

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY EDUCATION BUSINESS PANEL

Tuesday, 19 December 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Jim Mallory, John Muldoon, Monsignor N Rothern, Maja Hilton, Liz Johnston-Franklin and Luke Sorba

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gareth Siddorn, Councillor Liam Curran and Councillor Pauline Morrison

1. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the open meeting held on 28 March 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

2. Declarations of Interests

The Chair declared a personal non pecuniary interest in item 3 as a Member of the Brent Knoll and Watergate School Co-operative Trust.

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

3. Decisions made by Mayor and Cabinet on 6 December 2017

Delivering Additional School Places for Children and Young People with SEN

The Executive Director for Children and Young People introduced the report.

The Chair commented that when Watergate School in Bellingham was being rebuilt there was a request for it to be made bigger for future needs but Members were told the additional space would not be needed. The Chair said he hoped the same mistake would not be made now, and projections had been made to ensure future needs would be met. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said the spaces provided would meet current needs and the schools would be utilised to their maximum capacity, and this would be kept under review.

The Chair noted there had not been universal support to the proposal, he asked if there had been sufficient engagement with local residents who would be affected. The Executive Director for Children and Young People said officers constantly work with schools to engage local residents as much as possible.

The Service Manager, School Place Planning said officers were also aware of, and follow the statutory consultation process, and best practice.

He said for New Woodlands there had been proper engagement with residents and parents, and only a small number of people were not happy. He said there had been 4 weeks of representation addressing issues, and then the planning process would start, this would also highlight any remaining issues. The Chair said Members needed assurances.

Councillor Mallory raised a query about a proposal to have a Pupil Referral Unit for primary education located at New Woodlands Key Stage 4 provision, he asked about the timescale, and was told that September 2018 was the current timescale. The Chair said he was aware of the difficulties involved. He asked if it would be a new building, and was told the old Brent Knoll site would be used and it would be a combination of new and old building.

Councillor Johnston-Franklin asked how many pupils were involved and was told the information would be sent to her and the Chair as soon as possible.

Action >>>>> ED CYP

The Executive Director, Children and Young People said she would like to meet Ward Members to discuss further before the proposal was finalised. The Chair welcomed this.

RESOLVED that the decision of the Mayor be noted.

Meeting ended 7.30pm