

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE
19 OCTOBER 1999**

Present: Councillors Ward (Chairman), Bailey, Barnard, Birch, Mrs Doyle, Egan, Fawcett, Flood, Good, Mrs Hayes, Mrs Hirst, Ryan, Mrs Shillcock, Mrs Sutcliffe, Thompson, Wheaton and Worrall.

Substitute Members:
Councillor Mrs Birch for Councillor Mills
Councillor Ryan for Councillor Beadsley

Church Representatives:
Mr G Anderson, Mr D McCann

Teacher Representatives:
Mrs V Richardson and Ms L Wales

Apologies for absence were received from:
Councillors Beadsley and Mills and Mr J Haig

317. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 June 1999 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

318. Governor Selection Sub-Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Governor Selection Sub Committee held on 28 June 1999, as set out in Appendix A hereto, be received and noted.

319. Education Consultation Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Education Consultation Panel held on 14 September 1999 be received and noted.

320. Education Quality Assurance Sub Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Quality Assurance Sub Committee held on 22 September 1999, as set out in Appendix B hereto, be received and noted.

321. Education Budget Sub Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Education Budget Sub Committee held on 23 September 1999, as set out in Appendix C hereto, be received and noted.

322. **Governor Selection Sub Committee**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Governor Selection Sub Committee held on 27 September, as set out in Appendix D hereto, be received and noted.

323. **Teachers Joint Consultative Committee**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee held on 28 September 1999 be received and noted.

324. **Education Transport Panel**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Education Transport Panel held on 29 September 1999 be received and noted and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

325. **Commitment Budget and Medium Term Objectives 2000/01-2002/03 (Item 1)**

The Director of Education reported that the Strategy and Policy Committee considered the Council's existing commitments at their meeting on 14 July 1999 and the likely resource base for future years. The Committee concluded that the Council faced an underlying funding gap of around £3 million per annum for the foreseeable future. The Strategy and Policy Committee agreed an outline budget strategy for 2000/01, where service committees would be asked to review their existing commitments in detail and to consider their medium term priorities.

Preparation of the commitment budget for the period 2000/01-2002/03 brought together the Committee's existing expenditure plans, taking account of approved existing commitments including one-off pressures and economies approved for the 1999/2000 budget.

The Director of Education reported that the agreement of medium term objectives represented a critical element in ensuring that the Council's financial plans were responsive to policy issues and priorities. All committees had agreed a broad statement of their medium term objectives in October 1998. These needed to be reviewed annually before the commencement of detailed budget and service/local performance planning processes. Proposed medium term objectives for the Education Service were set out in Annex A to the report.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to add to the commitment budget the items shown in tables 1 and 2 in the report; and
- (ii) the medium term objectives shown in Annexe A of the report be agreed.

326. Standards Fund (Item 2)

The Committee considered a report seeking approval to apply for grant support and submit bids to the DFEE for monies available under the Standards Fund for 2000-2001. This funding through the Standards Fund was likely to be increased for the 2000-2001 financial year. It was noted that there were 31 grants available next year, eleven of which were new categories. Of these, 7 of the grants were not applicable to Bracknell Forest, five required bids and the rest were allocated by formula.

It was reported that last year Bracknell Forest had been very successful with grant bids. However, the majority of this year's grants would be allocated by formula.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The proposed grants and bids in Appendix A of the report be approved for submission to the DfEE; and
- (ii) should additional funding be required from the Borough Council, it be considered as a service development option for 2000-2001; and
- (iii) the grants be devolved to schools on the principles set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report subject to further consultation with headteachers.

327. Fair Funding – Delegation April 2000 (Item 3)

The Director of Education reported that the LEA had implemented phase 1 of the Government's requirement to increase delegation to schools under the Fair Funding initiative in the current financial year and that phase 2 would be in place for the financial year 2000-2001. It was noted that the second phase of Fair Funding would delegate approximately £900,000 of the Council's budget to schools. The report included a draft consultation document for schools on the options for delegating the additional funds in 2000-01. A revised version of the consultation document was tabled. During the period of consultation, meetings had been arranged with Governors (6 November) and Chairman of Governors and Headteachers (22 November). The results of this phase of the consultation would be reported to the Education Budget Sub Committee in December.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the revised consultation document and the response document be approved, subject to amendment;
- (ii) the Director of Education, in consultation with the Chairman of the Education Committee, be authorised to finalise the document if amendments are required; and
- (iii) the timetable for consultation and implementation attached as Annexe A, Appendix 1 of the report be approved.

