

EDUCATION TRANSITION COMMITTEE
18 MARCH 1998

Present: Councillor Ward (Chairman), Councillors Barnard, Beadsley,
Mrs Doyle, Fawcett, Good, Mrs Hayes, Mills, Mrs Shillcock,
Mrs Sutcliffe, Thompson and Wheaton

Teacher and Church Representatives:
Ms L Wales, Mr J Haig, Mrs M Desai and Mr G Anderson

Apologies for Absence were received from:
Councillors Harrison and Mrs Hirst

601. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 January 1998 were approved and signed as a correct record.

602. **Education Consultation Panel**

The Committee received a copy of the draft minutes of the Education Consultation Panel held on 23 February 1998.

603. **Education Budget Sub Committee**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education Budget Sub Committee held on 9 March 1998, as set out in Appendix A hereto, tabled at the meeting, be received and adopted.

604. **Education Appeals Sub Committee**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Appeals Sub Committee held on 11 March 1998 as set out in Appendix B hereto be approved and adopted.

605. **Membership of the Committee (Item 1)**

The Committee received a report indicating that the Portsmouth Diocesan Council for Education had recently made a nomination for its seat on the Committee. Mr D McCann would be attending future meetings of the Education Committee.

RESOLVED that the nomination of Mr D McCann as representative of the Catholic Dioceses of Portsmouth Schools Commission be accepted.

606. **Review of Education Consultation Panel (Item 2)**

The Committee received a report to consider the future operation of the Consultation Panel. The Committee noted that the Education Consultation Panel had worked well in conjunction with the Education Transition Committee over the past 2½ years. Concerns were expressed about facilities for the teacher representatives serving on the panel to consult and disseminate their electorates' views. The inclusion of ten Head Teachers as representatives of the 40 schools in Bracknell Forest was beneficial to the Council and the schools and it was suggested that the arrangement continue alongside the proposed Teachers' Joint Consultative Committee which would be comprised of representatives of the Teacher Associations.

RESOLVED that the Education Consultation Panel continue in its current format until further notice.

607. **Establishment of Focus Groups (Item 3)**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education setting out proposals to establish two new Focus Groups to review and make recommendations on the development of the statutory Education Development Plan and the preparation of a Special Education Policy for Bracknell Forest.

RESOLVED

- (i) that Focus Groups on the Education Development Plan and Special Education be established;
- (ii) that the Terms of Reference and membership be approved; and
- (iii) that nominations for the five Borough Councillors for each Focus Group be as follows:

Education Development Plan

Councillors Beadsley, Mrs Doyle, Fawcett, Thompson and Ward

Special Education

Councillors Barnard, Mrs Hayes, Mrs Shillcock, Ward and Wheaton

608. **Environment Strategy 1998-2001 (Item 4)**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Public and Environmental Services detailing proposals from the Public and Environmental Services Committee confirming the Council's commitment to Local Agenda 21. Copies of the draft Environmental Strategy had been circulated to Councillors separately.

RESOLVED that the Committee in confirming its commitment to Local Agenda 21 endorses the draft Environmental Strategy and pledges to play an active part in the promotion of good environmental practice and leading by best example, according to available resources.

609. **Progress Report on Preparation for Unitary Status (Item 5)**

The Committee received a report detailing progress with a number of key areas in the lead up to transition. It was noted that stronger links were being built up with schools with regular meetings and communications. Staffing levels were nearly at establishment level and the Department would shortly be moving to its new home, Edward Elgar House.

A number of joint arrangements and contracts had been arrived at and were set to be operational from 1 April. The Committee discussed the implications of the withdrawal of Wokingham District Council from the joint arrangements for the schools' library service and Young Musicians' Trust.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

610. **Progress Report on Joint Arrangements (Item 6)**

It was noted that this item was withdrawn as no longer required as it was subsumed into the previous item.

611. **Adoption of Education Policies (Item 7)**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education informing it of a number of policies and procedures previously adopted by Berkshire County Council.

The Director of Education informed the Committee that in the interests of a seamless transition that the policies listed in Annexe A to the report should be adopted pending review.

