

## **NORTH EAST (OUTER) AREA COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY, 27TH OCTOBER, 2008**

**PRESENT:** Councillor G Wilkinson in the Chair

Councillors A Lamb, J Procter, P Harrand,  
A Castle and A Shelbrooke

**OFFICERS:** Rory Bark, East/North East Area Manager  
Carole Clark, Area Management Officer  
Mike Earle, Democratic Services  
Jackie Green, Education Leeds  
Bob Stott, Education Leeds  
Shaid Mahmood, Children's Services  
Cristina George, Learning and Skills Council  
Margaret Ambler, Probation Service

### **32 Apologies**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R D Feldman, Mrs R Feldman and R Procter.

### **33 Declaration of Interests**

The following declarations of interest were made:-

Councillor Harrand – Agenda Item 13 (Minute No 41 refers) – Wellbeing Budger 2008/09 – Update – declared a personal and prejudicial interest in his capacity as a Trustee of Open House and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Lamb – Agenda Item 9 (Minute No 37 refers) – The National Challenge and Structural Change to Secondary Education in Leeds – personal interest in his capacity as a Governor of Wetherby High School.

### **34 Open Forum**

The Chair made reference to the provision contained in the Area Committee Procedure Rules for an Open Forum session of up to 10 minutes at each ordinary meeting of an Area Committee, to allow Members of the public to make representations or to ask questions on matters within the remit of the Area Committee.

Mr Alan Patrick, Alwoodley Community Association, was present and raised two issues:-

- (a) Proposal for a new GP-led Health Centre in Leeds (Agenda Item 11) Further to Minute No 8, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2008, and Minute No 23, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Mr Patrick made reference to the proposals for a GP-

led Health Centre in the Burmantofts area of Leeds. Mr Patrick felt that the Lingfield Clinic site, Alwoodley, would be ideal for such a proposal.

It was agreed to defer discussion until that item was reached on the agenda, when the Committee was due to be addressed by Dr Damien Riley, Director of Primary Care, Leeds Primary Care Trust.

- (b) Probation Service Community Payback Scheme (Agenda Item 12)  
Mr Patrick endorsed the proposal that the Area Committee should support the use of the Probation Service 'Community Payback Scheme' to carry out community work in the Committee's area. The Alwoodley Community Association had previous experience of utilising this scheme, and would be keen to use them again.

### **35 Minutes - 15th September 2008**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **36 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Wellbeing Fund 2008/09 – Community Planning Officer Post (Minute No 28 refers)

In response to a Member's query, the Area Management Officer reported that this post had been offered to two recent unsuccessful candidates in respect of another earlier advertised vacancy, but had been turned down. It was now the intention to seek interest from staff for a secondment to the post. Failing this, the post would be advertised.

Members expressed dissatisfaction at the present situation. The Committee had found the money to fund this post, and it should have been advertised immediately.

The Area Manager undertook to pursue the matter with the Chief Planning Officer and to inform Members of a proposed timetable for filling the post.

### **37 The National Challenge and Structural Change to Secondary Education Provision in Leeds**

Following a report to the Council's Executive Board on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008, the Chief Executive, Education Leeds, submitted a report regarding options for restructuring secondary education provision in East and North East Leeds, which potentially had implications for both Wetherby and Boston Spa High Schools. The Executive Board had agreed that a formal review should take place, involving consultation with all stakeholders, and that an options paper should be submitted to the Board in December 2008.

Jackie Green and Bob Stott, Education Leeds, introduced the report and responded to Members' queries and comments. In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- Members requested that they be supplied with further detailed information/ graphs regarding where pupils lived and which schools they attended, and a copy of the consultation programme and timetable
- The consultation which would be taking place throughout November, and also in West and North West Leeds, regarding proposals in those areas of the City, with headteachers, Governing Bodies, Ward Members and others, to elicit as wide a range of views as possible within the time allowed
- The Area Manager reported that the East Inner Area Committee at its meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October had broadly welcomed the review. It felt that the fact that 26 double decker buses of children passed through its area every schoolday transporting pupils to schools outside the area, such as Wetherby and Boston Spa, was ludicrous, and it wished to see excellent local schools attracting pupils from its local area. The potential for a new school or academy in East Leeds was also recognised as assisting the much needed regeneration of the area
- It was stated that this was the aim of Education Leeds – to provide high quality local schools with excellent academic records. There had been good improvements in other schools in East Leeds, such as John Smeaton and Agnes Stewart, which had led to increased demand from parents/pupils. Parental preference was acknowledged as a vital factor to be taken in to account when planning any possible changes in provision. However, the Education Authority had to take a broad view, and plan for the City as a whole, to meet challenges such as the Government's 'National Challenge' performance targets, the 'Building Schools for the Future' initiative, new funding arrangements and local authority responsibilities under the national 14-19 Strategy and the wider role of schools in the context of the Children's Services provision. There had been great strides made in integrating and co-ordinating Children's Services, but the task of trying to meet the needs of children and their families was severely hampered by the current situation of pupils travelling sometimes considerable distances to school, and often unable to take advantage of the extended services offered by that school because they spent 80% of their time, out of school hours, in another part of the City with different peers
- Members expressed serious concerns at the possible effect of the outcome of the review on Wetherby and Boston Spa High Schools. The reason they were so popular was that both were excellent schools which had excellent academic records, and it made little sense to de-stabilise this by coming up with proposals for new schools. This was likely to reduce pupil numbers at these popular and successful schools, with subsequent financial effects, and might call into question their very survival, which in turn could lead to pupils in this area having to travel to other schools. An option which could possibly come out of the review might be the merging of these two schools, and any such possible option would have to be carefully considered. However, the Council and Education Leeds needed to be clear in their objectives, and the potential