328. Reactive Maintenance Budget for Schools (Item 4)

The Director of Education reported that the reactive maintenance budget for schools was predicted by the Planning and Transportation Department to be overspent by £120,000 by the end of this financial year. It was reported that this budget was particularly difficult to manage, partly due to the unpredictable nature of the work and the lag in completing payments on items of work. The difficulties had been compounded by the late setting up of the Quaestor codes for Planning and Transportation. While an overspend against the budget had been identified by Planning and Transportation in December 1998, it had not been quantified accurately for another two months. At out-turn £360,000 had been spent, an overspend of £128,000. It was too late to address the budget pressure in preparing the 1999/2000 budget and therefore it was predicted that there would be an overspend in this financial year.

From April 1999 the £238,000 for reactive maintenance and service contract had been delegated to schools. 39 schools have bought back into one of the arrangements offered by the Planning and Transportation Department who agreed to manage the reactive maintenance and service contract funds on behalf of schools under an insurance type arrangement. The resource monitoring information for the period April to June 1999, detailed within the Quarterly Operations Report identified a saving of £100,000 on home to school transport as well as a potential overspending of £120,000 on reactive maintenance to school buildings.

RESOLVED that a virement of £100,000 from the budget for home to school transport to the budget for reactive maintenance within the individual schools budget be agreed.

329. Lifelong Learning Development Plan (Item 5)

The Director of Education submitted a report to update the Committee on the progress of the action plan that would be submitted to the DfEE as a requirement for grant under Standards Fund 15.

In 1999/2000 the DfEE had allocated an indicative grant of £39,847 to Bracknell Forest to fund the development work contributing to the plan. In 2000/2001 the DfEE would provide local authorities with support for lifelong learning by indicative grant under Standards Fund 28. Local authorities could expect the grant to be approximately twice the 1999/2000 level. The rate of grant was 50%.

The terms of reference and the constitution of the Bracknell Forest Lifelong Learning Partnership had been agreed by the Education Committee on 30 June 1999. This was based upon the National Protocol issued by the Secretary of State for Education subject to consultation during November 1998.

The draft of the Bracknell Forest Lifelong Learning Development Plan 1999/2001 set out the Borough Council's strategy for lifelong learning in the Bracknell Forest area. It was noted that the Borough Council as part of the Bracknell Forest Lifelong Learning Partnership, was contributing to a broader lifelong learning plan that would bring together the insight and provision of all the key partners representing business and education within the area. The Lifelong Learning Development Plan and the Partnership's Lifelong Learning Plan covered the same geographical area and had been developed in parallel. For this reason the Lifelong Learning Development Plan would not be finalised until the wider plan was complete.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the draft action plan be agreed in principle;
- (ii) the Director of Education be authorised to complete the plan in consultation with the Lifelong Learning Partnership; and
- (iii) the Director of Education be authorised to modify the draft action plan in response to any change in requirements as a result of the baseline data and target milestones from GOSE.

330. Asset Management Plan (Item 6)

The Director of Education reported that the DfEE had informed local authorities that they were required to develop Asset Management Plans to ensure that resources for school premises were used as effectively as possible to improve building and facilities, to raise educational standards and to contribute to the Government's agenda of reform and modernisation of schools. There was a requirement on each Local Education Authority to consult on its Asset Management Plan and Bracknell Forest had started the process by producing a local policy statement for consultation in January 1999. Following the publication of the DfEE's guidance, the LEA was also about to undertake surveys concerning the suitability of school accommodation. When the guidance on the sufficiency of school accommodation was issued, the LEA would review its assessment of schools under this heading. The DfEE had laid great emphasis on the involvement of schools in the preparation of Asset Management Plans and the LEA had therefore established an Asset Management Consultative Group consisting of heads, governors, diocesan officers and officers of the Education and Planning and Transportation Departments.

The framework provided by the Asset Management Plan guidance on suitability and condition would also enable the Borough Council to formulate its bid under the New Deal for Schools 4 programme. Schools would be involved at an early stage in the formulation of the LEA's application. The advisors and inspectors in the Departments CQA branch and the diocesan authorities would also be involved. As the Borough Council received funding last year under the heading of suitability, it was proposed that resources would be best spent concentrated again in formulating suitability bids.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the local policy statement as attached as Appendix 1 of the report be agreed; and
- (ii) the approach to formulating bids for new deals for schools under the heading of suitability be endorsed.

