

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

9 March 2010

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Caroline O'Neil, Assistant Director, Child and Adult Services
Danielle Swainston, Sure Start, Extended Services and Early
Years Manager
Ann Turner, Governor Support Officer
Kay Forgie, Performance & Information Manager (Children)
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

51. Admissions to Schools 2011/12 & Co-ordinated Admissions Procedures to Primary and Secondary Schools for 2011/12 *(Assistant Director, Child & Adult Services)*

Purpose of Report

To determine the admission policy for community and voluntary controlled primary schools in Hartlepool for the school year 2011/12 and the co-ordinated admissions procedures to primary and secondary schools for 2011/12 following consultation with governing bodies and other admissions authorities.

Type of Decision

Key (Test ii applies)

Issues for Consideration

The report highlighted that Section 89 of the School Standard and Framework Act 1998 laid down the way in which an admissions authority must determine admission arrangements and was required to consult with governing bodies and other admission authorities. The latest statutory School Admissions Code came into force on 10 February 2009 and the report outlined how the Authority must comply with the code.

A summary of consultation responses was outlined in Appendix 1 of the

report and these views had been considered by the Admissions Forum on 2 February 2010. Revised Admission limits were discussed with schools on the basis of revised net capacity figures and these were attached as Appendix 2 of the report. The co-ordinated schemes for primary and secondary admissions agreed by the Admission Forum were attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

The report outlined the policy for entry to community and voluntary controlled primary schools. This had not significantly been changed as a result of the consultation exercise.

The Portfolio Holder commented that it was a sensitive issue as all parents wanted what was best for their children, however she hoped that those who were not offered a place at their preferred choice would settle in their allocated school.

Decision

The Portfolio agreed:-

- That the admissions policy for 2011/12 set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report be approved
- That the current partner primary model be retained as part of the oversubscription criteria for secondary schools
- That single stage entry at reception continues
- That the revised admission limits be agreed
- That the co-ordinated admission schemes be approved

52. General SureStart Grant and Aiming High for Disabled Children Capital Grant *(Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Manager)*

Purpose of report

To seek approval for the change in costs to Kingsley SureStart Children's Centre

To seek approval for the change in Early Years Grant allocation to Kiddikins Childcare Ltd at Hindpool Close SureStart Children's Centre

To seek approval for the allocation of Aiming High for Disabled Children capital grant 2009 -11

Type of decision

Non key

Issues for consideration

The report provided details of revised costings for Kingsley SureStart Children's Centre. Building work had been carried out and completed but accounts were still being finalised which had led to an increase in original costings. Reasons for the price variance included the creation of a temporary road in order to allow contractor vehicles on site as well as the addition of an outside play area to the contract.

In addition, the report set out a revised Early Years Grant allocation to Kiddikins Childcare Ltd in order to secure its sustainability with relocation to Hindpool Close SureStart Children's Centre. To obtain a 'good' Ofsted inspection, works had been identified including an upgrade to the kitchen facilities, work on the outside play area, electrical work, a new laundry room and additional storage. It was clarified that certain of the Ofsted criteria were open to individual interpretation and therefore these works had not been identified prior to the visit by the Inspector. The Portfolio Holder outlined the high aspirations due to the implementation of SureStart and how it was expected that because of this initiative, children would be more advanced in their development in future years.

The SureStart Capital Grant 2009-2011 included capital allocations for 2009/10 and 2010/11 for Aiming High for disabled children (short break care). The report set out proposed capital projects which had been identified during parent consultation including the creation of up to four accessible changing facilities in key locations throughout the town. This would be carried out in conjunction with Adult Services to enable access to facilities by disabled persons over a larger age range.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved:-

The change in costs to Kingsley SureStart Children's Centre

The change in Early Years Grant allocation to Kiddikins Childcare Ltd at Hindpool Close SureStart Children's Centre

Approval for the allocation of Aiming High for Disabled Children capital grant 2009-11

53. Appointment of Local Authority Representatives to Serve in School Governing Bodies (*Governor Support Officer*)

Purpose of report

To request the Portfolio Holder's consideration and approval of the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee in respect of the appointment of Local Authority representative Governors to serve on school governing bodies where vacancies currently exist and to those where terms of office have expired or about to expire.

Type of decision

Non key.

