

minutes



Meeting DRUGS EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 24th September 2007 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Councillor Edward Llewellyn-Jones (Chair)

Councillor Joe Lonergan (Vice Chair)

A Peter Barnes
Steve Carr
John Carter
Bruce Laughton

A Sheila Place
Lynn Sykes
Parry Tsimbiridis

CO – OPTEES

A Mrs P Burbridge
A Mr K Daly
Mr D Richards
A Mrs L Wooding

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Andy Freeman
Councillor Andy Stewart
Richard Goad, Chair of DARE

APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

It was noted that Councillor Joe Lonergan had been appointed Vice-Chair of the Select Committee in place of Councillor Andy Stewart.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor Steve Carr
Councillor Sheila Place
Mr K Daly

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

PRESENTATION BY DAVID GILBERT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF DARE (DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION)

Mr Gilbert, Chief Executive of DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) gave a presentation to the Select Committee that covered all areas of the DARE programme. The Select Committee heard how the programme had evolved in the USA and was introduced into the UK in 1993. He reflected on the programme over the last four years.

It was pointed out that little research had been carried out in the UK to establish the programme's effectiveness, this was due to limited resources being available. He reported on and circulated information on an evaluation carried out in 2004 to assess the strengths of the programme and to identify areas that required further development. Feedback had been collated through questionnaires completed by teachers and parents. The findings had led to a revised programme being delivered into schools during the academic year of 2006/07. Although responses had been gathered from parents, they had yet to be collated and analysed. Feedback from teachers was positive with 96% approval of the DARE decision making model. 90% used DARE to support PSHE (Personal, Social, and Health Education) within the curriculum.

Mr Gilbert explained the options available to schools for delivering the DARE programme. It was explained that the number of schools signing up to DARE had reduced over the last 4 years. This was due to some schools choosing to take part every other year and some choosing something different, which they felt was better. For the majority of schools, funding was the biggest issue. 280 schools had signed up for the 2008/09 programme. The cost to schools was £22 per child for full DARE officer delivery, £15 per child for 50/50 teacher and DARE officer delivery and £8 per child for teacher led. It was hoped the revised delivery options and charges would produce an increase in the take up of the programme. Schools had welcomed the new options for delivery. Mr Goad said that work was being done to try and get local businesses on board to support schools that needed help to fund it.

Partners had been involved in refreshing and modernising the programme. Anne Trout, Personal Development Learners Drugs Consultant at Nottinghamshire County Council, referred to some of the work she did in parallel with DARE and to some of the other resources used in schools. On Track, for key stage 1 which was in all primary schools and Keeping on Track, for key stage 2. Ms Trout said that she had trained over 100 teachers in as many schools over the last few weeks on the DARE programme. She added that work was being done to target schools who had not signed up to the programme and on delivering to colleges. There was also a course that could be used in youth work and for those not engaged in education.

In response to a question regarding children's self esteem, Mr Gilbert pointed out that this was a key lesson within the DARE curriculum. He also pointed out that DARE was not a panacea but complementary to life skills. He acknowledged that more needed to be done in key stages 3 and 4 to ensure a continuous and effective drugs education. Mr Richards felt that training from peer groups in schools was

intrinsic for children in all key stages. Sporting opportunities were seen as a way of getting children engaged, with the use of positive role models. It was noted that a continuation of education was necessary through all of the key stages, with a particular focus placed on secondary schools.

In terms of funding, Mr Gilbert explained how other funding had been secured from Sports Act and Wilkinson's, the hardware retailer, following the withdrawal of funding from the Police. Internally they now had a smaller number of staff and robust fund raising.

The Select Committee watched a short film on student's perception of the programme and heard from volunteers from the West Nottinghamshire College who had been invited to give their comments on the programme.

Mr Gilbert's vision for the journey ahead was to get trustees on board the 3 year strategy and to focus on resources. It was important to be influential and informative with parents and to continue partnership working. Mr Gilbert said that he would like to see better evaluation for reassurance that they were going in the right direction and to inform some of the decision making for the future.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and giving evidence to the Select Committee. He referred to the next meeting and reminded the Select Committee of its intention to have an all day meeting. Details of the arrangements would be sent to Members in advance of the meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.50pm.

CHAIR

Ref: drugs education/m_24 sept 07