

EDUCATION TRANSITION COMMITTEE
5 NOVEMBER 1997

Present: Councillor Ward (Chairman)
Councillors Beadsley, Mrs Doyle, Fawcett, Harrison, Mrs Hayes
Mrs Hirst, Mills, Mrs Shillcock, Wheaton and Worrall

Teacher Representatives: Mr J Haig, Ms L Wales, Mrs M Desai

Also Present: Mr G Anderson, Oxford Diocesan Council

Apologies for Absence were received from:
Councillors Mrs Sutcliffe, Taylor and Thompson

379. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 1997 was signed as a correct record.

380. Minutes of Sub and Liaison Committees

The Committee received the minutes of the Education Consultation Panel held on 13 October 1997 and the informal meeting of the Joint Advisory Sub Committee on Children's Services held on 22 October 1997.

381. Preparation for Unitary Status (Item 1)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education outlining progress with joint working on a variety of key issues. It was noted that the third tier appointments to the new Education Department were progressing.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

382. Standards Fund 1997/98 (Item 2)

The Committee received a report, circulated separately to the main agenda on the bids being put forward by the Education Department against the Standards Fund. The Director of Education explained the reasons behind the proposals not to bid against certain categories of funding as there was no likelihood of success. The Committee also discussed the budgetary implications and noted that at present, the DfEE provided 60% towards most grant expenditure, however this was being reduced by 50%. The balance had to be made up by the authority and any final decision on which grants formally to take up can be deferred until the Committee's overall budget was known.

RESOLVED that the Quality Assurance Sub Committee be requested to examine which of the competitive grants would be a priority for the Council and to approve where necessary approve detailed submissions on the Committee's behalf.

383. School Capital Expenditure (Item 3)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education outlining capital expenditure projects which could require permission for the Council to borrow capital funding. It was noted that there was there was a bid to provide additional accommodation at Whitegrove Primary School and schemes to remove temporary classrooms at Warfield and Wildridings Primary Schools. The buildings at Wildridings were surplus to requirement and also at the end of their useful life. It was noted that there would be consultation with governing bodies before removal dates were established.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

384. Nursery Development Programme - Berkshire County Council (Item 4)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education outlining an offer by Berkshire County Council to consider the provision of nursery accommodation in the Whitegrove/Warfield area. According to the County Council's criteria, the Whitegrove/Warfield area was next in line for nursery development, should funding become available. The Joint Advisory Sub Committee on Children's Services had considered the issue and was recommending that the Committee respond positively to Berkshire County Council.

RESOLVED that the Council respond positively to Berkshire County Council regarding the provision of nursery accommodation in the Whitegrove/Warfield area.

385. Establishment of an Early Years Development Partnership (Item 5)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education detailing terms of reference and composition of an Early Years Development Partnership needed to produce an Early Years Development plan. The plan needed to be approved for submission to the DfEE by 2 February 1998. The Committee agreed that a Special Needs teacher would be included in the forum and that the sentence in the forum's terms of reference "to plan training for those involved in the delivery of Early Years provision" would be amended to "to identify training needs for those involved in the delivery of Early Years provision".

RESOLVED subject to the amendments mentioned above, that the recommendation of the Joint Advisory Sub Committee on Children's Services with regard to the terms of reference and membership of the Early Years Development Partnership be agreed.

386. Targets/Life Long Learning Task Force (Item 6)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education on establishing a Targets/Life Long Learning Task Force. It was noted that the Thames Valley Enterprise would provide most of the budgetary input for carrying out research etc. The only cost to the Council would be the time to set up and participate in the forum's meetings. The Committee debated the need to maintain an adequate labour supply in the area and the need for re-training for new skills as appropriate.

The forum was aimed at bringing together a wide variety of providers and was among other things to assist Thames Valley Enterprise in furthering their objectives. A white paper on Life Long Learning was expected to be published soon.

RESOLVED that the terms of reference for the Task Force to endorsed and that the Committee's representation be Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Education (Transition) Committee.

387. Joint Education Library Service (Item 7)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education setting proposals for Bracknell Forest to be host authority for future provision of the Education Library Service. The report sought agreement in principle and further details would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee. It was noted that the service provided a quite different facility to that of the Public Library.

The service would be housed at the former County supplies building in Darwin Road, Reading and Reading Borough Council were undertaking responsibility for the fabric of that building. Ratification of the proposals by the other five unitary authorities was expected soon.

RESOLVED

- (i) that Bracknell Forest Borough Council be the host authority for the Education Library Service on behalf of the other Boroughs and Districts in Berkshire;
- (ii) the initial period of the contract be three years; and
- (iii) Officers be authorised to continue detail work and to report back to the Committee at a later stage.

388. Provision of Language Support for Ethnic Minority Pupils (Item 8)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Education outlining proposals for the future provision of language support to Bracknell Forest's schools in respect of pupils with little or no English. This service was a peripatetic service providing specialist input for children from a wide variety of backgrounds. It was not felt appropriate that the Borough should provide this service in-house and it was proposed that the service would be purchased primarily from Reading Borough Council service as and when needs arose.

RESOLVED that in respect of the period 1 April to 31 August 1998 that

- (i) a service for peripatetic language support be provided under contract by Reading Borough Council;
- (ii) Officers be authorised to undertake contract negotiations with Reading Borough Council;
- (iii) Services for interpretation and translation be purchased as required.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 9.25pm.

CHAIRMAN