Issues for consideration

The report summarised the process of inviting applications for representative governors and the criteria for their selection.

An appendix to the report scheduled the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee at its meeting held on 5 February 2010.

The Governor Support Officer explained that Governors whose term of office was about to expire would be contacted in advance to elicit whether they wished to remain in office in order to ensure continuity on the Governing Boards.

It was clarified that Councillor Aiken's appointment to St Cuthbert's RC Primary School had come about after he had expressed an interest following a letter circulated by the Chief Executive. In respect of Owton Manor Primary School where there had been two expressions of interest, the unsuccessful candidate had been appointed as a Community Governor

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee in respect of the appointment of representative Governors to serve on school governing bodies where vacancies exist and those which would occur in the Spring term 2010.

54. Children's Services Departmental Plan Quarter 3 Progress Report (*Performance & Information Manager (Children)*)

Purpose of Report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made towards achieving Departmental Plan actions, performance indicators (PIs) and risks for the

period to 31 December 2009.

Type of decision

Non key.

Issues for consideration

The report summarised progress over the third quarter of 2009/10 on the actions and PIs within the Children's Services Departmental Plan 2009/10. It also covered the current position of associated risks.

It was noted that the action in relation to reducing teenage conceptions was very challenging but new data had shown a 12.9% reduction. Of the performance indicators although a number were showing as not being achieved, this was because of historical unrealistic targets. However results had improved dramatically and were above national expectations in many areas of achievement.

The Portfolio Holder remarked that some employers considered that young people were leaving schools without adequate skills. The Assistant Director stated that the Authority had good links with schools, employers and the economic development department and sought the views of employers and those who provided apprenticeship opportunities. Young people received good independent advice and guidance on what qualifications were needed.

The Portfolio Holder was pleased with plans for the expansion of the Cleveland College of Art and Design as this would provide further opportunities for young people in the town.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the progress made in completing the actions and achieving the performance indicators for the Children's Services Department during 2009/10.

55. Ward Jackson Primary School Consideration of Voluntary Aided Church of England Status *(Governor Support Officer)*

Purpose of Report

To draw the attention of the Portfolio Holder to a proposal by the Governing Body of Ward Jackson Primary School to seek change of status of the school from a Community School to a Voluntary Aided Church of England School with effect from September 2010.

Type of Decision

Non key.

Issues for Consideration

The report outlined how a consultation paper had been received from the Chair of Governors of Ward Jackson Primary School in relation to the Governing Body seeking Church of England Voluntary Aided Status for the school. As part of the process the Governors were seeking consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders over a six week period, ending on 19 March 2010. A public consultation meeting had also been held on 24 February 2010 in the school. A copy of the consultation document was attached as Appendix A to the report. Following the end of the consultation period a further meeting of the Governing Body would be held.

The Governing Body had submitted an application (Form 10) to seek exemption from the Secretary of State under Section 10 of the Education Inspections Act 2006 to publish proposals to establish a school with a religious character without competition. The Diocese had also completed Form 18 which was a requirement if a school proposes to change category to Voluntary Aided Status, as evidence must be provided that the Governing Body were able and willing to meet their financial responsibilities for any building works after the implementation date, the Governing Body had to demonstrate that it had access to sufficient funds in order to meeting 10% of its overall liabilities for at least 5 years.

The Portfolio Holder queried whether there had been any objections received and was informed that thus far responses from the consultation had been very positive.

If this proposal were implemented, there would be a number of changes including the terms and conditions of staff contracts and a change in the constitution of the Governing Body for the proposed school.

The constitution of a Voluntary Aided School would differ to that of the present Governing Body and consist of the following;

- At least one but no more than 1/10th LA Governors
- At least two but no more than 1/3rd Staff Governors
- At least one Parent Governor
- Foundation Governors will outnumber the total of other Governors by two in order to preserve their majority
- A number of Foundation Governors who are eligible for election or appointment as Parent Governors that, when they are counted with Parent Governors, will comprise of 1/3rd or more of the total membership of the Governing Body.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the consultation by the Governing Body of Ward Jackson Primary School on a proposal to the change of status of the school from Community School to a Voluntary Aided Church of England School with effect from 1 September 2010 and to consider a further report should the Governing Body agree to publish Statutory proposals.

The meeting concluded at 10.31 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 15 March 2010