331. Guidelines for the use of Physical Restraint in Schools (Item 7)

The Director of Education introduced a report recommending the guidelines for the use of physical restraint in schools. The guidelines had been drawn up in consultation with teacher associations, UNISON and the GMB. It was reported that Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 stated that a member of school staff may use such force as was reasonable to prevent a pupil from committing an offence, causing personal injury to, or damaging the property of any person including the pupil himself, or engaging in

behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline. It did not authorise anything which constituted corporal punishment. Once approved by the Education Committee, the guidelines would be recommended to governing bodies of schools and provision would be given for additional training for key staff. Members of the Teachers Joint Consultative Committee agreed that it was important that the LEA evaluate potential trainers to recommend to schools.

It was suggested that the title of the documents could be "guidelines for the use of physical restraint of pupils" as the guidelines only dealt with the restraint of pupils registered to that particular school. The Committee noted that it would be the decision of the headteacher of the school to determine who would be authorised to use physical restraint.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the model guidelines for physical restraint of pupils attached as Annexe A of the report be adopted; and
- (ii) these guidelines be recommended to governing bodies.

332. Parent Governor Representatives on Education Committees (Item 8)

The Committee considered a report on the appointment of Parent Governor Representatives to the Education Committee. The DfEE had issued the Education (Parent Governor Representative) Regulations 1999 which made provision for representatives of Parent Governors of maintained schools to be appointed to the Education Committees of Local Education Authorities. The Local Authority was required to appoint between two and five parent governor representatives to any committee that it appointed to carry out its statutory functions as a Local Education Authority. It was suggested that in the interest of avoiding an over-large committee, two representatives be sought, one from the primary phase and one from the secondary phase. Parent Governors at Kennel Lane Special School would be able to choose which election they would participate in. In appointing Parent Governor Representatives, the Council would need to comply with the legislation which provided that the majority on any committee where there are non elected members with voting rights, should be preserved by appointing additional councillor members when necessary.

To be eligible to stand for election as a Parent Governor Representative, a candidate would need to be at the date of election, a parent governor of one of the Authority's schools and a parent of a child receiving education from the Authority. The elections would be timed to enable the Council to appoint elected parent governor representatives to the relevant committees at the Annual Meeting on 24 May 2000.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the new arrangements for the election of parent governor representatives be noted;
- (ii) two parent governor representatives be sought, one from the primary sector and one from the secondary sector;
- (iii) the election timetable be arranged as set out in the report, to enable the appointments to the relevant committee(s) to be confirmed by the Council at its Annual Meeting on 24 May 2000;

- (iv) the term of office of the parent governor representatives be three years and in the event of a casual vacancy arising, the term of office of the successor be a new three year term; and
- (v) the Head of Member and Registration Services be appointed as Returning Officer for the Election.

333. Quarterly Operations Report (Item 9)

The Director of Education presented the Quarterly Operations Report on the activities of the Education Department for the period to October 1999. The Committee requested that staff absence rates be identified in future reports.

RESOLVED that the Quarterly Operations Report be received.

334. Item Submitted for Information

The Committee received and noted the following item which was submitted for information only.

Winkfield St Mary's CE Primary School (Item 10)

335. Exclusion of Public and 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 consideration of items 11 and 12 which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category for Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (1) Information relating to particular employees (Items 11 and 12)

336. School Staffing Costs Virement (Item 11)

The Committee considered a report on the virement to the Premature Retirement and Dismissal Cost budget from the underspend resulting from clawback from the Individual Schools Budget.

RESOLVED that a virement of £100,000 to the Premature Retirement and Dismissal Cost Budget from the Individual Schools Budget be agreed.

337. Early Retirement (Item 12)

The Committee considered a report seeking the agreement of the Committee to an early retirement under the terms of the model policy.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) subject to the conclusion of an agreement pursuant to (ii) below, the early retirement of X be agreed in accordance with the terms specified in the report, from the end of the spring term 2000; and

- (ii) the Director of Education, in consultation with the Borough Personnel Officer and Borough Solicitor, be authorised to conclude a compromise agreement.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 10.31pm

CHAIRMAN