

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

WEDNESDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor A Lamb in the Chair

Councillors H Bithell, K Brooks, K Bruce,
D Cohen, M Harland, J Illingworth,
W Kidger, J Lennox, A Smart and
R. Stephenson

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)
Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)
Mrs K Blacker – Parent Governor Representative (Primary)
Ms J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative
Mrs A Kearsley – Early Years Representative
Ms D Reilly – Looked After Children and Care Leavers

At the commencement of the meeting Councillor Pryor asked if the Chair was satisfied that the meeting could go ahead in line with the Council's Constitution; the Chair confirmed that he was satisfied.

37 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

38 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

39 Late Items

There were no formal late items, however there were two additional pieces of information circulated during the meeting at the Board's request (minute 43 refers):

- A map of catchment areas for schools in the Roundhay / Wigton Planning Area
- A map of the Roundhay ward, including the area of struggle and the four sites previously consulted on for the Roundhay free school

40 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting.

However, Co-opted Member Jackie Ward wished it to be noted that she was a Member of the School Organisation Advisory Board (SOAB) and was at the meeting that took place on 15th August 2018, but stated that she would approach the call-in meeting with an open mind. Additionally, Co-opted Member Kate Blacker wished it to be noted that she lived in Roundhay and her child attended another school within the area, but that she also approached the meeting with an open mind.

41 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Drinkwater, C Gruen and Renshaw, along with notification that Councillors Brooks, Harland and Smart would be attending the meeting as substitutes. Apologies were also received from Co-opted Members Claire Hopkins, Helen Bellamy and Viv Bryden.

42 Call In Briefing Paper

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report in relation to the procedural aspects of the call in process.

Members were advised that the options available to the Scrutiny Board in respect of this particular called in decision were as follows:

Option 1- Release the decision for implementation

Having reviewed this decision, the Scrutiny Board may decide to release it for implementation. If the Scrutiny Board chooses this option, the decision will be immediately released for implementation and the decision may not be Called In again.

Option 2 - Recommend that the decision be reconsidered

The Scrutiny Board may decide to recommend to the decision maker that the decision be reconsidered. If the Scrutiny Board chooses this option a report will be submitted to the decision maker.

In the case of an Executive Board decision, the report of the Scrutiny Board will be prepared within three working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting and submitted to the Executive Board. Any report of the Scrutiny Board will be referred to the next Executive Board meeting for consideration.

In reconsidering the decision and associated Scrutiny Board report, the Executive Board may vary the decision or confirm its original decision. In either case, this will form the basis of the final decision and will not be subject to any further call-in.

Failure to agree one of the above options

If the Scrutiny Board, for any reason, does not agree one of the above courses of action at this meeting, then Option 1 will be adopted by default, i.e. the decision will be released for implementation with no further recourse to Call In.

RESOLVED – That the report outlining the Call In procedures be noted.

43 Proposal to increase primary places at Moor Allerton Hall Primary School

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report that presented background papers to an Executive Board decision which had been called in in accordance with the Council's Constitution. This related to a proposal to increase primary places at Moor Allerton Hall Primary School.

The decision had been called in for review by Councillors D Cohen, N Harrington, R Stephenson, D Collins, B Anderson, W Kidger and J Bentley.

The Scrutiny Board considered the following written information:

- Completed call-in request form
- Executive Board report 'Outcome of Statutory Notice on a proposal to increase primary places at Moor Allerton Hall Primary School' submitted to the meeting held 19th September 2018
- Minutes of the SOAB meeting held 15th August 2018
- The Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening report submitted to Executive Board 19th September 2018
- Draft Minutes of the Executive Board meeting held 19th September 2018

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Tim Pouncey, Chief Officer, Resources and Strategy
- Anne Fell, Joint Interim Head of Learning Improvement, Children and Families
- Jane Walne, Head of Programmes and Projects, City Development
- Richard Amos, Sufficiency and Participation Lead, Children and Families
- Lesley McKay, Head Teacher of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School
- Reuben Moore, Chair of Governors at Moor Allerton Hall Primary School

As the Nominated Lead Signatory to the Call In, Councillor Cohen addressed the Board and highlighted a number of issues to be considered when making

the decision. Councillor Cohen recognised that Moor Allerton Hall Primary School were working hard to tackle some of the issues raised by Ofsted in their most recent inspection, which had led to an overall judgement of 'Requires Improvement' for the school. However, Councillor Cohen raised concerns about the potential impact of the proposed expansion plan on the schools improvement journey. Councillor Cohen informed the Board of a number of schools in Leeds that had previously expanded year groups, and had subsequently received a judgement of 'Requires Improvement' from Ofsted. Additionally, Councillor Cohen raised concerns in line with those expressed by the SOAB during their August meeting.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions / provide comment to Councillor Cohen at this stage. Discussions included:

