

**EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB
COMMITTEE
19 JULY 2011
5.30 - 6.20 PM**



Present:

Councillors Allen, Mrs Birch, Brunel-Walker, Davison and Mrs Temperton

Also Present:

Mr Graham Jackson, NASUWT

Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Resources and Assets

In Attendance:

Tony Madden, Chief Officer: Human Resources

Paul Yound, Human Resources Manager, Children, Young People and Learning

1. Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Brunel-Walker be elected Chairman of the Education Employment Sub-Committee for the 2011/12 Municipal Year.

COUNCILLOR BRUNEL-WALKER IN THE CHAIR

2. Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members

There were no apologies for absence or substitute members in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Education Employment Sub-Committee held on 26 January 2010.

6. Academy Schools

The Committee received a report providing an overview of the employment implications of a school converting to academy status.

The report included an overview of the development of academies, an outline of the freedoms available to academy schools and an overview of the process that schools had to go through if they wished to become academies.

To date, only one school in Bracknell Forest, Ranelagh School, had made the decision to become an academy. Although the number of staff who had become involved in consultations about the transfer had been limited a number of discussions about the proposed changes had taken place at internal staff meetings. Throughout the consultation process there had been positive interaction and dialogue with the trade unions

The Committee was informed that staff would not be given new contracts however they would be sent TUPE letters transferring their current terms and conditions to their new employers. It was stressed that TUPE was only valid for the moment of transfer and the School could change staff terms and conditions the next day if it wished however, any changes could only be implemented if there were clear and substantive reasons for doing so and after a set process had been followed. Post transfer the School would still be bound by the Teachers Pay and Conditions document when dealing with current staff and staff would continue to be members of the Teachers Pension Scheme

One of the more complex elements of the consultation had related to the flexible benefits package that staff had been offered through Bracknell Forest Council. Following the transfer staff would no longer be eligible to buy into the scheme however the School had taken the decision to buy into the same scheme used by the Council to enable staff to make continued use of some benefits for example childcare vouchers and the Bike to Work Scheme.

Ranelagh's Head Teacher had made it clear that she wanted the close working relationship that currently existed between the School and the local authority to continue. The School had also indicated that they intended, in the short-term, to continue to sustain purchase levels of local authority services as at 2010/11.

The full financial impact on the Council was not yet known however Ranelagh's transfer was not expected to have a significant financial impact on the Council at the current time.

Discussions were taking place at a number of the borough's schools over the possibility of becoming academies however no decisions had yet been taken

The Committee expressed the view that rather than being reactive to events it would be more productive for the Council to take a strategic approach to academies and the services that the local authority might offer those schools that adopted Academy Status. It was acknowledged that there was not currently a strategy setting out the Council's approach to Academies in place however the Children, Young People and Learning Departmental Management Team were currently discussing the approaches that might be adopted.

The Committee noted the report.

7. Strike Action 30 June 2011

The Committee received a report providing an overview of the industrial action by teachers that took place on 30 June 2011.

It was reported that across the Borough's schools 257 teachers had participated in industrial action, 15 Schools had closed, 5 schools had partially opened and 19 schools had remained open.

The Committee was informed that there continued to be disquiet amongst the teaching profession towards the Government's proposed changes and although it was not yet clear what form it might take it was considered likely that there would be further industrial action later in the year. It was also considered likely that trade unions that had not previously taken industrial action would participate in any future action.

It was clarified that despite being listed twice, once as remaining open and once as having closed due to industrial action, St Michael's CE Aided Primary School in Sandhurst had in fact closed. It was also noted that although Annex A showed St Joseph's Catholic Primary School as having closed teachers had decided not to take industrial action and the School had remained open.

During the run up to the strikes on 30 June 2011, a number of extremely positive discussions between officers and Trade Union representatives had taken place over the impacts that any strike action might have for schools. It was hoped that these positive relationships would continue in the future.

The Committee praised the quality of the information made available to the public about the strike action and any implications and congratulated all the staff involved in this area of work.

The Committee noted the report.

8. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Education Employment Sub Committee would take place on Tuesday 11 October 2011 at 5.30pm.

CHAIRMAN