
MEETING	EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	9 JANUARY 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS KIRK (CHAIR), BROOKS (VICE-CHAIR), ALEXANDER, GUNNELL, HYMAN, MERRETT, MORLEY AND DR D SELICK
APOLOGIES	MR J BAILEY

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda, in addition to the list of general personal interests circulated with the agenda.

Cllr Merrett declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the business generally as a governor of St Paul's Primary School and asked that this be added to the list.

25. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

26. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

27. SCHOOL GOVERNORS - INTERIM REPORT

Members considered a report which presented further information relating to the scrutiny topic on the role of School Governors and suggested actions to progress the Committee's review of this topic. A draft School Governor exit questionnaire had been prepared as requested at the last meeting (Resolution (iii) of Minute 23 refers) and was attached as Annex A to the report.

The report provided a reminder of the key objectives within the agreed remit for the topic (split into Parts A and B) and of the print, postal and database costs involved with carrying out the survey of individual governors discussed and agreed at the last meeting. Costs to be funded by Scrutiny amounted to £532. There was also the cost of producing statistical information from the survey to consider; this could be only estimated once Members had decided on the nature and format of the information they required. Since the current Scrutiny budget for the review

was only £250, a request for further funding would need to be made to Scrutiny Management Committee to cover the additional amount.

Members were asked to consider:

- In relation to key objective (iv), how the skills and training information obtained from the individual governors' survey should be presented;
- Any revisions required to the draft exit questionnaire;
- The suggested timetable for consideration of key objective (iii) (Investigate ways of maximising the skills of increasing community involvement with Governing Bodies) set out in paragraphs 12 and 13.

Copies of a letter to the Press from Ken Beavan concerning the governor survey, together with the published response from the Assistant Director of Children's Services, were circulated at the meeting. Officers confirmed that there had been no negative feedback from governors on the survey.

RESOLVED: (i) That, with regard to the production of database reports using information from the individual governor survey:

- a) details of the gender make up, ethnicity, age profile and socio-economic profile of governors be included, together with the equivalent information on the composition of the schools' students which is already available to Officers;
- b) the data be presented as an overview of the situation in all schools;
- c) a breakdown of information by primary (including infants and juniors) and secondary schools be provided.
- d) a breakdown of information by ward be provided.

(ii) That the draft exit questionnaire at Annex A be approved, subject to the following amendments:

- a) Include "*Children have left school*" as a further reason in the 'Reasons for Leaving' section;
- b) Include the following additional questions to the "Support you received as a Governor" section:
 - "*Did you feel your time as a governor was worthwhile? Can you expand on your answer?*"
 - "*What did you enjoy about being a governor? What did you not enjoy?*"
- c) Under "Any Other Information", add the words "*Please continue on a separate piece of paper if you wish*".

(ii) That the exit questionnaire be sent to all governors who have resigned during the past academic year.

(iii) That the following revised timetable be agreed for consideration of key objective (iii):

- Members to consider, approve and / or amend a draft questionnaire for Governing Bodies at the Committee's meeting on 26 February 2008;
- Questionnaire to be presented at a full governors' meeting of each school, together with a report on the work of the Education Scrutiny Committee;
- Results to be presented at the Committee meeting on 27 May 2008.

(iv) That school governors be invited to attend an informal session, with refreshments, at the conclusion of the formal business of the Committee's meeting on 26 February, to contribute their ideas on methods of recruiting community governors, so as to inform key objective (iii). The informal session will be scheduled for 6:00-7:00 pm.

(v) That the next topic for scrutiny be considered at the meeting on 26 February, and that the Scrutiny Officer determine in the meantime whether there are any outstanding topics within the Committee's remit that have already been registered.

*(vi) That an additional informal meeting of the Committee be arranged on 30 January 2008, 5:00-6:00 pm, to discuss the outstanding scrutiny topics.

REASONS: To move forward with this review, take account of future work and ensure compliance with scrutiny procedures, protocols and work plans.

*Note: It was later confirmed by the Chair that this informal meeting would not be required, as there were no outstanding scrutiny topics. Instead, a scoping report for Part B of the current review would be presented at the meeting on 26 February.

Action Required

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| 1. Progress current review, in line with Resolutions (i) - (iv). | GR |
| 2. Check any outstanding scrutiny topics. | GR |

M Kirk, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.15 pm].