- The Board acknowledged that whilst Councillor Cohen had referenced other schools that had been expanded and subsequently received a 'Requires Improvement' judgement from Ofsted, it would be difficult to attribute the expansion of such schools as being the main causal factor. Co-opted Member Kate Blacker informed the Board that she was a governor at one of the schools in question and that in the case of that particular school, their 'requires improvement' Ofsted judgement was due to a number of other issues aside from the expansion of the school.
- A request was made for a map of the catchment areas for the schools in the 'area of struggle'. This information was provided to the Board during the meeting. The Board commented that the Executive Board were not provided with the maps requested to consider during their discussions of the proposal.

Councillor Pryor addressed the Board and provided Members with more detail around the response from local parents and stakeholders through the consultation process. Members heard that the majority of respondents to the consultation were in support of the expansion, and that the objections received amount to 1.5% of the responses. Councillor Pryor also informed the Board of the plans to consult on changes to catchment areas for the schools in the 'area of struggle', to help provide sufficient capacity and ensure more choice for parents. Councillor Pryor also summarised the reasons that expansions of other local schools and previous sites for a potential free school in the area were deemed not suitable, and that Moor Allerton Hall Primary School was considered to be the best option moving forward.

The Head Teacher and Chair of Governors at Moor Allerton Hall Primary School also briefly addressed the Board, informing Members of the significant efforts that have been made to improve the reputation of the school, but also highlighted the impact that the call-in process and subsequent media attention was having on the reputation of the school, creating further challenge for staff. However, they also informed the Board of some of the improvements made following the Ofsted judgement and reported that their progress scores were now in line with the national average.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions / provide comment to Councillor Pryor, Moor Allerton Hall Primary School representatives, and relevant officers at this stage. Discussions included:

- A request was made for an additional map to be provided to Members, presenting the four sites pursued during the Roundhay Free School Consultation, in relation to the 'area of struggle' in the Roundhay ward. This information was distributed to Members during the meeting. Members heard that the Education and Schools Funding Agency (ESFA) had several discussions with various officers and Councillors within the local authority and their assessments of the potential sites and the options available were that there was not a suitable site that was deliverable for the scheme to go forward, and the Trust, as a result of that, decided to withdraw their application for a free school in January 2018. The Board also heard that City Development were confident that all other options for increasing school places in the area had been explored.
- Upon request of more detail around Ofsted's judgement of the school, the Board was informed that the school had undergone a period of turbulence in leadership prior to the Ofsted inspection, which was reflected in the inspection report as significant to the 'Requires Improvement' judgement. The Board heard that the School Improvement team were working closely with the school to address the issues raised by Ofsted, and were confident that the school would achieve a 'good' judgement following the next inspection.
- Members queried the walking distance from the 'area of struggle' to Moor Allerton Hall Primary School, and were informed that the distance varied between 1.2 and 1.6 miles, therefore meeting the statutory requirement.
- Members queried whether any funds would be required, additional to the £4.2m figure stated in the report. Members were informed that the Growth Fund would be used to fund the school during the period that the Dedicated Schools Grant calculations did not reflect the influx of pupils, as calculations in the first few years of expansion will be based on previous Census data. It was also confirmed that the £4.2m funding for expansion noted in the report was in the pre-feasibility stage, and would be subject to a separate Executive Board decision.
- Members were informed that the school had already been managing bulge cohorts resulting in temporary three form entry in Reception and Year One, and had commenced this temporary expansion at short notice. The Head Teacher commented at this stage that they had already begun the process of expansion, but that a more permanent solution was required to ensure that the school received the correct infrastructure, support and resource.
- Co-opted Member Jackie Ward, who was also a Member of the SOAB, wished for it to be noted that many of the questions raised at the SOAB meeting in August 2018 could not be answered at that time as it was felt that the information provided lacked sufficient detail and that relevant officers and representatives from the school leadership team

were also not present at that meeting to help address the questions raised.

- The Board asked for future reports provided by the Children and Families Directorate to the SOAB to include detailed information, along with maps of the relevant areas, if appropriate.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and the information presented during the meeting be noted.
- b) That future reports provided by the Children and Families Directorate to the School Organisation Advisory Board (SOAB) include detailed information along with maps of the relevant areas, if appropriate.

44 Outcome of Call In

The Scrutiny Board considered whether or not to release the decision for implementation. A vote was subsequently held and the Scrutiny Board agreed (by majority decision) that the decision be released.

RESOLVED – That the decision be released for implementation.

45 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next Children and Families Scrutiny Board meeting will be held Wednesday, 24th October 2018 at 10.00 am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.45 am)

The meeting concluded at 12:25pm.