

Time commenced – 6.05pm
Time finished – 6.55pm

EDUCATION COMMISSION 23 JANUARY 2006

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

Co-opted Members: Nasreen Iqbal – Parent Governor
John Honey (Catholic Diocese)

Also Present:

Councillor Wynn
Ian Jennison - NUT

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hird, Alison Brown and Tony Walsh.

Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

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

35/05 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 19 December 2005 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to the insertion of Councillor Latham's apologies.

36/05 Call In

There were no items.

Items for Discussion

37/05 Performance Monitoring

The Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director Corporate and Adult Social Services and Deputy Chief Executive that detailed the Schools' Performance in Key Stage Assessments. The report detailed an analysis of progress and trends in all key areas of school performance and in respect of Key Stage Assessment for Derby Schools for the academic years ending 2001 to 2005. Councillor Wynn considered that the improvement in performance indicators in Derby was a testimony to the Education Service and schools. It was reported that there had been work with the Pakistani Community Reference group and that through this link with the community performance had increased from below to above average.

Resolved to thank everyone involved in the reference group and note the report.

38/05 Revenue Budget 2006/07 to 2008/09

The Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director, Corporate and Adult Social Services and Deputy Chief Executive that highlighted key points of the Council's draft Revenue Budget 2006/7 to 2008/09 falling within the remit of the Education Commission. The Council's draft Revenue Budget was issued to Overview and Scrutiny Commission members at a briefing on 9 January 2006. All Commissions had been given an opportunity to consider the draft revenue budget at their business meetings during January 2006 and make recommendations on proposals which fell within their respective remits.

The Performance Eye, performance monitoring facility gives the Overview and Scrutiny Commissions the means of monitoring the effects and outcomes of the funding for Council services, agreed through the budget process. It was suggested that each Commission could identify particular service areas within its remit and could, at subsequent meetings, use Performance Eye to track progress and to examine the effects on performance of the budget allocation within those areas. A summary of the information from the draft Revenue Budget, which related to the Education Commission, was set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

Councillor Wynn reported that the education budget of £135 million in 2005/06 had risen to £144.3 million. It was reported that a start had been made on restructuring the Education and Social Services and that there was an expectation that this would lead to efficiencies within the service. It was noted that an early intervention team had been established that would provide a link between birth and the foundation stage of school.

Councillor Latham asked what cuts should be expected in order to keep the Council Tax increase between 2% and 4% and if a guarantee could be given that there would be no cut to the adult education budget. Councillor Wynn responded that no guarantees of cuts to adult education budget could be given as the budget was in consultation stage and that a provisional Council Tax figure was 2.4% - 2.5% and that the whole of the service was being looked at to find the necessary savings. Andrew Flack commented that adult services were almost entirely funded by Learning Skills Council grants and so provided an element of protection.

It was considered that the Gatsby Project had had a major impact in improving the education of children looked after by the City Council. Funding for the project from the Gatsby Foundation was coming to an end and members noted that there was no increase in funding beyond 2007/08.

Members were informed that there would be reductions in the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant; and that the Grant would be directed prescriptively, in ways that partly did not accord with Derby LEA's identified priorities. The affected schools are currently being consulted. Members were concerned that the reduction in grant and prescribed use will impact children who have English as a second language and particularly those in areas of social deprivation.

Members welcomed Councillors Roberts comments at Area Panel 4 that there will be no cuts in the Education budget.

Resolved to recommend to the Council Cabinet that there should be no cuts in the Education budget, particularly in light of concerns raised about Adult Learning, the Gatsby Project and English Speakers of Other Languages.

Members asked to be provided with a list of all Capital Schemes at the next Commission meeting and show the variances between the previous years programme.

Members also wished to see the proposals to use the DFES monies to rebuild Ivy House and New Normanton school at a future date.

39/05 Forward Plan

The Commission identified the following items on the Forward Plan for consideration at a future meeting:

67/05 Targeted Capital Fund New Build

40/05 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission

There were no items.

41/05 Matters Referred to the Commission by Council
Cabinet

There were no items.

MINUTES END