



EDUCATION, YOUTH & LEISURE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting of the EDUCATION, YOUTH & LEISURE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE held on THURSDAY 24 JULY 2003 at 7.00 PM at the Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

PRESENT: Councillor Andy Simmons (Chair)
Councillor Lisa Rajan (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Eliza Mann and Robert Smeath

OFFICERS: Bob Coomber – Chief Executive
Jay Yeats – Head of Parks & Sport
Peter Roberts – Scrutiny Team

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Mrs Josie Spanswick, co-opted member.

CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERSHIP

The Members listed as being present were confirmed as the voting Members.

NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS AS URGENT

The Chair agreed to receive a report from the Head of Parks and Sport, "Parks and Sport Key Issues".

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

MINUTES

RESOLVED: That, subject to the following amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2 July 2003 be agreed and signed as a correct record of the proceedings:

Page 3, Resolution 5, to read, "That the Minister for Education and Tim Brighouse, the Commissioner for London Schools, be invited...".

RECORDING OF MEMBERS' VOTES

Council Procedure Rule 1.17(5) allows a Member to record her/his vote in respect of any motions and amendments. Such requests are detailed in the following Minutes. Should a Member's vote be recorded in respect of an amendment, a copy of the amendment may be found in the Minute file and is available for public inspection.

The Sub-Committee considered the items set out on the agenda, a copy of which has been incorporated in the Minute File. Each of the following paragraphs relates to the item bearing the same number on the agenda.

4. PARKS AND SPORT KEY ISSUES (see pages 74 - 87)

- 4.1 The Head of Parks & Sport provided an over-view of major policies and guidance affecting parks and green spaces and sport and fitness. He circulated key statistics in respect of use of leisure centres in the borough.
- 4.2 In response to Members' questions, the Head of Parks & Sport clarified the status of Groundwork Southwark and their proposed involvement in the development of Burgess Park. He also gave further explanations of the data provided on use of leisure centres, in particular as to visits made by people with disabilities and black and minority ethnic groups and the difficulties of reaching these groups. He commented that some leisure centres were close to capacity unless further investment was made. He also confirmed that although schools made use of leisure centres, the Education & Culture Department was responsible for the provision of facilities for under 11s.
- 4.3 The Head of Parks & Sport updated the Sub-Committee on the progress of the Waite Street development and indicated that the Council would not take possession until it was satisfied that the pitch had been properly completed. He also outlined management of the former Flaxyards site.
- 4.4 The Head of Parks & Sport also updated the Sub-Committee as to the result of the re-organisation of the Parks Rangers service. Postal surveys of park users highlighted areas of dissatisfaction with the service and were used as a basis for the work programmes of rangers. It was hoped that the good practice employed by the new community wardens would inform the future service of parks rangers. He confirmed that the priority in the job was more firmly placed on enforcement – as opposed to education or ecology - and that out-reach was seen as a separate function to be carried out by another team.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Head of Parks & Sport circulate briefings to Members in respect of the Waite Street development and management of the former Flaxyards site; and
 2. That Members raise with the Chair any concerns in respect of provision of facilities for under 11s and that these be taken up by the Sub-Committee at a future meeting.

5. EDUCATION CONTRACT

5.1 The Chief Executive updated the Sub-Committee on decisions taken by the Executive in respect of the award of the contract for education interim strategic management. The contract had been awarded to Cambridge Education Associates (CEA) on 21 July 2003, subject to agreement of terms and conditions and to the satisfactory termination of the contract with WS Atkins. The Chief Executive outlined the experience of CEA at Islington and confirmed that a draft direction had been received from the Secretary of State requiring the Council to enter into the contract. He confirmed that, apart from internal management costs, all costs would be met by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

5.2 The Chief Executive also reported that the contract for the longer-term review of education services had been awarded to the Office for Public Management (OPM). OPM hoped to interview a number of people before the Summer holiday period.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That a representative from OPM be invited to brief the meeting of the Sub-Committee on 3 September 2003; and
 2. That following the briefing, the Sub-Committee consider what role it wishes to take in the review and at what point it would be useful to receive a further briefing from the OPM on their initial findings.

6. WORK PROGRAMME 2003/2004 (see pages 88 – 93)

6.1 The Sub-Committee considered its work programme for the coming Municipal Year and agreed to review it at each meeting, together with the Council's Forward Plan. It noted that Tim Brighouse, Commissioner for London Schools, had agreed to attend the Sub-Committee's next meeting in order to provide a briefing on London Challenge.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That representatives of the Head Teachers' Council Executive and Southwark Governors' Association be invited to attend the meeting of the Sub-Committee on 3 September 2003 to receive the briefing on London Challenge;
 2. That the Strategic Director of Education & Culture brief the Sub-Committee on 3 September as to the timetable for agreement of the Education Budget in order for the Sub-Committee to determine when it could make an input;
 3. That the Sub-Committee consider the School Organisation Plan on 3 September and that Officers be asked to provide a short summary in addition to the full Plan;
 4. That the Strategic Director of Education & Culture brief a future meeting of the Sub-Committee as to this year's school admissions, as a starting point for scrutiny;

5. That the draft project brief for a scrutiny of School Exclusions be agreed, together with the following:
 - an independent witness to be invited to the Sub-Committee's meeting on 8 October 2003 to provide an initial briefing on Exclusions;
 - that Officers provide a school by school breakdown of the number of exclusions;
 - that Officers provide details of schools identified as having high and low numbers of exclusions, giving details of any particular circumstances or strategies;
 - that Officers provide case-study examples of exclusions;
 - that all Members be invited to suggest appropriate stakeholders or other parties to be invited to provide comments to the Sub-Committee;
 - that Members visit Willowbank Pupil Referral Unit as part of the scrutiny project brief;
6. That Officers confirm dates in October for members of the Sub-Committee to undertake an exercise in interrogating performance data, as a pre-cursor to scrutiny of Performance Reports at the Sub-Committee's meeting in November; and
7. That members of the Sub-Committee attend an appropriate meeting of Southwark's Youth Council prior to commencing the scrutiny of Youth Services and Connexions.

The meeting finished at 8.55 pm.

CHAIR:

DATE: