

**EDUCATION CONSULTATION PANEL
12 MAY 1998**

Present: Councillor Ward (Chairman), Barnard, Mrs Hirst, Mrs Sutcliffe and Wheaton
Head Teachers: Mrs Brooke, Ms Traies, Mrs Winrow, Mrs Graham, Mrs Northover, Ms Calcroft, Mrs Tskamakis and Mr Knott
Teacher Representatives: Mrs Walker, Mr Haig, Mr Evans and Mrs Draper

Apologies: Mr Donaldson, Mrs Snowdon, Mrs Wales and Mrs Desai

89. Minutes: 23 February 1998

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel circulated with the Education Transition Committee agenda 18 March 1998 were accepted as a correct record.

90. Term and Common Inset Dates 1998/99 (Item 1)

The Panel received, tabled at the meeting, proposed term dates for 1999/2000 and 2000/2001. Widespread consultations with interested parties and neighbouring unitary authorities were being undertaken and comments were requested Date in the Summer term. The item would then be referred to the Education Committee.

91. Admission Arrangements (Item 2)

This item was intended to confirm arrangements with other unitary authorities regarding the transfer of children from primary to secondary school in September 1999. If there were any developments about the Charters designated appropriate area, these would be reported.

92. Baseline Assessment (Item 3)

It was noted that a Working Group was currently meeting to pilot baseline assessment schemes with a view to bring a recommendation about a common scheme for Bracknell Forest schools to the Education Committee on 18 June.

93. Guidelines on Teachers Handling Pupils (Item 6)

A Government consultation under the Education Act 1997 on the powers of restraint for pupils in mainstream schools was currently being undertaken.

94. **Employment of Children (Item 7)**

It was noted that a report would be received by the Committee to adopt the Berkshire County Council bye-laws on children's employment.

95. **Plan to Reduce Infant Class Sizes (Item 8)**

The Budget Sub Committee would be receiving a report on this later in the week. Several schools had been identified that would need additional accommodation to meet the target. A bid was being prepared although the guidelines only included permanent rather than modular accommodation which on some school sites was not feasible. The impact on whole schools beyond the infant phase would need to be addressed.

96. **Complaints Procedure (Item 9)**

This item was unlikely to proceed to the Education Committee in June however a review of the Borough Council's corporate complaints procedure was underway. A revised leaflet on how to make complaints was being prepared for use in schools.

97. **Off Site and Hazardous Activities Policy (Item 10)**

It was noted that the Council had bought into the Off Site and Hazardous Activities Service for 1998/99. The service had revised the Berkshire guidance and this would be incorporated into the Council's own procedures.

98. **Changing the Length of School Sessions (Item 11)**

The Director of Education withdrew this item from the Panel's agenda.

99. **Redundancies in Education Library Service (Item 12)**

The Panel noted that the Education Library Service was managed by the Borough Council on behalf of all the unitary authorities. However, Wokingham District Council did not buy into the service and as a result of the budget reduction, there had been a need for some voluntary redundancies soon after vesting day. It was also noted that the Government may be bring forward proposals for expenditure in this area to be delegated to schools under LMS.

100. **Response to Parent Governor Representatives on Education Committees (Item 13)**

The Government had circulated a consultation paper about regulations proposed to be made under the Schools' Standards and Framework Bill. Essentially, the regulations would require all Education Committees to appoint at least one elected representative of parent governors of all schools. The person(s) appointed under the regulations would carry voting rights on the Committee. The means of election would be addressed later on although it was possible that the Governors' Association could be involved in the process.

101. Budget Report from Sub Committee (Item 14)

The report was a regular reporting mechanism for expenditure against Education Revenue Budget. There was concern about the delay in the production of MIDAS information for schools to finalise their budgets in accordance with the 31 May deadline. Some of the Education Finance Team were involved in the winding up of the former Berkshire County Council's accounts and this was diverting time from other activities.

102. LMS - Further Delegation (Item 15)

It was noted that the DfEE were considering proposals for the further delegation of funds through the LMS scheme, and this would be the subject of a report when the consultation document was produced.

103. Establishment of a Pupil Referral Unit (Item 16)

The Education Committee would be receiving a report on the property issues that would need to be determined before the Pupil Resources Unit could be progressed. College Hall was one option under consideration. It was estimated that there was a group of 60 children of secondary age in the Borough with a variety of needs. Costings for the project supposed a capacity of 22 to 25 pupils initially.

104. Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE) (Item 17)

It was noted that the Education Committee would be receiving a paper about the establishment of a SACRE.

105. Schedule for Review of Schools' Personnel Policies 1998/99

The Panel received for its information a schedule of personnel policies which were being revised between September and January 1999.

106. Policies on which there is Consultation during the Summer Term 1998

The Panel received copies reports that had been approved by the Education Quality Assurance Sub Committee which were currently with schools for consultation through the summer term 1998.

107. **Dates of Future Meetings**

The Panel agreed meetings in the lead up to the three planned Education Committee meetings at 4.30pm as follows:-

8 September
7 December
2 March 1999

It was noted that other meetings may be called as and when necessary.

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 6.00pm.

CHAIRMAN