

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

THURSDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2012

PRESENT: Mr I Garforth in the Chair
Ms T Hagerty - Roman Catholic Church
Diocese
Mr D Kenny - Schools Group

IN ATTENDANCE Mr P Brennan - Children's Services
Ms L Savage - Children's Services
Mrs A Oldroyd – Legal Services – Legal
Adviser to the Board
Mr S Robinson – Governance Services –
Clerk to the Board

1 Election of Chair/Vice Chair

Mr I Garforth was elected as Chair.

2 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited those present to introduce themselves.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Reverend C Sedgewick, Diocesan Board of Education for the Diocese of the Church of England and Ms J Taylor, Further/Higher Education Establishment Group.

4 Declaration of Interests

Mr I Garforth informed the meeting that he was a trustee of the South Leeds Academy Trust and a Director of the Sponsor of Cross Flats Academy. Under the terms of reference these were not interests that would require him to withdraw from the discussion and take no part in the making of any recommendations.

5 School Organisation Advisory Board (Leeds) - Terms of Reference

A copy of the terms of reference for the School Organisation Advisory Board (Leeds) was submitted.

Mrs A Oldroyd, Legal Adviser to the Board informed the meeting that the terms of reference had been slightly amended to incorporate the following revisions:-

- to remove as a member the Learning and Skills Council;
- to amend paragraph 3.4 which deals with declarations of interest; and
- to alter the quorum for meetings increasing it from 1 group to 2 groups

Mr I Garforth made reference to the use of the term “governor” contained within the terms of reference and the Legal Adviser to the Board agreed to revisit this issue.

RESOLVED – That the amended terms of reference for the School Organisation Advisory Board (Leeds) be noted and approved.

6 Report on School competition process for new schools in Harehills and South Leeds

The Board considered a report by the Legal Adviser to the School Organisation Advisory Board explaining the role of the Board in considering the school competition bids and to make recommendations to the Executive Board to assist the Executive Board in reaching a decision in relation to the following new school proposals:

Public consultation took place in September and October 2011 on the need for new primary schools at Florence Street in Harehills and the site of the former South Leeds Sports Centre. The Executive Board agreed to proceed with competitions for new schools in January 2012. This entailed publishing two statutory notices, one inviting interested parties to submit bids to run the schools, and the second publishing details of the bids and inviting comments. The second notice expired on 20 August 2012.

The invitation to bid notices resulted in six academy bids for Harehills and four academy bids for South Leeds.

The bids for Harehills were Academies Enterprise Trust, The Co-operative Trust, Lilac Sky Schools, LEAF Academy Trust, Leeds Muslim College and Rainbow Schools.

The bids for South Leeds were Academies Enterprise Trusts, Lilac Sky Schools, Rainbow Schools and the Learning Trust South Leeds.

Prior to discussing the proposals, the Board noted that the Lilac Sky Schools bid for both Harehills and South Leeds had been withdrawn.

The Board considered the following background information:-

- Copies of the invitation to bid, bids received, and responses received
- Report from Children’s Services in relation to recommendation on the preferred bidder in competitions for new primary schools

In addition to the above, the Board received representations from the following representatives who responded to Board Members' questions and comments:

Mr P Brennan – Deputy Director of Children's Services (Learning, Skills and Universal Services) and Ms L Savage – Senior Planning and Bids Manager, Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Team, Children's Services

Board Members discussed the report from Children's Services and, in summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- Clarification if the DfE had been asked to exclude any bidders and on the validation process
- Clarification if another site had been identified in South Leeds
- Concern that the Harehills site would not be ready and the issues around car parking and access
- Clarification of how Children's Services viewed the role of Academies
- The need to commend the Learning Trust South Leeds's bid to build on their 0-19 offering in the area and to welcome their strong vision in this respect
- The need to use existing practices within the School Improvement capacity
- The need to acknowledge that the Co-operative had strong values with links to the Trinity University College which would result in a closer relationship
- Clarification of the aims of a Foundation School
- Clarification of the value of a Trust and concerns expressed about their future aspirations
- The personal view expressed by the Roman Catholic Church Diocese that you cannot operate a multi faith system in view of the many elements and that such a system needed competition
- Clarification of how Children's Services perceived 0-19 provision

Following a summing up process from the representatives in attendance, the Chair thanked the representatives and asked them to withdraw so that the Board could consider the new school proposals.

