
MEETING	EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	28 MARCH 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS HALL (CHAIR), BARTLETT, MR J BAILEY (PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVE) AND DR D SELICK (CHURCH OF ENGLAND REPRESENTATIVE)

APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS KIND AND LIVESLEY
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21. Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited Members to declare at this point any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Mr John Bailey stated that he was now also a governor at Huntington Primary School and requested the addition of this onto the standing list.

22. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

23. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme from Cllr Scott.

Cllr Scott referred to his submission to the Committee in which he raised some concerns with the Home to School Transport Service draft report. In particular in draft Recommendation 1 relating to negotiations with the transport provider for St Mary's School, Askham Richard for the provision of seat belts to be provided on all vehicles but it stated "at a reasonable cost". He stated that he felt that reasonable cost should not be a factor in the provision of seat belts and that safety was the main concern. He also stated that assurances/guarantees should be obtained from suppliers of the services that vehicles currently used that met the Council's standards would not be switched. If no assurances were received then the supplier should be given notice. Finally he asked for the addition of a further recommendation that, as a matter of urgency, current contracts providing home to school transport for secondary schools should also be examined and reviewed to ensure the vehicles used had seatbelts fitted. He also felt that double decker buses should not be used for school transport as they were unsuitable for seat belt adaptation.

The Chair confirmed that the Education and Inspection Act meant that all Authorities would have to rewrite their contracts with suppliers in the future.

24. Home to School Transport Services - Final Report

Members gave further consideration to the final report and recommendations on Home to School Transport Services approved at the Committees meeting held on 27 February 2007.

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed that Scrutiny Management Committee had considered this Committees final report on Home to School Transport Services at their meeting held on 26 March. She reported that they had supported the Scrutiny Committees recommendations and had suggested that the Executive may also wish to consider the provision of seat belts on transport buses used by secondary school pupils. It was pointed out that this Committees remit had only referred to primary schools and had not extended to secondary schools.

Members further considered the final report at Annex A, they confirmed that Recommendation 2 ensured that contractors would not be able to switch vehicles for home to school transport and agreed the following amendments:

Recommendation 2

In part c) rewording to state: Contractors to ensure that all drivers have had a CRB check no later than 3 years before commencing this work and thereafter in line with current Council policy.

Recommendation 5

The deletion of the final words "wherever possible" of this recommendation.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the above amendments, the report be approved for submission to the Executive as the final report of the Education Scrutiny Committee on home to school transport.

REASON: So that the final report reflects Members' views and to enable the Committee's recommendations to be referred to the Executive.

25. Chairs Comments

The Chair thanked all those that had contributed to the production of the report for their work on this topic which had enabled the Committee to make recommendations that would, in the long term, improve the quality of the buses used for school transport.

CLLR C HALL

Chair of Scrutiny Committee

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 5.40 pm.