

LIFELONG LEARNING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21st March, 2002 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Hussain (Chair); Councillors Akbar, Akhtar, Boyle, Bullock, J. Davies, Dunington, McCarthy and Patterson.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES: G. Ryan and J. Wrigglesworth.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Moran.

ACTION BY

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Councillors Hand and Yasin; C. Carey (Co-opted Diocesan Representative) and K. Coleman (Parent Governor Representative).

17 MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26th February, 2002 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

18 BEST VALUE REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES (REF: 4.1)

The Director of Scrutiny reported that the Best Value Review of Children's Services would commence before the next scheduled meeting of the Committee and on the need to appoint a Panel to investigate the Review's findings.

Resolved: That the Chair and Vice-Chair and Councillor Patterson be appointed to the Scrutiny Panel to oversee the Best Value Review of Children's Services.

Wes Cuell

19 ETHNIC MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT PLAN (REF: 5)

The Senior Adviser - Multi Ethnic Achievement sought the instructions of the Committee on what aspects of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Plan it wanted to consider.

Resolved: That the report of the Senior Adviser - Multi Ethnic Achievement to a future meeting of the Committee be on the subject of "what does the Ethnic Minority Achievement Plan mean to schools?"

Monica Austin

20 EXCLUSION/INCLUSION (REF: 6)

The Head of Access introduced the Manager of the Behaviour and Tuition Service and made a joint presentation on the issues surrounding the Exclusion/Inclusion Policy and responded to questions from Members of the Committee.

Resolved: That the Head of Access be instructed to report to a future meeting of the Committee on:-

- (a) comparative statistics on the reasons pupils have been excluded from school;
- (b) the number of days lost by exclusions and a breakdown by year groups;
- (c) how many pupils have been excluded more than once;
- (d) any evidence available on what happens to permanently excluded pupils;
- (e) statistics on exclusions between different ethnicities;
- (f) information on children who have not been excluded but nevertheless do not attend school; and

- (g) any evidence available on why the majority of exclusions are from schools in the north of the Borough.

Terry Redmayne

21 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS (REF: 7)

The Head of Access introduced the Pupil Access Manager and made a joint presentation relating to the procedures for admitting children into schools and responded to questions from a member of the public and from Members of the Committee.

The Committee, in particular, focussed on the dilemma faced by some parents who had selected their catchment area school as second preference; not being allocated a place at the school of their first preference; and as all places in their catchment area school had been allocated to pupils who had indicated that school as a first preference, ending up with a place in a school which they had not indicated as a preference.

Resolved: (i) That the Head of Access and the Pupil Access Manager be thanked for their presentation.

(ii) That the subject of School Admissions be commended as the first priority for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme for June/July, 2003 and that in the meantime the Head of Access be instructed to arrange for Members of the Committee to visit another Local Education Authority experiencing similar problems as Luton.

Terry Redmayne

22 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (REF: 8)

The Senior Adviser - School Development and Assessment Reporting, Recording made a presentation on the strategies of the Local Education Authority to monitor attainment in schools.

Resolved: (i) That the Senior Adviser - School Development and Assessment Reporting, Recording be thanked for her presentation.

(ii) That a further report be made to a future meeting of the Committee on comparative statistics of attainment in schools in the current year and the last year.

Heather Weston

23 BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PLAN (REF: 9)

The Director of Lifelong Learning updated the Committee on developments in relation to the Behaviour Support Plan and the Evaluation of Behaviour Support Services in Luton, conducted by the University of London Institute of Education.

Resolved: That the report be noted and the matter be considered further at the meeting when the issue of school inclusions and exclusions is considered.

Terry Redmayne

24 BEST VALUE REVIEW OF THE MUSIC SERVICE (REF: 10)

The Head of Access submitted and reported on the Music Service Revised Action Plan : Best Value Review. He also reported that the Scrutiny Panel who investigated the Review felt there was a marked improvement in the provision at both primary and secondary level as well as the addition of a Saturday morning music school in a different location. The Panel recognised that the service improvements had been achieved without budget enhancement. However, the Panel expressed concerns that the Action Plan was out of date and wished the following to be considered:-

- Strengthened response to improving service access for hard to reach groups including pupils from ethnic minorities and those with special educational needs.
- Establishing a parents reference Group to enable feedback on service developments.
- Establishing a young people's reference Group of service users to gain their views.

- Surveying the views of parents whose children do not use the service to see if there are ways of encouraging higher levels of service take up.

The Head of Access further reported that the Music Service had agreed these recommendations which would be included in the review of the Service Plan for 2002-2003.

Resolved: That the report and the concerns of the Scrutiny Panel be noted and submitted to the Executive for consideration.

Greg Shanahan

(Note: The meeting ended at 9.15 p.m.).