

EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE FORUM (SPECIAL) MINUTES

1 MARCH 2011

Chairman:	* Councillor Brian Gate	
Councillors:	* Husain Akhtar * Mrs Camilla Bath * Nizam Ismail	* Janet Mote * Krishna Suresh * Ben Wealthy (1)
Councillors in attendance:	* Nana Asante * Ramji Chauhan * Ajay Maru	* Bill Stephenson
Teachers' Constituency:	† Ms A Drew * Ms C Gembala Ms J Lang	† Ms L Money * Ms L Rowlands * Ms L Snowdon
Governors' Constituency:	* Mrs C Millard * Mr N Ransley	Mr K Sochall Ms H Solanki
Elected Parent Governor Representatives:	(Vacancy)	(Vacancy)
Denominational Representatives:	† Mrs J Rammelt	* Reverend P Reece

- * Denotes Member present
- (1) Denotes category of Reserve Member
- † Denotes apologies received

22. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Raj Ray

Councillor Ben Wealthy

23. Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED: To note that apologies were received from Mrs Annie Drew and Mrs Julia Rammelt.

24. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda Item 5 - Information Report: Academy Schools

Councillor Husain Akhtar declared a personal interest in that he was Governor of Grange First and Middle Schools. He would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Councillor Nana Asante declared a personal interest in that she was a Governor of Stanburn First and Middle School. She would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Councillor Mrs Camilla Bath declared a personal interest in that she was a Governor of Whitchurch Middle and Harrow High schools. She would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Councillor Ramji Chauhan declared a personal interest in that he was a Governor of Glebe School. He would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Councillor Brian Gate declared a personal interest in that he was Governor of St. John's Church of England Primary School, an Appointee of St. Dominic's College and Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges. He would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Councillor Nizam Ismail declared a personal interest in that he was Governor of Stag Lane Middle School. He would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Councillor Janet Mote declared a personal interest in that she was Governor of St John Fisher Primary School and Member and representative of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers. She would remain in remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Mrs C Millard, representing the Governors' Constituency, declared a personal interest in that she was Governor of Grange First and Middle, Cannon Lane Middle and Nower Hill High Schools. She would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Mr N Ransley, representing the Governors' Constituency, declared a personal interest in that he was Governor of St Dominic's (RC) Sixth Form College and St John Fisher Catholic Primary school. He would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Reverend Paul Reece declared a personal interest in that he was Local Authority Governor for Krishna Avanti School and Sponsor Governor of Camrose Primary School. He would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Mrs Lynne Rowlands, representing the Teachers' Constituency, declared a personal interest in that she was Governor and Headteacher of Canons High School. She would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

Councillor Krishna Suresh declared a personal interest in that he was a Governor of Vaughan First and Vaughan Middle schools. He would remain in the room during the discussion and decision making on this item.

25. Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received.

RECOMMENDED ITEM

26. Information Report: Academy Schools

An officer introduced a report which outlined the Council's proposed position on the potential conversion of seven high schools to academy status. The officer tables a revised recommendation to the report.

Officers advised that:

- the seven High Schools deciding whether to seek academy status in the borough were Bentley Wood, Canons, Harrow High, Hatch End, Nower Hill, Park High and Rooks Heath;
- three of the seven schools had reached stage one of the process of achieving academy status. The remaining four schools would be holding meetings over the forthcoming weeks to discuss whether to proceed to stage one, and begin statutory consultation;
- the seven schools would be writing to MP's, Councillors, Headteachers of primary schools and parents with children attending primary schools in order to consult as widely as possible;
- in 2011/12, the Department for Education (DfE) reduced the formula grant by £614,000 to finance the cost of the schools in the borough adopting academy status. It was anticipated that further funding of £484,000 would be clawed back by the DfE in 2012/13;
- a review by the DfE was underway in relation to capital funding of academies;

- schools that converted to academy status before 1 September 2011 would receive protection which would limit the reduction of their top up funding to 10%.

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges reiterated that the Council would prefer the seven schools to remain in Local Authority Control. However, the Council would support these schools regardless of the outcome regarding academy status.

Members of the Forum expressed the view that the proposed level of consultation needed to increase in order to enable parents within the borough to be fully informed of the potential impact of these schools adopting academy status.

Members also agreed that maintaining the proud educational history of the borough was of paramount importance whilst considering and supporting the schools that had expressed an interest in transferring to academy status.

In response to questions, officers and Members advised that:

- it was the Council's intention to propose that the consultation process was fair, thorough and transparent. Public meetings would be held on 21 March at the seven schools;
- the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges would be meeting with the seven schools to ensure that appropriate means of consultation were being fully utilised;
- special schools were not permitted to apply for academy status at this time;
- it was anticipated that the schools would continue with the majority of SLAs that were currently in place. There would be a period of approximately eight months to ascertain what the exact needs were;
- no more than 50% of those on the Governing body for academy schools could be staff members;
- each academy school would be responsible for facilitating its own admissions arrangements. There was a possibility of academy schools procuring this service from the Council in future years;
- the intention of academy schools was to maintain current class sizes. This would be subject to change in future years;
- the progress of a simplified and less descriptive admissions code, as outlined in the Government White Paper and Bill, would be monitored;
- the legal and planning departments were working to address potential issues surrounding the land and property aspects of the schools transition to academy status. For community schools, guidance suggested that the conversion process required the land to be

transferred to the Academy Trust. This would usually be by way of a 125 year lease to the Academy Trust, with the Council retaining its freehold interest in the land. The Academy Trust would be responsible for maintaining the upkeep of the building throughout the duration of the lease;

- academies were not bound by the National Curriculum. It was anticipated that academies would have particular freedom in choosing aspects of the curriculum at Key Stage Level 3;
- academy schools would receive their current budget plus the additional funding provided by the DfE;
- the strong relationships between schools within the borough would be maintained regardless of their individual status.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet)

That the implications, for the Authority, of the potential conversion of seven of Harrow's High Schools to academies be noted, and the Forums comments on the proposed conversion be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

Reason (for Recommendation): To prepare for the significant changes that academy conversion will entail and to ensure that all of Harrow's schools continue to provide high quality education to local young people.

RESOLVED ITEMS

27. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: To note that the next meeting of the Forum was due to take place on 5 April 2011.

28. Amendment to Membership

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 1.5 and following notification from the Labour Group Leader:

- (1) Councillor Zarina Khalid be appointed as a full Member of the Forum, replacing Councillor Nizam Ismail;
- (2) Councillor Nizam Ismail be appointed as a Reserve Member of the Forum replacing Councillor Zarina Khalid.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.35 pm, closed at 9.00 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR BRIAN GATE
Chairman