

EDUCATION TRANSITION COMMITTEE
3 JULY 1997

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

Also present: County Councillor Mrs L Boyd (for Dr L Murray),
Councillor North

Apologies for Absence were received from:
Councillor Wheaton, County Councillor Dr L Murray

147. **Petition.**

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Ward declared his interest in this item of business and vacated the chair.

COUNCILLOR BARNARD, VICE CHAIRMAN IN THE CHAIR

The Committee received a petition in the following terms:-

“We, the undersigned, strongly object to the decision by the Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Council to exclude the children of Forest Park and the Warren from Charters School.

We believe that any decision should not have been made before *full* consultation with ALL the parties concerned.”

The petition was in response to changes to the designated appropriate area of Charters School being put forward by Windsor and Maidenhead Royal Borough Council. A representative of the petitioners spoke to the petition and presented it. The Vice Chairman called on Berkshire County Council’s Head of Admissions, who was attending the meeting as part of the County’s Bracknell Forest Link Team, to indicate the County Council’s position on this issue. It was noted that a special meeting of the County Council’s Education Committee was due to consider the County Council’s response to the proposed changes. Existing County policy was that there would be no change to admissions policies or catchment areas for the remainder of the life of the County Council. Since the school allocations for September 1998 would be carried out by Berkshire County Council by the end of February 1998, the County Council would have to determine whether an exception should be made to the general policy on this occasion. There was concern about the lack of consultation carried out by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and advice from the DfEE indicated that where there was lack of agreement, the County Council was not compelled to administer the proposed changes.

Councillor Mrs Doyle proposed a motion in the following terms which was duly seconded:-

“This Council:

- (i) recognises the right of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead to determine the catchment areas for schools within its Borough;
- (ii) views with concern the action taken by the Education Committee of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead in changing the catchment area for Charters School without prior consultation with the public and this Council; and

- (iii) requests a meeting with the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead to discuss the implications of this change for the children of Forest Park and The Warren.”

RESOLVED that the motion put forward by Councillor Mrs Doyle be adopted, and that the petition be noted.

COUNCILLOR WARD IN THE CHAIR

148. Minutes of Sub and Liaison Committees.

The Committee received for information copies of the minutes of the Education Consultation Panel held on 21 May 1997 and 5 June 1997.

149. Appointment of Director of Education. (Item 1)

The Committee received a report from the Borough Personnel Manager providing some biographical background to Mr Anthony Eccleston who was due to take up his appointment in August. Mr Eccleston addressed the Committee and indicated that he was very pleased to be coming to Bracknell Forest and hoped to raise achievements of all learners in the Borough.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

150. Constitutional Matters. (Item 2)

The Committee received a report from the Borough Administrator detailing the Committee's membership and Terms of Reference.

It was noted that there would be a Focus Group meeting once that would examine Terms of Reference for the Education Transition Committee, the Sub Committee Terms of Reference and Officer delegations for the Director of Education.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Terms of Reference and assignment of functions for the Education Transition Committee as passed by the Council be agreed as an interim statement;
- (ii) that the Focus Group be established on the basis set out in Appendix 2 to the report to consider the Committee's Terms of Reference and Officer delegations and that the following Councillors be nominated to serve on the Focus Group: Councillors Barnard, Mrs Hirst, Mrs Hayes, Ward and Wheaton;
- (iii) that an Executive Sub Committee comprising of Councillors Barnard, Mrs Doyle, Mrs Hirst, Ward and Wheaton be established.

151. Teacher and Headteacher Consultation Arrangements. (Item 3)

The Committee received a report from the Education Planning & Project Officer detailing proposals for Teacher consultation arrangements and religious representatives on the Committee. The Chairman emphasised that the new unitary authority would not be following

all of Berkshire County Council's consultation arrangements. He emphasised that the ten Headteachers who had been co-opted by the former Education Panel had proved very helpful in the discussions leading up to the shadow period. The aim was for meaningful consultation to take place early on in the Committee cycle rather than to adopt Berkshire County Council's approach of presenting the consultation body with finalised Committee reports a day or so prior to the full Committee meeting.

