

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

THURSDAY, 1ST JULY, 2010

PRESENT: Mr Ian Garforth in the Chair
Ms Trina Hagerty and Mr Clive Sedgewick

7 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance

8 Election of Vice Chair

The Clerk to the Board sought nominations for the position of Vice Chair to the School Organisation Advisory Board

Reverend C Sedgewick nominated Mrs T Hagerty, the Chair seconded the proposal

RESOLVED – That Mrs T Hagerty be elected Vice Chair of the School Organisation Advisory Board for a one year period

9 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received for Mr D Kenny and Mr J Sutton

10 Declarations of Interest

Mr C Sedgewick declared a personnel interest in the proposals to close Parklands Girls High School, the Diocese of the Church of England having put forward a bid to establish an Academy on the Parklands site

11 Outcome of Statutory Notices for Changes to School Organisation

The Board considered a report by the Legal Adviser to the Board explaining the role of the Board in considering objections to the following proposals and to make recommendations to the Executive Board in reaching a decision in relation to the following proposals:

Statutory proposals to seek the closure of City of Leeds High School, the Closure of Parklands Girls High School, the Closure of Primrose High School and Changes to Primary Provision in Horsforth

Changes Provision in Horsforth

The Board were advised that in January 2010 the Executive Board approved a formal consultation on proposals for changes to Featherbank Infant School and Newlaithes Junior School in Horsforth. Statutory Notices were published to decrease the lower age range of Newlaithes Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11, with an admission limit of 60 and with an overall capacity of 420 children and increase the age range of Featherbank Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 and decrease the admissions number from 60 to 30, with an overall capacity

of 210 children. These proposals were formally linked.

There was one response to the statutory notices, which opposed the change.

Officers reported that the objections received raised no new significant issues

Members discussed the proposal, concentrating on the following issues:

- Use of site availability
- Concern over transition arrangements
- Risk of negative disruption to education
- A desire for further consultation on the Early years Service in the Horsforth area
- Concern over funding of a new key stage

The Board noted the objections and expressed sympathy to the concerns raised

Closure of Primrose High School

The Board were advised that in October 2009 the Executive Board approved a formal consultation on the proposed closure of Primrose High School on 31st August 2011 to be replaced by an Academy sponsored by the Co-operative Society.

There were nine responses to the statutory notice, which opposed the change.

Officers reported that the objections received raised no new significant issues

Members discussed the proposal, concentrating on the following issues:

- The ability of the sponsor(s) to deliver Secondary Education provision at Primrose
- Insufficient clarity about the links with City of Leeds College
- Early years provision

The Board noted the objections

Closure of Parklands Girls High School

The Board were advised that in October 2009 the Executive Board approved a formal consultation on the proposed closure of Parklands Girls High School on 31st August 2011 to be replaced by an Academy sponsored by the Edutrust Academies Charitable Trust (EACT). A parallel consultation was conducted on the provision of single sex girl's education.

There were seven responses to the statutory notice, which opposed the change.

Officers reported that the objections received raised no new significant issues

Members discussed the proposal, concentrating on the following issues:

- Budgetary implications for the Academy
- The ability of the proposed sponsor to deliver school improvement
- Concern about administration costs for the Academy
- The move away from single sex schools
- The location for the provision of an additional High School to serve the east Leeds community

The Board noted the objections and expressed sympathy to the concerns raised

Closure of City of Leeds High School

The Board were advised that in October 2009 the Executive Board approved a formal consultation on the proposed closure of City of Leeds High School on 31st August 2011.

There were one hundred and seventy five responses to the statutory notice, which opposed the change.

Members discussed the proposal, concentrating on the following issues:

- The viability of the school
- The location of the school was in an area compounded by challenges
- The desirability of maintaining secondary school provision in the City Centre
- A desire for availability of high quality secondary provision for that community
- Acknowledged the commitment of the staff
- To further look at the demographics of the area

The Board noted the objections and expressed sympathy to the concerns raised

Additional comments - Overall Members considered that that proposals lacked a cohesive approach to the needs of the inter-related communities involved and had now been overtaken by the new opportunities for school improvement, in conjunction with the local authority, provided by the change in central government.

In particular, Members were concerned that the location of Parklands Academy was not on the correct site for a new, large school to serve the communities of inner East Leeds.

The Board therefore recommended that an urgent review of all the three secondary proposals should take place with a view to establishing integrated,

viable, high quality educational provision for the communities involved at the centre of those communities, as is inherent in the Leeds Schools Admissions Policy

RESOLVED – It was the view of the School Organisation Advisory Board that the Executive Board be recommended to:

- (i) Support the proposed changes to Primary provision in the Horsforth area
- (ii) Support the proposals to close Primrose High School and replace with an Academy
- (iii) Support the proposal to close Parklands Girls High School and replace with an Academy
- (iv) Support the proposal to close City of Leeds High School

12 Future Business

There were no issues raised under future business

13 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Arrangements for a future meeting of the Schools Organisation Advisory Board to be notified to Members in due course