



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Held: TUESDAY, 11 JANUARY 2005 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Johnson - Chair
Councillor Fitch - Liberal Democrat Spokesperson
Councillor Sood – Labour Spokesperson

Councillor R. Blackmore	Councillor Panchbaya
Councillor Hall	Councillor Porter
Councillor Henry	Councillor Renold
Councillor Hunt	Councillor Suleman
Councillor Lloyd-Harris	Councillor Thompson
Councillor Nurse	Councillor Westley

Co-opted Members (Voting)

Canon Peter Taylor - Church of England Diocese

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

Mr Resham Singh Sandhu-Leicester Council of Faiths
Ms Jane Rolfe - Primary Sector
Mr Peter Flack - Secondary Sector
Mr Adam Suddaby - Incorporated Colleges
Mr Geoff Rawnsley - City of Leicester Governors Association

In Attendance

Councillor Waddington – Cabinet member for Education and Lifelong Learning
Gary Garner - UNISON

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54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they had in the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

The meeting was asked to note the general interests of Members as governors

as follows:

	School / College	Category of Governorship
Cllr R Blackmore	Ellesmere College	LEA
Cllr Fitch	Leicester Adult Education College	LEA
Cllr Lloyd-Harris	Beaumont Leys School	LEA
Cllr Nurse	Soar Valley Community College	LEA
Cllr Panchbaya	Spinney Hills Primary School	LEA
Mr G Rawnsley	Crown Hills Community College	LEA
	Mayflower Primary	LEA
Mr RS Sandhu	Sir Jonathan North Community College	LEA
Cllr Sood	Spinney Hills Primary School	LEA
	Leicester College	LEA
Mr. A. Suddaby	Leicester Adult Education College	Co-opted
	Ellesmere College	Co-opted
Cllr Suleman	Regent College	LEA
Canon P Taylor	Humberstone Junior School	LEA
	St Mary's CoE, Hamilton	Foundation
Cllr Thompson	Sandfield Close Primary	LEA
	Northfield House Primary	LEA
Cllr Westley	Babington Community College	LEA

The Town Clerk advised Members who were school governors that they had non-prejudicial interests in, and their general declarations applied to the following items:

Draft Revenue Strategy for the Education & Lifelong Learning Department	Agenda Item A (minute 60 refers)
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2004/05 - Period 4	Agenda Item E (minute 64 refers)
2004/05 Capital Programme Monitoring - Period 4	Agenda Item F (minute 65 refers)

Jane Rolfe and Peter Flack declared prejudicial interests in Item 6 'Draft Revenue Strategy for the Education and Lifelong Learning Department (minute 59 refers), as their posts were funded by trade union monies. However, under

Section 12 (2)(a) of the Model Code of Conduct and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7b of the Council's Constitution, they were invited to remain in the meeting and to provide information if requested.

Canon Peter Taylor declared a prejudicial interest in Item 7 'A City Academy for Leicester' (minute 60 refers), as a sponsor of the project. However under Section 12 (2)(a) of the Model Code of Conduct and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7b of the Council's Constitution, he was invited to remain in the meeting and to provide information if requested.

61. A CITY ACADEMY FOR LEICESTER

The Service Director, Policy and Resources, Education and Lifelong Learning, submitted a report which advised and updated Members on the issues relating to the proposed Academy.

Under Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7b of the Council's Constitution, the Scrutiny Committee invited Mr Hayes to address the meeting. He expressed doubts about the proposals on social and academic grounds and suggested that the vision should not be to create education that was divided down religious lines, but to achieve schools that met the needs of the City and the Community. He stated that a group had been formed called 'Action for Community Schools', which, it was hoped, would help to achieve this aim.

Members were informed by the Corporate Director that migration out of the City to County schools was still a major factor, with approximately 4,000 City children educated in the County. This resulted in a loss of revenue through lower Government grants, a rise in the number of surplus places and declining confidence in the City's secondary schools.

Concern was expressed that the creation of more places would increase the number of surplus places, and may lead to more school closures, and other schools losing pupils and therefore requiring additional funding through small school protection. In response, it was stated that it was hoped that the City Academy would attract pupils back into the City, thus eventually decreasing the number of surplus places.

Confusion and concern was expressed about the status of the school, and its definition as an independent school. In response the Corporate Director advised that the City Academy would not be a 'private' school, but a state school for state pupils, funded by the Government. Members were reminded that the City Academy had agreed not to select pupils, and that parents would not have to pay for their children to attend.

Concern was also expressed that the specialisation of the school in food technology was too closely linked to the sponsor, and would prevent a broader curriculum being taught. In response it was noted that over the next three or four years most LEA schools would become specialist schools, and also that

other changes may mean that no schools have to follow the national curriculum as it is currently required. In addition it was emphasised that the specialism was in fact Business and Enterprise with a curriculum focus on food technology and allied sciences. Members requested that a report be brought to a future meeting with regard to the future of the national curriculum.

It was highlighted that one of the most deprived communities in the City had no choice of secondary schools, and that it was important to create a school that children wanted to attend, at the heart of the community. It was suggested that the means of creating the school may not be ideal but that it would be the best way to deliver the improvements needed in the community.

It was noted that, as the City Academy would cover ages 3-16 or 3-19, the difficulties of changing schools at certain ages would be removed. It was also stated that it was the intention to form partnerships with post 16 education providers. Discussions were on-going with post 16 educational partners over whether a sixth form would be necessary, but it was noted that the first sixth form intake would not be until 2012.

Attention was drawn to the Government appointed Adjudicator's report, which looked at how the process had been dealt with and the appropriateness of the proposals. The report had expressed concern about the disappointing level of information provided and the lack of consultation, resulting in only 238 responses. The Adjudicator considered that this showed a lack of support for the Academy.

The importance of the City Academy being a local school for local people was emphasised, and the need to give priority to pupils at Secondary level in the catchment area of the former Mary Linwood School. It was suggested that it should have more than the one required LEA Governor, and that the LEA should have more of an influence over the creation and running of the school.

Councillor R Blackmore, seconded by Councillor Suleman, proposed that the creation of a City Academy be approved in principal, with the conditions that the school is for local people within the Mary Linwood catchment area, that the Academy worked in partnership with the LEA, and that exam results were included in the City exam results.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the establishment of a City Academy on the site of the former Mary Linwood school be supported subject to the following conditions:
 - a) that the DfES allows the Council to retain 50% of the proceeds of sale of Southfields/Newry to invest in local sports facilities;
 - b) that the City Academy is a local school for local

people, with priority given to those within the former Mary Linwood catchment area;

- c) that the school's management work in partnership with the LEA;
 - d) that the City Academy's exam results are included in the City exam results.
- 2) That the transfer of the Mary Linwood site to the sponsors subject to detailed negotiations and agreement be supported;
 - 3) That the disposal of Southfields/Newry Schools to the Leicester Lift Company at market value, or on the open market if satisfactory terms with the Leicester Lift Company cannot be agreed, be supported;
 - 4) That a report be brought to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee with regard to the future of the National Curriculum.