Concerns were expressed about the apparently narrow range of people being included in the consultation arrangements. Non Teachers, Post 16 and other specialist staff were not included in the consultation arrangements. It was recommended by the Education Consultation Panel that the representatives appointed to the Education Transition Committee would be automatically also members of the Education Consultation Panel. It was essential that the proposals were agreed at the meeting, otherwise the arrangements would not come into effect until the November meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Committee approve the arrangements set out in the report for Teacher representatives on the Education Transition Committee, religious representatives on the Committee, Teachers' representatives and that consultations continue with regard to the JNWP;
- (ii) that meetings of the Education Consultation Panel are held early in each cycle wherever possible;
- (iii) that the Committee review the arrangements following consultation and in the light of corporate guidelines prior to formalising proposals to be effective for the period after 1 April 1998;
- (iv) that agenda papers and minutes relating to the Education Transition Committee be issued to all members of the Consultation Panel and Teacher representatives; and
- (v) that the Teacher representatives elected to the Education Transition Committee also be members of the Education Consultation Panel in addition to the five Teacher representatives to be appointed to the Panel.

152. **Education Appeals Committees. (Item 4)**

The Committee received a copy of a report for information which was to be considered by the Strategy & Policy Committee on 16 July 1997. The report indicated the need for the Borough Administrator to be designated as Clerk to the Appeals Committee to support the entire process for recruitment and for training of Appeal Committee members. It was hoped that all members of the Borough Council would be able to take on some of the Appeal Committee work.

RESOLVED that the Committee note and approve the proposals set out in the report.

153 **School Admission Arrangements. (Item 5)**

The Committee received a report from the Education Planning & Project Officer detailing the existing admissions policies for County and County controlled primary and secondary schools. It was proposed that there should be no change for September 1998 to these arrangements.

RESOLVED that with effect from 1 April 1998 to the end of 1998/99 school year, the proposals for school admission arrangements detailed in the report be adopted, based on the status quo.

154. **The Committee's Response to "Partnerships in Learning". (Item 6)**

The Committee received a report from the Education Planning & Project Officer requesting any feedback on the "Partnerships in Learning" document which had been published in April 1997. It was noted that the Working Group had identified the need for a policy on nursery education and for a strategy for Post 16 education in the Borough.

RESOLVED that the broad principles of Partnerships in Learning be endorsed, with the additions identified by the Working Group.

155. **Education Budget and Standard Spending Assessment. (Item 7)**

The Committee received a report from the Borough Finance Officer detailing the progress being made with the budget disaggregation. There would be a consultation on the scheme for local management of schools in the Autumn term.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

156. **Staffing Structures. (Item 8)**

The Committee received a report from the Education Planning & Project Officer detailing the response to the consultation on staffing structures.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

157. **Progress Report on Inter Authority Joint Working. (Item 9)**

The Committee received a report from the Education Planning & Project Officer detailing the latest situation on key issues being considered by the Borough in conjunction with other new unitary authorities. The Education Planning & Project Officer updated the Committee as follows:-

- Berkshire Young Musicians' Trust: It was noted that the Berkshire Youth Musicians' Trust would need to establish six separate contracts with the new Councils and clearly there would be diversity among the Councils as to their requirements from the Trust.
- Special Education: The report contained two lists of items, one indicating where joint arrangements may be justified and the second where they would probably not be justified.

- Welsh outdoor centres: An arrangement would need to be made by the Unitary Councils for the continued use of Rhos-y-Gwaliau and Tirabad. On the basis of current usage, Rhos-y-Gwaliau was used for six weeks of the year by Bracknell Forest schools. The Committee declared its general support for outdoor education and would look to support in a general manner, rather than the Welsh centres alone.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

158. **Easthampstead Park. (Item 10)**

The Education Planning & Project Officer indicated that this agenda item was withdrawn whilst consultation continued on the issue.

159. **Term Dates for 1998/99. (Item 11)**

The Committee received report from the Education Planning & Project Officer detailing term dates for 1998/99.

RESOLVED that the term dates set out in the report be approved.

160. **LEA Management Information Systems. (Item 12)**

The Committee received a report from the Borough I.T. Manager and the Education Planning & Project Officer setting out a proposal for the LEA Management Information System. An evaluation had been carried out and the Borough would need to proceed with the early installation and implementation of hardware and software to allow the Department to train, test and develop the new systems ready to go live on April 1998.

RESOLVED

- (i) that SIMS-EMS be adopted as the central Local Education Authority system;
- (ii) the appropriate hardware and software be purchased on behalf of the LEA;
- (iii) SIMS Limited provide a comprehensive planning, implementation and training service to the LEA;
- (iv) a support contract be established between the LEA and SIMS Limited;
- (v) that the identified indicative cost of figures £99,200 be approved for this purpose from the transitional budget, with ongoing cost of £84,051 per annum.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 9.40pm.

CHAIRMAN