The Legal Adviser to the Schools Organisation Advisory Board outlined the procedure to be followed and reminded the Board Members that they were invited to comment on the proposals, with any observations on the bids which they felt they could recommend, and any they felt they could not recommend.

The Chair proposed that in reviewing the bids Board Members should consider whether:

- the organisation has the ability to deliver outstanding education; and
- the ability to understand and respond effectively to the local context

The groups entitled to make recommendations, were the Roman Catholic Church Diocese and the Schools Group. Each group considered the bids and made the following comments:

South Leeds bids

Rainbow Schools

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – there was no knowledge of the application of education in the local area and it was considered that there was no experience

The Schools Group – also considered that there was a lack of experience

Both Groups decided that they could not recommend this bid

Academies Enterprise Trust

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – there was no knowledge of the application of education in the local area and it was considered that there was no experience

The Schools Group – there was a potential to deliver, but also considered that there was a lack of experience in key areas

Both Groups decided that they could not recommend this bid

Learning Trust South Leeds

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – the proposals to build on their 0-19 offering was to be highly commended and the bid was responsive to the local circumstances

The Schools Group – the proposals were extremely competent and responsive to the local circumstances and had the ability to provide high quality education

Both Groups decided that they could recommend this bid

Harehills bids

Academies Enterprise Trust

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – there was no knowledge of the application of education in the local area and it was considered that there was no experience

The Schools Group – also considered that there was a lack of experience

Both Groups decided that they could not recommend this bid

The Co-operative Trust

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – there was the capacity to deliver outstanding education in this area and that the trust had a national reputation for excellence in primary education

The Schools Group – also considered that the trust had a national reputation for excellence in primary education and the ability to deliver outstanding education in this area

Both Groups decided that they could recommend this bid

LEAF Academy Trust

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – had significant concerns with a bid for a multifaith academy and considered that this was unworkable. It was acknowledged that there was a place for secular or faith education, but considered that multifaith was unclear and unworkable

The Schools Group – considered that there was a lack of experience within the local context. It was recognised that LEAF were operating in the general area, but unlike The Co-operative Trust, LEAF were not working in Harehills through what was Primrose High School

Both Groups decided that they could not recommend this bid

Leeds Muslim College

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – there was a lack of experience in the ability to deliver outstanding education

The Schools Group – also considered there was a lack of experience in the ability to deliver outstanding education

Both Groups decided that they could not recommend this bid

Rainbow Schools

The Roman Catholic Church Diocese – there was no knowledge of the application of education in the local area and it was considered that there was no experience

The Schools Group – also considered that there was a lack of experience

Both Groups decided that they could not recommend this bid

RESOLVED – It was the view of the Schools Organisation Advisory Board that the Executive Board be recommended to consider the following preferred bids:-

- South Leeds – The Learning Trust South Leeds
- Harehills – The Co-operative Trust

7 Future Business

The Legal Adviser to the Board reminded the meeting that the term of office for Members of the Board was a maximum of three years.

The current position as at 13th September 2012 was as follows:-

- Reverend C Sedgewick – three year's term of office to expire on 9th October 2012
- Mr I Garforth - three year's term of office to expire on 9th October 2012
- Ms T Haggerty - three year's term of office to expire on 9th October 2012
- Mr D Kenny - three year's term of office to expire on 9th October 2012
- Ms J Taylor - three year's term of office to expire on 1st July 2013

It was also noted that there remained a current vacancy on the Schools Group.

The Legal Adviser to the Board informed Members that the next time there was a need to convene a Schools Organisation Advisory Board meeting there was a requirement for Members to be nominated by their respective groups and then re elected.

RESOLVED – That the current position be noted.

8 Date and Time of Next Meeting

To be arranged as and when required.

(The meeting concluded at 2.45pm)