benefits and pitfalls of any proposed options, to avoid allegations of social engineering or political influence.

**RESOLVED** – That subject to the above comments, the current review of secondary education in East and North East Leeds be noted and a further report be brought to the Committee when the matter has been reconsidered by the Executive Board.

### **38 Leeds Colleges Merger - Consultation**

The Committee received a presentation from Cristina George, Learning and Skills Council, regarding agreed proposals to merge three existing Leeds colleges – Thomas Danby, Park Lane and the College of Technology – into one Leeds College from 2009.

In brief summary, the following issues were discussed ;-

- The proposals were being carefully planned with the revised 14-19 Strategy responsibilities and funding arrangements in mind, to give young people, and adult learners, the widest range of learning routes to suit their individual needs; some young people would prefer to stay on at school, and for others, college was the preferred option. The biggest noticeable change was likely to involve the increase in young people going into apprenticeships, following on from the Government's initiative in this area. In order to have an apprenticeship you had to have a job, and the recent economic downturn might have an impact on numbers, but the College would be working closely with employers to provide the training they required
- When looking at reorganising and rationalising the College estate, people's ability and willingness to travel to courses would be a factor.

The Learning and Skills Council and the College were working in partnership with METRO, Education Leeds and the Council's Development Department in order to try to take account of as many factors as possible when implementing the merger, including Education Leeds strategy and the Council's regeneration plans for Leeds and any joint funding opportunities.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted

### **39 Proposals for a new GP-led Health Centre in Leeds**

In the absence of a representative from the Leeds Primary Care Trust, it was agreed to defer this item to the meeting to be held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

### **40 Probation Service ' Community Payback Teams '**

The East/North East Area Manager submitted a report outlining a 'Community Payback Scheme' operated by the Probation Service, utilising offenders under supervision to carry out prescribed community work in an area, and Margaret

Ambler of the Probation Service attended the meeting and responded to Members' queries and comments.

**RESOLVED** – That the Committee agrees in principle to participate in the scheme, and the matter be referred for discussion at Ward Member meetings with a view to a report being brought back to a future Area Committee meeting.

#### **41 Wellbeing Fund 2008/09 - Update**

The East/North East Area Manager submitted a situation report regarding the Committee's Wellbeing Fund 2008/09, including details of projects in development, applications from the Environment Fund and grant applications before the Committee this evening for determination. The Area Manager also urged the Committee to consider bringing forward proposals for utilising the Committee's current capital balances.

**RESOLVED** –

- (a) That the Area Manager's report be noted, including details of the bulb applications from the Environment Fund and projects in development;
- (b) That the release of £3,000 revenue funding for the security improvements at Highfield Primary School be approved;
- (c) That the delegated decision of the Chief Regeneration Officer to grant £5,000 revenue funding to Open House be noted.

#### **42 Town and Parish Forum - Feedback Report**

The East/North East Area Manager submitted a report outlining the issues discussed at the meeting of the Town and Parish Council Forum held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

In response to comments made by Parish Council representatives about the standards of grass-cutting in their area, and whether they could assume responsibility for this themselves, it had previously been made clear to them that the City Council would not fund Parish Councils to carry out this work themselves, but if they wished to fund it themselves, or use local volunteers, then this was something which could be negotiated. Some Parish Councils, such as Bramham, had entered the 'Britain in Bloom' competition in order to avail themselves of possible funding options, to enable them to assume responsibility for, amongst other things, grass cutting in the village, and this was something which other villages might wish to consider. The Area Manager also reported that it had been suggested to them that a number of Parish Councils possibly form a consortium, to be able to carry out grass cutting in their areas.

**RESOLVED** – That subject to the above comments, the notes of the Town and Country Parish Council Forum meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008 be received and noted.

#### **43 Leeds Involvement Project - Consultation on Possible Restructuring**

**RESOLVED** – That an item be included on the agenda for the next meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

**44 Dates, Times and Venues of Future Meetings**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008, 5.30 pm, Civic Hall

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009, 5.30 pm, Leeds Town Hall

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009, 6.00 pm, venue to be advised.

The meeting concluded at 6.49 pm