RESOLVED that the existing Berkshire County Council policies listed in Appendix A be adopted pending review; with the deletion of capability procedures for Headteachers and other staff.

612. **Capital Programme 1998/88 - 2000/01 (Item 8)**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Corporate Services and Director of Education setting out a proposed Capital Programme for 1998/99 and an Asset Management Plan, including criteria for school improvement projects. It was noted that this had been considered in detail by the Budget Sub Committee and changes agreed by the Sub Committee would be reflected in the final published documents.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the ranking criteria detailed in Annexe A to the report be approved;
- (ii) that the schemes summarised in Annexe B be submitted to the Strategy and Policy Committee for inclusion in the Capital Programme for 1998/99;

- (iii) that the draft statement of aims for the Asset Management Plan attached at Annexe C be approve; and
- (iv) that the three year programme as detailed at Annexe B for part of the Authority's provisional Asset Management Plan.

613. **Draft Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Teachers' Joint Consultative Committee (Item 9)**

The Committee received a report from the Borough Personnel Manager and Director of Education setting out a Constitution and Terms of Reference for the proposed Teachers' JCC. The document had been the subject of consultation with Teachers' Professional Associations and the Committee would run in parallel with the existing Local Joint Committee for all other staff in the unitary authority. The minutes of the Teachers' JCC would be reported to the Personnel Sub Committee to ensure consistency on personnel policy matters affecting all of the Council's employees.

RESOLVED that the Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Teachers' Joint Consultative Committee attached to the report be approved.

614. **Facilities Agreement (Item 10)**

The Committee received a report from the Borough Personnel Manager and Director of Education setting out a proposed Facilities Agreement to give effect to consultation arrangement with teaching and other staff. It was noted that the overall budget for all consultation arrangements was approximately £28,000.

RESOLVED that the Facilities Agreement set out at Appendix A to the report be approved and adopted.

615. **Early Retirement Arrangements for Teachers (Item 11)**

The Committee received a report circulated separately to the main agenda setting out a model early retirement policy for the interim period to 1 September 1998. The Director of Education reminded the Committee that the draft policy had been the subject of extensive consultation with schools and Teachers' Associations. The Committee was reminded that as a result of changes introduced by the Government the Local Education Authority was now required to make up a percentage of the lump sum and annual pension cost of a teacher retiring between the ages of 50 and 60; this would no longer be borne by the Teachers' Pension Scheme. The aim of the policy was to clarify where costs of early retirements would fall to ensure that Governing Bodies were aware of the full financial implications before granting an early retirement request and to ensure that the definition of the circumstances of early retirement were also made clearer.

RESOLVED that the interim policy set out as Appendix A to the report be approved with immediate effect and until September 1998 and provide for the early retirement of teachers on the following basis:-

- (a) on grounds of redundancy for those 50 years and over with redundancy payments based on the statutory minimum weekly payment, for these purposes £210 per week;

- (b) in the interests of the efficiency of the service, normally only for those aged 58 years and over;
- (c) on grounds of ill-health as agreed by the National Agency, Teachers' Pensions;
- (d) no enhancement (i.e. no added years);
- (e) in order to try and avoid any redundancies, a one off £10,000 sum to be allocated to any school willing to accept a teacher who would otherwise be made redundant in another school in the Borough; and
- (f) that the Borough Council arrange for professional financial advice to any employee or teacher who is considering redundancy.

616. Model Capability Procedure (Item 12)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education setting out a Model Capability Procedure for teaching staff other than Head Teachers. It was noted that the principles used in the procedure originated arisen from changes in Government guidelines devised in association with an ACAS Working Group. It was also noted that the procedure had been the subject of consultation with Teachers' Professional Associations and schools. Concerns were expressed about the opportunity for staff to lodge appeals in the procedure. It was agreed that the model procedure would make clear right of appeal to the governing body at each of the formal stages.

RESOLVED that the Model Capability Procedure attached as Appendix A to the report be adopted, as amended above.

617. Corporate Maintenance and Other Contracts (Item 13)

The Committee received a report for information from the Director of Planning and Transportation - Surveying detailing maintenance arrangements for buildings and plant in the Education (Transition) Committee's ownership.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 9.40pm

CHAIRMAN