

EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE FORUM

MINUTES

27 JUNE 2011

Chairman:	* Councillor Brian Gate	
Councillors:	* Husain Akhtar * Christine Bednell (1) * Zarina Khalid	* Kairul Marikar (2) * Janet Mote Raj Ray
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), (2) Denotes category of Reserve Members
† Denotes apologies received

RECOMMENDED ITEM

49. School Expansion Programme

An officer introduced a report which set out a proposal for a School Expansion Programme as part of the School Place Planning Strategy 2010-2013. He advised that:

- the plan was being devised to meet the projected demand for school places in Harrow;
- three key aspects of the School Expansion Programme were:
 - Permanent places - To expand some existing schools within the borough;
 - Temporary places - To plan bulge classes in existing schools;
 - Contingency Places - To highlight existing schools that could cater for additional bulge classes should they become necessary;
- it was proposed that an additional 6-8 permanent forms of entry would be established in the primary sector by 2016;
- officers would contact Governing Bodies to discuss the permanent expansion of their school;
- a meeting for Chairs of Governing Bodies and Headteachers would be held on 6 July 2011 to discuss the proposals.

In response to questions, officers advised that:

- eight additional bulge classes were established for the current Academic year to cater for the unprecedented demand for school places in the primary sector;
- London Councils estimated that approximately 70,000 additional permanent school places would need to be found over the next four years across London. The reason for the increased demand was unknown and exceeded any projections. Possible factors included parents choosing state funded schools for their children rather than private funded schools;
- each permanent expansion would have a capital implication. It was anticipated the cost of permanent expansion would be spread over a number of financial years as it will take time for the expansion to work its way through the school;
- the total number of pupils in the borough was approximately 26,000.

Members commented that:

- Harrow was known for its good education;
- the introduction of Academies and Free Schools could complicate choices for parents;
- school place planning was an inexact science. The planning was complex and there were many aspects to it. Some areas could require more permanent places because of new housing developments concentrated in some areas;

- bulge classes may be used to meet demand as it arises, but it was hard for the school to plan long-term.

RESOLVED: To Recommend (to Cabinet): That

- 1) the Forum's comments on the proposal for a School Expansion Programme be noted, and that the following key aspects of the Programme be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration;
 - Permanent places - To expand some existing schools within the borough;
 - Temporary places - To plan bulge classes in existing schools;
 - Contingency Places - To highlight existing schools that could cater for additional bulge classes should they become necessary.

Reason for Recommendation: To ensure that sufficient places are available to fulfil the Local Authority's statutory responsibilities.