

# MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY EDUCATION BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 8 July 2014 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Gareth Siddorn (Vice-Chair), Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Carl Handley, Jim Mallory, Jamie Milne (Chair), John Muldoon, John Paschoud, Sharon Archibald (Parent Governor Representative) and Mark Saunders (Parent Governor Representative)

ALSO PRESENT:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pauline Morrison

## 17. Minutes

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Education Business Panel following the elections.

RESOLVED that the minutes of that part of the meeting which was open to the press and public held on 28 January 2014 be confirmed and signed.

## 18. Declarations of Interests

None.

## 19. Decisions of Mayor and Cabinet 25 June

Measures to Increase the supply of Permanent Primary School Places: Report on the Representation period on Proposals to Enlarge to enlarge Sir Francis Drake Primary School

The Head of Education Infrastructure introduced the report. The Chair received confirmation that all the decisions by the Mayor and Cabinet would be progressed subject to the outcome of the planning application. The Chair commented that this was an unusual situation wherein the community is saying they do not want a new school, and asked how officers plan to address concerns raised by the various interest groups.

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The Head of Education Infrastructure said that some of the views were in principle, as some people do not want the school to change from a single form to a 2 form entry. He added that there would still be pressure for reception places up until the end of the decade. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that some people do not want to see the old school demolished, as they were worried the new building would not be adequate to meet the needs of the children, while others did not think proper consultation had been done.

Councillor John Paschoud asked what evidence was presented to Mayor and Cabinet that the site had the capacity for twice the number of children than before. He asked whether there were any plans to expand the school site by acquiring land around it. Councillor John Paschoud also asked what the decanting arrangements were. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that the decanting arrangements would be the same as for Beecroft school. He added that the most significant thing was that there would be a reduction in playground space. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that there had been some discussion with Parks to utilise some park space for break out during lunchtime.

Councillor John Paschoud said that he was concerned about the lack of availability of proper plans and information on outdoor space for members to consider. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that officers were in a difficult situation as things needed to be done quickly, and further information would only be available at the point when planning permission is sought.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.20, and reconvened at 7.21

Councillor Curran said that it was obvious that the council had to make a decision faced with the options available, because of the current pressure for school places. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that with the level of demand the council was faced with, all opportunities to increase capacity of schools would be considered. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that in the general locality officers were looking at expanding Kender school, and the provision of a 3 form entry school at Convoys Wharf.

Councillor Curran said that he was aware of an issue raised by Joan Ruddock, MP for Deptford that the consultation was mainly done in English which was not deemed to be fair and adequate. The Head of Education Infrastructure said he was aware that Parents Group had lobbied Joan Ruddock. He said that officers had asked the school whether translation services would be needed as part of the consultation process, and they were told that this would not be necessary. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that there were issues raised about the online consultation, but there was always the option for emails to be sent to him or a member of his staff directly.

The Chair asked about consultation with neighbouring authorities, and was told that officers were working closely with Southwark and Greenwich. Councillor Dacres asked what percentage of primary schools have been enlarged and was told 79%. She then asked whether the Head of Education Infrastructure would say performance had been affected in these schools. The Head of Education Infrastructure said that on average over the last 2 years Lewisham Key stage 1 & 2 results have improved steadily.

The Chair asked for confirmation that Sir Francis Drake was the only school that qualified for this first round of the Education Funding Authority project, this was confirmed.

- RESOLVED that
- i. the decision of the Mayor be noted.
  - ii. the Mayor instruct officers to fully engage both Ward Councillors, and Councillors with relevant responsibilities if there is any proposal for the use of Parks.
  - iii. as there are no detailed plans in the current report, there should be a further report to Mayor and Cabinet, and the respective Scrutiny Committee, following close working with the governing body, parents and neighbouring boroughs in the finalisation of detailed proposals.

#### Trinity Primary School Leahurst Road

The Head of Education Infrastructure introduced the report, the Chair asked for confirmation that the property would revert back to the council if the school cease to be a community school. This was confirmed by the Head of Education Infrastructure. The Chair thanked officers for the report.

RESOLVED that the Mayor's decision be noted

The meeting closed at 7.35pm

**20. Exclusion of the press and public**

**21. Decisions made by Executive Directors under Delegated Authority:**