

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY EDUCATION BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 28 March 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Gareth Siddorn (Vice-Chair), Liam Curran, Carl Handley, Jim Mallory, John Muldoon, Maja Hilton, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Luke Sorba and Pauline Morrison, and Monsignor N Rothern,

13. Minutes

The Chair welcomed new and returning Business Panel Members to the meeting; Councillors Hilton, Johnston-Franklin, Morrison and Sorba. The Chair also thanked out-going members of the Panel; Councillors Dacres, Michael, Milne and Moore for all their hard work during their term of office.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the open meeting held on 31 January 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

14. Declarations of Interests

Councillor Mallory declared a personal non pecuniary interest in item 3 as a Governor of Abbey Manor College.

Councillor Handley declared a personal non pecuniary interest in item 3 as a Board Member of Brent Knoll and Watergate Schools co-op Trust.

15. Decisions Made by Mayor and Cabinet on 22 March 2017

Lewisham Schools Place Planning Strategy

The Executive Director for Children and Young People introduced the report. The Chair stated that local authorities have a duty to provide school places for children in the borough. He asked what the future plans were for a new secondary school in Lewisham. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said the situation was complicated as there were still places available in some of the Lewisham secondary schools. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said this was mainly due to the high volume of export of secondary school children to neighbouring boroughs. She added that the bulge classes provision in primary schools had not yet worked through to secondary schools. Panel Members were told that the start of the serious deficit of secondary school places would be in 2019/20 hence the justification of 1 form entry for Bonus Pastor and a planned extension of Addey & Stanhope.

The Executive Director for Children and Young People said Panel Members should be aware that if there was to be a new secondary school it would only be a Free School. This would mean the Council would not have to identify a site for the school. She said finding a site in London was not easy, and the officers were focusing on filling up existing schools, and the Council hoped to export fewer pupils in future.

The Chair asked how long it would take to build a new school and was told that a large secondary school could take years. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said apart from the construction itself a suitable site would have to be identified, planning permission sought and all this could take about 3-4 years. The Chair said this was worrying, as talk of building a new school had been going on before the current administration and to date no progress had been made. The Executive Director for Children and Young People informed the Panel that the Council could not possibly open a new secondary school when there were vacant places in existing secondary schools. She emphasised that the urgency was in providing places for primary school children and this would continue till 2018/19.

Councillor Mallory said he was aware of the difficulty in securing a site to build a new school, and wanted to find out if there was any scope to expand existing schools, especially as most of them were built under the BSF programme. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said most of them have not got the facility to expand, and although Sedgehill School was on a large site this would be the wrong time to expand it.

Councillor Mallory asked if other sites have been investigated, and was told that officers had not yet done a site trawl for secondary schools as the priority currently was for primary school places. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said the Council could look at expanding schools that were popular but there were issues around optimum size for secondary schools, and this would have to be considered carefully.

Following a detailed discussion, and in response to a question about the Council's strategic plan to address the issue of secondary school places and securing additional funding for this, the Executive Director for Children and Young People said officers would set out clear steps to address this problem. She said things that were being discussed included recycling of bulge classes in Primary schools and focusing on increasing the number of special school places. She added that proposals would be brought to members in the next few months.

The Chair said he was happy that the Children and Young People Select Committee were constantly reviewing schools forecast on a yearly basis. The Chair requested the following briefings for Education Business Panel Members:

- i. the proposed church Free School.
- ii. proposal for getting SEN funding for out of borough school places.
- iii. plans for increasing secondary school places in the borough.

The Chair said these were very important issues and needed to be addressed. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said this information would be provided after the Easter Break.

Action >>>>> EC CYP

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor be noted.

Our Lady St Philp Neri – Land Transfer

The Capital Programme Delivery Services Manager introduced the report.

Business Panel Members asked if the Council would get any financial benefit from this transaction, and was told the Council would not. It was noted that the current value of the land was £30k and the Mayor had pledged £6.1m towards expansion works as it would be of significant benefit to Lewisham if the school was expanded. The Chair asked that officers ensure access to Home Park is part of the discussion, and was told by the Capital Programme Delivery Services Manager that this would be included in the contract.

Action >>>>> ED Resources & Regeneration

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor be noted

16. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act, as amended by the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to information) (Amendments) (England) Regulations 2006 and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

The following is a summary of the items considered in the closed part of the meeting:

17. Decision Made by Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 22 March 2017

Ashmead and Addey & Stanhope School Expansions

The Chair said Business Panel Members received and noted the Head of Law's letter.

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor be noted.

18. Decision Made by an Executive Director Under Delegated Authority - Award of Stage 1 Design and Build Contract Addey & Stanhope and Ashmead Schools

This item was not required for further discussion.

Meeting ended: 7:55pm

Chair