

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 3
Brighton & Hove City Council

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

4PM – 17 MARCH 2008

BANQUETING ROOM
HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Brown (Chair); Councillors, Kemble (Deputy Chair), Bennett, Duncan, Harmer-Strange, Hawkes (OS) Hyde, McCaffery, K Norman and Randall.

PART ONE

ACTION

15. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

15A Declarations of Substitutes

15.1 Councillor Randall declared that he was as a Substitute Member for Councillor Kitcat.

15B Declarations of Interest

15.2 There were none.

15C Exclusion of Press and Public

15.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A, Part 5A, Section 100A(4) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

15.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 14 on the agenda "Waste from Schools and Other Educational Establishments - Proposed Framework agreement for sites to Joint the Corporate Waste Contract" Exempt Paragraphs 8 & 9.

16. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

17. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**Appointment of Director**

17.1 The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome Di Smith who had recently started in post as the Director of Children's Services .

18 CALLOVER

18.1 **RESOLVED** – That with the exception of items reserved (and marked with an asterisk), the recommendations and resolutions contained therein be approved and adopted without debate.

19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

19.1 The Committee considered a public question of Mr Greg Hadfield in the following terms :

“ Could the Committee or its officers please provide the following information for Year 7 intakes of September 2007 and for September 2008 :

a) the number of children living in the Falmer High School catchment area and the Longhill High School catchment area who successfully applied to each of the following schools (excluding those with sibling links), Dorothy Stringer School, Varndean School, Blatchington Mill School and Sixth form College and Hove Park School ; and

b) the number of pupils eligible for and / or taking free school meals for each of the secondary schools for whose admission procedures the local authority is responsible.”

19.2 The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Brown responded in the following terms :

“ The Council do not collect this data but the pattern of allocations within catchment areas suggests that the average journey will be reduced from the previous system which had a larger number travelling long distances across the City.” It was agreed that the information requested relative to eligibility and receipt of free school would be provided to Mr

Hadfield separately and would be included in the response sent to him following the meeting .

The Assistant Director explained from the available data there appeared to have been a levelling of the spread of free school meals across the City. This had been predicted when determining the new catchment system whilst recognising that the Falmer catchment area would remain significantly higher than in other areas. The dominance of sibling links to Dorothy Stringer accounted for its low figure . if the sibling links outside the catchment area was removed in 2012 it was expected that that would result in even greater parity between the schools.

19.4 Mr Hadfield then asked a supplementary question relative to the number of successful applications excluding those with a sibling link in 2007 .

19.5 The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Brown provided the following information :

Successful applications excluding those with a sibling link
2007 :

Living in : Dorothy Stringer Varndean Blatchington Mill
Hove Park

School	High School	School	Inc Sixth Form College	
Falmer	6	24	1	3
Catchment Longhill	3	15	1	16

Catchment

Successful applications excluding those with a sibling link 2008
:

Living in : Dorothy Stringer Varndean Blatchington Mill
Hove Park

School	High School	School	Inc Sixth Form College	School
Falmer	1	16	2	2

Catchment

Longhill	1	1	2	1
Catchment				

- 19.5 **RESOLVED** – That the response given to Mr Hadfield's question(s) be received and noted and additional information requested including information relative to length of home to school journeys be included in the written response supplied to MR Hadfield following the meeting .

20A. PETITIONS

- 20.1 None were received.

20B. Councillor Questions / Communications

- 20.2 Councillor Allen spoke at the invitation of the Chairman in his capacity as a Local Ward Councillor stating that notwithstanding the drawing up of six catchment areas across the City and the subsequent consultation, there remained a geographical disparity with children in some areas of his ward significantly disbenefitted as a they remained unable to access their nearest LEA schools. He requested that the Committee address these issues in reviewing the first year of the new admissions arrangements.

- 20.3 **RESOLVED** - That the content of Councillor Allen's submission be noted received . The Committees' consideration and discussion relative to this matter set out below in Paragraph 22 of the minutes.

21. GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 21.1 The Committee considered the report of the Director of Children's Services setting out details of the decisions made at a consultative meeting relative to the appointment of LA governors which had met on Monday 25 February 2008 and reporting on measures which had been considered in respect of governor recruitment and retention issues (for copy see minute book).

- 21.1 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the decisions made by the Director of Children, Families & Schools in consultation with the Chair, Deputy Chair and Opposition Spokesperson set out in Appendix B to the report be noted; and

(2) That the changes to governing bodies be noted and that consideration be given to any additional methods of recruiting governors as may be appropriate.

***22. REVIEW OF REVISED SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES**

22.1 The Committee considered the report of the Director of Children's Services in relation to a Review of Revised School Admissions Procedures. The report set out the proposed admission arrangements for community schools for 2009/10 and proposed admission numbers for all maintained schools in the City. The revised schemes for co-ordinated admissions, including key dates and also the arrangements for consultation with Voluntary Aided schools were also set out. It was recommended that the rationale established for the admissions round 2008 /9 be continued, this to include the existing boundaries of the catchment areas as established. (For copy see minute book).

