

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY (EDUCATION) BUSINESS PANEL, which was open to the press and public, held on MONDAY, 12 JULY 2004 at LEWISHAM TOWN HALL, CATFORD, SE6 4RU at 7 p.m.

Present

Councillor Smith (Chair); Councillor Anderson (Vice-Chair); Councillors Adefiranye, Dawson, Fitzsimmons, J Hastie, Maslin, Morris, Morrison and Muldoon.

Apologies for absence were received from Monsignor Rothern.

<u>Minute No.</u>		<u>Action</u>
1	<u>MINUTES</u> (page	
	RESOLVED	that, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Anderson chairing the meeting in the first instance in the absence of the Chair, the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 21 June 2004 be confirmed and signed.
2	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</u> (page	
	Councillor Morrison declared that she is the Chair of Governors at Crofton School; and Councillor Dawson declared that he is currently receiving a fee from the International Organisation of Teachers Trades Unions.	
3	<u>DECISIONS MADE BY THE MAYOR AND CABINET ON 30 JUNE 2004</u> (page	
	1. <u>Expansion of New Woodlands Special School</u>	
	RESOLVED	that the decisions of the Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

2. New Secondary School Proposal - Position Report

The Executive Director for Education & Culture gave a brief outline of the report.

Councillor Anderson said that there was no guarantee that the new school would open in 2006. He also enquired what the Council would be saying about the closure of the Leisure Centre.

Councillor Morrison stated that she preferred the Leisure Centre site to the Playtower site and emphasised that the Council would need to undertake a major public relations exercise on the proposal. She had listened to the John Gaunt Show on the radio and the Council had been rubbished, despite the efforts of the Deputy Chief Executive. However, what was noticeable was that there was no member input particularly from the Cabinet.

Councillor Morris referred to the impact of the merger of St Joseph's Academy and Our Lady of Lourdes to form the Knights Academy and questioned whether this had been factored into the demand for new secondary school places. It was noted that places would be based 50% on a distance to school basis after siblings have been taken into account and 50% on a radius of 3 miles. He also asked about the guidelines for open space/play area for schools. The Executive Director for Education & Culture undertook to respond to Councillor Morris on this matter.

Councillor Dawson reiterated that the Cabinet should have been represented at the interview with John Gaunt and recommended that this be raised with the Mayor.

The Chair suggested that:

- (i) the Minutes of the meeting reflect the lack of support for the Deputy Chief Executive at the radio interview;
- (ii) monitoring of the proposal for the new school be undertaken by the Children & Young People Select Committee; and

- (iii) the content of the Mayor and Cabinet report be discussed by all relevant Select Committees.

Councillor Maslin recommended that the decisions made by the Mayor should be called in. He was not convinced of the need for a new school for the following reasons:

- 1) He did not have confidence in the officer advice that had been given in respect of future secondary school rolls which underlies much of the rationale for current policy because:
 - (a) over the last 6 years members had received contradictory advice, and
 - (b) the assumption that school rolls will rise because the proportion of Lewisham parents wishing to send their children to Lewisham schools will rise is excessively subjective and speculative and consequently, to his mind, dubious.
- 2) He was not persuaded that the Ladywell site is the most appropriate.
- 3) Because of 1 above, he found the case for having to open a school in 2006 unconvincing. Consequently, he saw no need to temporarily open a new school on the Ennersdale site.
- 4) He found the argument that Northbrook will be able to take over the Ennersdale site in 2009 seamlessly and that there would be no additional cost implications for the expansion of Northbrook from the decision to allow Ennersdale to be the temporary site for the new secondary school, unconvincing.

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He then moved that the decisions made by the Mayor be called in. On a show of hands there appeared 4 people in favour of call in and 6 against.

The motion was lost.

In conclusion it was

RESOLVED that the decisions of the Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

3. Local Education Authority - Making of Instruments by Order - Voluntary Aided School

RESOLVED that the decisions of the Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

4. Local Education Authority - Making of Instruments by Order

RESOLVED that the decisions of the Mayor and Cabinet be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.

Chair