.
- The review of criteria, assessments and appeals.
- Improvement of quality assurance, customer care and safety.

Resolved to advise Council Cabinet that the Commission welcomes the final report and improvement plan.

26/03 Forward Plan – September 2003

No new items were identified for consideration.

MINUTES END