22.2 Green Councillors put forward an amendment for consideration by the Committee which was proposed by Councillor Duncan and seconded by Councillor Randall. This amendment was subsequently withdrawn following further discussion during the course of the meeting .

22.3 Councillor McCaffery stated that her experience of the new admission arrangements as reported to her had been the same as those experienced by her ward colleague Councillor Allen. She proposed an amendment for consideration by the Committee in the following form :

“ I wish to put forward the following amendment to the recommendations and suggest that each bullet point is debated separately :

2 Recommendations

2.1 after Year 2009/ 10 insert “ with adjustments as detailed in Paragraph 2.3”

2.3 After - “the catchment areas” insert adjusted as follows :

- Children from upper BN1 (north of Withdean Stadium are included in the catchment area for Patcham High School
- That children living between Elm Grove and Bear Road are included in the Varndean / Dorothy Stringer catchment.

Additional Paragraph 2.5 :

That Cardinal Newman High School is requested to take a

percentage of children from a radius of one mile to the school as part of its commitment to the surrounding community."

This amendment was proposed by Councillor McCaffery and seconded by Councillor Bennett.

- 22.4 The Legal Adviser to the Committee explained that Cardinal Newman as a voluntary aided school, had its own admission arrangements and criteria in place and could not be required to enter into an arrangement with the local education authority in the manner suggested. As a local catholic secondary school it took children from a wide geographical area, extending well beyond the City boundaries and was generally oversubscribed. It was therefore unlikely that such a request would meet with a favourable response. The legal adviser to the Committee explained that it would need to be able demonstrate that it had acted reasonably in imposing any conditions. Councillor McCaffery was of the view that notwithstanding this the school should be approached. Councillor Bennett supported the approach suggested by Councillor McCaffery. However, following further discussion Councillor McCaffery agreed to removal of paragraph 5.
- 22.5 Councillor K Norman sought clarification regarding the effects if the proposed amendments were made and it was explained that this would result in a further wholesale review, the outcome of which could be far reaching but could not easily be predicted. The present arrangements had been formulated following as the result of detailed consultation and the existing catchment areas had been arrived at as a result of that. Any changes made to one catchment area would have a knock on effect across the others and changes could not be made in isolation.
- 22.6 Councillors Duncan and Norman also enquired whether the possibility of Falmer becoming an academy and the admissions arrangements which might be attendant on that had been taken account of and also whether potential increases in the number of school age children across the city associated with proposed new developments had been factored in. It was explained that these had and that there was sufficient capacity across the city's schools as a whole for such increases to be absorbed. The Chairman stated the proposals which would enable Falmer to become the first city academy had been welcomed and were being actively pursued.

- 22.7 Councillors Hawkes and Kemble stated that having read the officers' report they fully supported the recommendations contained therein and were of the view that these represented the most appropriate way forward based as they were on firm evidence and not anecdotally. Both were of the view that having taken time and care in devising the current system that it would be premature to "tinker around the edges" at this early stage. It had taken two years of exhaustive work to get to the current point.
- 22.8 Councillor Randall concurred with the views expressed by Councillors Hawkes and Kemble agreeing that it had taken a long time to formulate the present arrangements and that it would be irresponsible to agree to make changes in the absence of facts concerning the potential impact of such changes.
- 22.9 Councillor McCaffery stated that she did not consider that refinements within some of the catchment areas would cause the whole system to implode and considered that her proposals could be instrumental in addressing issues relative to Patcham being under subscribed and could also serve to improve the social mix across the city's schools.
- 22.10 The Chairman responded relative to the suggestion by Green councillors that a working group should be set up to address and monitor issues arising from the Council's new admission arrangements, stating that it had already been agreed that these new arrangements would be the subject of review. Data would be collected and any minor changes which might be appropriate could be made in the future.
- 22.11 Councillor Hyde sought clarification regarding the effect of Falmer becoming very undersubscribed and regarding further measures which might be possible to address this issue. The Assistant Director, School Support and Central Area reiterated his earlier comments that any changes would need to be made in the round as changes made in one catchment would have knock on effects and that these would need to be clearly identified. Having arrived at a balance this needed to be maintained.
- 22.12 Following discussion, Councillor McCaffery withdrew her suggested Paragraph 2.5. but wished a vote to be taken in respect of the remaining amendments. Councillors Duncan and Randall stated that they were generally happy with the substantive recommendations although they had wished an explicit recommendation to be included relative to the setting up of a working party. Having noted the Chairman's

comments they were prepared to withdraw their amendment. A vote was then taken on Councillor McCaffery's amendments which was lost. A vote was then taken on the substantive recommendations as set out in the report and these were approved as set out below.

22.13 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee agree:

- 1) That the proposed admission arrangements and school admission limits set out in the consultation documents (copies available in the members' library) be adopted for the admissions year 2009/10;
- 2) That the co-ordinated schemes be approved ;
- 3) That the catchment areas established for the admissions round 2008/ 9 be adopted into the admissions criteria ; and
- 4) That the City boundary should be retained as the relevant area for consultation for school admissions .

