

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE
8 APRIL 2003
(5.30 pm – 6.10 pm)

Present: Councillors Edger (Chairman), Fawcett, Henfrey, and Sargeant
Mr G Jackson and Ms S Jales

1. Election of Chairman (Item 1)

Councillor Edger was elected as Chairman of the Sub Committee for the remainder of the current municipal year.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman (Item 2)

Councillor Sargeant was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Sub Committee for the remainder of the current municipal year.

3. Declarations of Interest (Item 4)

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Urgent Items of Business (Item 5)

There were no urgent items of business.

5. Remodelling of School Workforce (Item 6)

The Sub Committee was requested to note the details of the National Agreement signed by the Government, the Employers and school workforce unions which was intended to both raise standards and to tackle teacher workload issues. This agreement initiated a process of reform whereby all parties would continue to work in partnership to develop shared understandings in respect of each stage of implementation and delivery during the first phase.

The Director of Education reported on details of the National Agreement and the related financial resources, timetable for reforms and next steps to be undertaken. The Sub Committee was advised that the objectives of the Agreement would be met by freeing teachers from routine administrative tasks to enable them to concentrate on teaching and to provide time for planning, preparation and assessment and for leadership and management tasks whilst reducing the amount of demand for cover teaching. The need to enhance the numbers and roles of support staff to undertake these administrative tasks, which were identified in the report, was noted and such enhancement may include the employment of higher level teaching assistants.

A Member advised that the National Union of Teachers was not currently participating in discussions concerning the development of the Agreement owing to concerns regarding the proposed cover arrangements, which involved non-teaching



staff providing cover for teachers, and preferred to monitor the situation before 'signing up' to the Agreement.

Having noted details of, and considered the implications of, the National Agreement, Members indicated support for the principles behind the Agreement whilst highlighting associated concerns. These concerns related to a perceived lack of funding for the implementation of the Agreement, the invigilation of external examinations by persons other than teachers, cover arrangements involving non-teaching staff and anticipated difficulties in recruiting high level teaching support assistants in the South East of England. It was noted that the Borough Council intended to approach the Secretary of State to advise that it was unable to identify any additional funds within its funding settlement to support the Agreement and to seek national guidance on pay scales associated with the new enhanced support staff roles. The need to consider the non-teacher staff structure and grading to meet the needs of the Agreement and prevent new tasks from impinging on existing ones was recognised. It was noted that Learning and Skills Councils had been asked to assist with local delivery of national training courses for the new non-teaching roles.

Having been updated on progress achieved to date in respect of the establishment of the working group which would consider the proposals, the Sub Committee requested that the working group be advised of its views in this regard.

CHAIRMAN