

**EDUCATION BUDGET SUB COMMITTEE
27 MAY 1999**

Present: Councillors Barnard, Beadsley, Good, Mrs Hayes
Mrs Shillcock, Thompson, Ward, Wheaton and Worrell

Apologies for Absence had been received from Councillor Bailey

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Hayes be elected Chairman of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Ward be appointed Vice Chairman of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

3. Substitute Members

The Sub Committee noted the attendance of the following substitute member, appointed under Standing Order No. 38:

Councillor Mrs Shillcock for Councillor Bailey

4. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 13 January 1999 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Adult Education Policy Statement (Item 1)

The Sub Committee considered a report on the proposed Adult Education Policy Statement which outlined the rationale and objectives for the provision of the elements of adult education for which the LEA was responsible. The statement also outlined the way in which the service was delivered through a contract drawn up in partnership with Bracknell and Wokingham College. The arrangements for the management of the contract and the procedures and performance measures for ensuring the quality of the provision were also included.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Bracknell Forest Adult Education Policy Statement be approved;
- (ii) the balance of courses within the contract, as shown in Annexe 1 of Appendix A, be approved;

- (iii) the proposed increase in the unit of resource to £2,586 be approved; and
- (iv) a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Education Committee about the use of clawback.

6. **New Deal for Schools 3 1999/2000 (Item 2)**

The Sub Committee received a report on the outcome of the bid in December 1998 to the Department for Education and Employment for additional funding under the New Deal for Schools initiative.

The Education Department had submitted a bid for 100% grant funding to the DfEE for £6.388m capital funding in respect of school buildings. In April the department had been informed that it had received £450,528 for proposed improvements to the teaching accommodation at Great Hollands Infant and Junior Schools. Although the allocation was in line with that received by the other ex Berkshire Unitary Authorities, the Education Department did not agree that the Government had given sufficient consideration to the maintenance requirements of the Borough's schools. The DfEE had responded with an additional allocation of £35,156 for improvements to teaching accommodation at St Margaret Clitherow Voluntary Aided School.

RESOLVED that, while the Sub Committee is pleased with the allocation to the Great Hollands Infant and Junior Schools and St Margaret Clitherow Voluntary Aided School, the Sub Committee is disappointed that the Government has allocated nothing towards repairs or works in any of the Borough's remaining schools.

7. **Redeployment of Teachers (Item 3)**

The Sub Committee considered a report on a proposal to reinstate the arrangements whereby a sum would be paid by the LEA to schools to cover the additional costs incurred by schools when they accepted the redeployment of a teacher who would otherwise be made redundant. The arrangements had been reconsidered at the request of schools and were now brought forward in a modified form for further consideration. Three alternative options were set out in the report for consideration. The preferred option was for the Local Education Authority to continue the existing budget protection arrangements for redeployment and pay a smaller incentive payment, e.g. £6,000, to all schools receiving a redeployed teacher. The incentive payment would be both an incentive and provide recompense for the costs incurred by the school for induction and retraining of a new member of staff. The £6,000 was half the average redundancy payment for a Bracknell Forest teacher. This would meet the requirement to minimise redundancy costs to the LEA and actively encourage redeployment whilst being fair to all parties in the process.

Discussions had been held at the Teachers' Joint Consultative Committee with representatives of the teachers' associations who had been in favour of the policy in this form.

RESOLVED that £6,000 be made available to schools for each redeployed teacher accepted where this avoids a redundancy.

8. Development of Pre-School Provision (Item 4)

The Sub Committee considered a report on proposals to develop suitable premises for the provision of good quality early years provision in the area of Bracknell Forest served by Warfield CE Primary School and Whitegrove Primary School. This area had been identified as one where provision needed to be strengthened. The Governing Bodies of both schools had come forward with proposals for consideration. The schools' proposals were set out in full for the Sub Committee's consideration.

The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership had considered the proposals at their meeting on 8 March 1999. The Partnership had agreed the desirability of strengthening provision within the area. The Early Years Development and Childcare Plan indicated the scale of potential demand for places within the area and there was sufficient evidence to conclude that provision at both schools would be sustainable in the future. The Partnership had considered the outcomes of the project at Uplands Primary School, which had been part of the 1998/99 Capital Programme, and the lessons that had been learnt from it. In conclusion, the Partnership had supported the proposal from Warfield CE Primary School. The Sub Committee discussed the merits of each proposal and noted that the Warfield Primary School proposal was based on a partnership approach with an independent provider.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the views of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership be noted;
- (ii) the proposal for development at Warfield CE Primary School in 1999/2000 be approved.