[**Note** : Councillors Bennett and McCaffery wished their names to be recorded as having voted against the recommendations . Councillor Hyde abstained from voting. Councillors Duncan and Randall whilst supporting the substantive recommendations stated that they supported an explicit rather than implicit recommendation relative to this matter continuing to be monitored by a working group].

***23. PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF WEST BLATCHINGTON INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS**

23.1 The Committee considered the report of the Director of Children's Services in relation to the Proposed Amalgamation of West Blatchington Infant and Junior Schools (for copy see minute book).

23.2 Councillor Randall stated that he would be uneasy to progress the consultation process further in the absence of clear indications from the local community that they wished to pursue this option. He considered that it might be appropriate to defer consideration at this stage pending the out come of further consultations. The Assistant Director, Schools explained that it was important that the matter be facilitated in order that parents were aware that the matter was progressing . Consultation would continue. Councillor Hawkes expressed her support , given that the proposals appeared to be broadly supported and that further

consultation and negotiations would ensue and would inform further future reports.

23.3 **RESOLVED** - That the Committee

- 1) Note and endorse the proposal to amalgamate West Blatchington Infant and Junior Schools ;
- 2) Agree to the publishing of the required Statutory Notices in association with this proposed amalgamation ; and
- 3) Requests that the results of the Statutory Consultation Process regarding the proposed amalgamation be reported to the CFS Committee in May/June 2008. (*Meeting dates for 2008 / 09 to be confirmed*).

[**Note** : Councillor Randall wished it to be placed on record that he had abstained from voting in respect of the above matter].

***24. RE-TENDERING OF THE PREFERRED PROVIDER LIST FOR INDEPENDENT AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL AND FOSTER CARE**

24.1 The Committee considered the report of the Director of Children's Services Re-tendering of the preferred Provider List for Independent and Voluntary Sector children's Residential and Foster Care Services (for copy see minute book).

24.2 Councillors Duncan and Randall expressed grave concern that the potential benefits which could accrue from the tender process could be outweighed by the attendant risks. The Chairman stated she did not concur considering that the officers had sought to set out a balanced view regarding any potential risk. The report sought authority to proceed at this stage. If on completion of the tender process it did not appear that the proposals would be advantageous to the local authority they would be free to withdraw their interest.

- 24.3
- 1) **RESOLVED** – (1) That approval be given for the CYPT to join West Sussex County Council (WSCC) , and potentially in the future other local authorities, in establishing sub-regional Preferred Provider Lists (PPL's) for independent and voluntary sector foster care (IFA'S) and children's residential services ; and
 - 2) That approval is given for the authority to enter into a Framework Agreement with the selected Preferred/Accredited Providers. The decision to be

delegated to the Assistant Director – Specialist Services.

[**Note** : Councillors Duncan and Randall wished it to be recorded that they had voted against the recommendations set out above].

25. WASTE FROM SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS - PROPOSED FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR SITES TO JOIN THE CORPORATE WASTE CONTRACT

25.1 The Committee considered the report of the Director of Finance and Resources in relation to the Waste from Schools and Other Educational Establishments - Proposed Framework Agreement for Sites to Join The Corporate Waste Contract (for copy see minute book).

25.2 **RESOLVED** –That the creation of a framework agreement between the Council (as Local Education Authority) and Cox Skips for the maximum duration of four years for each school to opt in to should it so wish, in order to obtain the cost benefits provided under the main contract, be agreed.

[**Note:** The contracts with each school shall be for the same duration as the main Council contract between the Council and Cox Skips (i.e. up to a maximum of five plus two years, dependent upon good performance) for refuse and recycling collection and disposal from the Council's operational buildings].

26. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MOVE TO A NEW CONSTITUTION

26.1 The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy and Governance in relation to the Arrangements for the Move to a new Constitution (for copy see minute book).

26.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee:

- 1) Note the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (the Act) requiring Brighton & Hove City Council to move to new constitutional arrangements;
- 2) Note the manner in which the work of the current Children, Families and Schools Committee (CFS) would be discharged under the proposed new arrangements; and
- 3) The proposal to prepare a book to commemorate the life of the CFS Committee and for Members to participate in a group photograph in respect thereof be approved and

noted .

SUMMARY OF PART TWO ITEMS

28. WASTE FROM SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS: PROPOSED FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR SITES TO JOIN THE CORPORATE WASTE CONTRACT - EXEMPT CATEGORIES 8 AND 9

28.1 The Committee considered the report of the Director of Finance and resources in relation to Waste From Schools and Other Educational Establishments: Proposed Framework Agreement for Sites to Join the Corporate Waste Contract For copy see minute book).

28.2 **RESOLVED:** - That the creation of a framework agreement between the Council (as Local Education Authority) and Cox Skips for the maximum duration of four years for each school to opt in should it so wish, in order to obtain cost benefits provided under the main contract be approved.

[**Note** : the contracts with each school shall be for the same duration as the main Council contract between the Council and Cox skips (i.e. up to a maximum of five plus two years, dependent on good performance) for refuse and recycling collection and disposal from the Council's operational buildings].

The meeting concluded at 5.05 pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of

2008