

# minutes



Meeting EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Tuesday, 5 April 2005 (commencing at 10.30 am)

## Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

## COUNCILLORS

Stella Smedley (Chair)

M Suthers OBE (Vice-Chair)

	Colin Bromfield	A	Mrs Nellie Smedley
	Yvonne Davidson	A	Richard Robinson
A	Stan Heptinstall MBE		Brian Smith
	E Llewellyn-Jones	A	Andy Stewart
A	Tom Pettengell	A	Yvonne Woodhead
A	Peter D Prebble		

## Statutory Added Members

A Mr K Daly  
Mr D Richards JP  
Ms P Burbidge (Parent Governor)  
Ms L Wooding (Parent Governor)

## Non-Voting Co-optees

A	Mr L Jefferies	(Teacher Trades Unions)
	Mrs G Lane	(School Governors)
A	Mr N Lewis	(F E sector)
A	Mr A McAllister	(Ethnic Minority Communities)
	Dr B Ramsey	(School Governors)
A	Ms L Regan	(Teacher Trades Unions)
	Mr A Ross	(Teacher Trades Unions)
A	Mr J Wilson	(Head Teachers)
	Vacancy	(Head Teachers)

## Others invited to attend

Ms T Carnachan (Support Staff Unions)

## **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor M Storey  
Mr J Cocking  
Mr B Pardon  
Mr D Cokeham

## **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 February 2005 having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor Tom Pettengell  
“ Mrs N Smedley (on other County Council business)  
“ Richard Robinson  
Mr J Wilson

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

None.

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION'S REPORT: DECEMBER 2004 – FEBRUARY 2005**

Councillor Storey reported that since the report had been prepared, he had attended the National Union of Teachers Annual Conference. He had been impressed by the arguments of the Make Poverty History Campaign, and encouraged support for the campaign. Councillor Stella Smedley and Ms Lane endorsed his comments, but other members asked for further information.

In relation to the School Forum, Ms Lane stated that fair funding campaign material would be sent out shortly. Councillor Storey indicated that the County's per pupil funding was about average. In reply to a question from Mr Ross, Councillor Storey believed that some ideas from the Tomlinson report might filter through. He saw it as important that a child should be able to follow a course which suited them and they would enjoy, as near home as possible. Councillor Stella Smedley commented that some schools had already taken steps to broaden the curriculum. She suggested that at some point in the future the Committee might like to consider education in the wider world, and what the County Council's contribution might be.

It was agreed to note the Cabinet Member's report.

## **REVIEW OF DISSEMINATION OF GOOD PRACTICE IN THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE EDUCATION SERVICE: FINAL REPORT**

Stuart Kilby, School Improvement Services, drew the Committee's particular attention to the recommendations for maintaining and improving current good practice. He added that many of the recommendations had been addressed as the work had carried on. Councillor Smedley observed that the group had found a large amount of good practice already being shared. Mr Richards thanked Mr Kilby for his support to the Study Group and was pleased that there was so much good practice and that the culture of dissemination was developing. He saw some potential danger in that advance skills teachers were an important part of dissemination, but such posts might not be funded in the future. Councillor Smedley expressed her thanks to all those involved in the review.

It was agreed to endorse the recommendations, and submit the report to Cabinet for consideration.

### **CHILDREN ACT**

Di Morton, Assistant Director (Strategic Support Services) introduced the report which summarised the requirements of the Children Act and the implications for the County Council. She explained that the Director of Education had lead responsibility for identifying the implications for the Authority, which also involved the Social Services, Culture and Community, and Environment Departments. The external consultant's report on possible structures was due to be considered by Cabinet at the end of April, with a view to decisions being taken during the summer.

Councillor Bromfield stated that the Act would have a major impact on the organisation of the County Council. He had a number of concerns, including the notion of integrated services and the difficulties of moving towards them, the exclusion of schools from the duty to co-operate, the inability of the County Council to enforce co-operation, the outcome of the joint area review depending on the performance of other agencies, not sharing databases, and confidentiality.

Dr Ramsey expressed support for the Act. He believed that co-operation had to be wanted and could not be enforced, and that Cabinet Members had a major role in breaking down barriers and encouraging co-operation. Councillor Suthers believed that scrutiny had a role in looking at the implications of the Act. He was sceptical about the Act, but reminded the Committee of the long series of child abuse cases to which the Act was a response. He believed that nothing in the Act would serve to recruit additional social workers in hard pressed areas or to make their task any easier. However if a new structure was required, then he believed it should be scrutinised to ensure that it worked. Mr Cokeham referred to the difficulties for organisations with different structures to communicate, and to the reluctance to divulge information. He felt that the County Council could encourage the sharing of information at an early stage.

Councillor Llewellyn-Jones observed that this Select Committee was only part of the picture, and Social Services and Culture and Community were also involved. He believed that the decision on how to scrutinise should be left to the County Council after the election. Councillor Bromfield wondered if there should be a specific scrutiny panel to look at the Act.

Mrs Morton indicated that there would be an opportunity to scrutinise developments, as the Act was implemented. She stated that a working draft of the self assessment was due to be presented to the joint meeting of scrutiny and the executive on 13<sup>th</sup> April. Councillor Suthers wondered whether the Cross Service and External Affairs Select Committee might be the best body to scrutinise the Act. Councillor Smedley recognised that other committees had a role, but felt that this Committee had one too.

It was agreed to note the report and comments made during discussion on it.

### **SUGGESTED CHANGES TO THE OPERATION OF THE COMMITTEE**

The report suggested some changes to the Committee's approach and items to be considered. Councillor Smith supported the idea of two study groups, but suggested they have a larger membership to encourage attendance.

It was agreed to support the proposed amendments to the Committee's operation.

### **REVIEW OF THE FORWARD PLAN**

The report invited Members' comments on the Forward Plan, and whether it should feature as a regular item on the Committee's agenda. Members discussed the way that cross-service matters were dealt with, in relation to the Forward Plan, there was generally support for the opportunity to scrutinise matters before a decision was made. It was therefore agreed that the Forward Plan feature as an item on the Committee's agenda.

Councillor Smedley closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their contribution to the Committee's business.

The meeting closed at 11.45 am.

### **CHAIR**

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