9. Education Library Service – Proposals for Future Management (Item 5)

The Director of Education reported to the Sub Committee on the future management of the Education Library Service which was a joint arrangement between five of the Berkshire Unitary Authorities for which Bracknell Forest was host authority. Upon the introduction of the Government's Fair Funding requirements the budget for the Education Library Service was to be delegated to secondary schools and devolved to primary and special schools from April 2000. The risk to the operational viability of the service was therefore increased as the extent of the buy-back from schools would be uncertain. As host authority, the Borough Council's liability would have to be protected. The report described an evaluation of the risk and alternative options for the future management of the service that had been undertaken jointly by the Directors of Education from the unitary authorities in Berkshire. The Directors have concluded that the present form of management with a firm commitment to share liabilities, no contract end date, with a termination period of nine months, was their preferred way forward. The recommendation was to be considered by each partner authority and a contract drawn up in the expectation that agreement would be forthcoming. At that point a further report would be made to the Sub Committee to confirm the situation and outline the terms of the contract in detail.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Sub Committee endorse that the Borough Council remains as the host Authority for the Education Library Service;

- (ii) the Borough Solicitor be authorised to agree contracts with the other participating Unitary Authorities on the basis that liabilities be shared, and nine months' termination period be required;
- (iii) a further report be brought to the Sub Committee when firm agreement has been received from all other partner Authorities and contract details are known; and
- (iv) the Inter-authority Client Officer Group identifies a strategy to effect savings if insufficient schools buy back from delegated or earmarked funds. This will need to be in place by the end of September 1999.

10. **Future Funding Arrangements for Rhos-y-Gwaliau (Item 6)**

The Sub Committee received a report outlining the agreement reached by the Berkshire Unitary Authority leaders regarding the Rhos-y-Gwaliau outdoor education centre. The Sub Committee was invited to ratify the proposed course of action.

At their meeting on 4 December 1998, the leaders of the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities had agreed that funding should continue for the Rhos-y-Gwaliau outdoor centre for the next five years to 31 March 2004, subject to the Trust producing an agreeable business plan and exit strategy which would show how this support would taper out towards self-sufficiency during this period. It was noted that the centre was used on a regular basis by six Bracknell Forest schools, normally for one week each per year.

RECOMMENDED that the Strategy and Policy Committee be advised that, in principle and subject to annual confirmation, funding should continue for the next five years to 31 March 2004 within the Education Budget, subject to the Rhos-y-Gwaliau Trust producing an agreeable business plan and exit strategy which would show how this support would taper out towards self sufficiency during this period.

11. **Berkshire Young Musicians Trust – Fee Tariff for 1999/2000 (Item 7)**

The Sub Committee considered a report outlining the proposed fee tariff recommended by the Berkshire Young Musicians Trust (BYMT) to apply from 1 September 1999. The Board of Trustees had discussed the fees for 1999/2000 on 29 April and made a number of recommendations as set out in the report. A new contract for music tuition with the BYMT would be required from 1 September 1999. Details of this would be reported to a future meeting for agreement. However, fees for the next academic year needed to be established at this stage, as BYMT had an obligation to give half a term's notice of any changes to the current fee tariff.

RESOLVED that the following fee tariff be approved to apply from 1 September 1999:

- (i) Group Lessons – to raise charges by £1 per pupil per term from £55.50 to £56.50, an increase of 1.8%;
- (ii) Bands, Choirs, Ensembles – to reduce charges for ensembles of 60 minutes or less by £2 per pupil per term and by £3 per pupil per term for ensembles lasting more than 60 minutes; and

- (iii) all other charges to remain unchanged.

12. 1999/2000 Section 52 Budget Statement (Item 8)

The Sub Committee received a report on the legal requirement for the Authority to provide annual financial statements covering planned expenditure on education services. One of the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 defined the criteria that could be used for the distribution of funds to schools through an allocation formula, together with those functions and support services that could be retained by the LEA. Only those items specifically detailed in Regulations could now be retained, resulting in 100% delegation of relevant budgets to schools. As a result of this legislation the LEA was now free to make its own formula funding decisions, providing they fell within the scope of the Regulations. The Authority was required to publish annual financial statements to demonstrate that it had complied with the financial requirements of the Regulations. The Government intended to publish league tables of Local Education Authorities based on the information set out in the Section 52 Education Budget Statement, including the percentage of education expenditure that was delegated to schools. In this regard it was noted that the average level of delegation to schools in the South East was 81.65% in a range from 76% - 87% and that Bracknell Forest was delegating 79.39% of the LEA budget to schools.

RESOLVED that the report and the attached Section 52 Budget Statement for 1999/2000 be noted.

13. Exclusion of Public & Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 9 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (i) Information relating to particular employees

14. Redundancies in Schools 1999/2000 (Item 9)

In accordance with Standing Order 25 Councillor Barnard declared a non-pecuniary personal interest as a governor of one of the schools affected and was able to remain and speak to the report.

The Sub Committee received a report for information on the staffing position in three of the Borough's Primary Schools where the Governors were considering making redundancies under their delegated staffing powers.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 5.30pm and
concluded at 7.20 pm

CHAIRMAN