

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance)

Executive Board

Date: 17 October 2007

Subject: Arrangements post the abolition of the Leeds School Organisation Committee

Electoral Wards Affected:

ALL

☐

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

☐

Community Cohesion

☐

Narrowing the Gap

☐

Eligible for Call In

☒

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

☐

Executive Summary

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To inform members about the abolition of the Leeds School Organisation Committee (SOC) on 25 May 2007 and to agree how the Council should decide on proposals formerly dealt with by the SOC.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The SOC was an independent statutory body established by The School Standards and Framework Act 1998. It took decisions on statutory proposals where objections had been received from any person following the publication of statutory notices namely notices:
- Closing schools
 - Opening new schools
 - Making prescribed alterations to schools
- 2.2 Section 29 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 abolished SOC's from 25 May 2007. Responsibility for decision making in relation to school organisation proposals now passes to Local Authorities (LAs) and to the Schools Adjudicator as set out in the attached table at Appendix A.

- 2.3 Consideration needs to be given to how proposals will be dealt with post abolition of the SOC. The main issue for consideration is how the Authority should in future deal with proposals to which there are objections as the Executive Board would continue to deal with all other proposals.
- 2.4 To assist in the decision making process an Advisory Board of educational representatives could be set up to make recommendations to the Executive Board on school organisation proposals. Suggested draft standing orders for an Advisory Board are set out in Appendix B.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 The Executive Board will continue to deal, as at present, with:
- 3.1.1 Decisions on whether to go out to consultation on school organisation proposals.
 - 3.1.2 Once consultation has taken place deciding whether to publish statutory proposals.
 - 3.1.3 Deciding school organisation proposals in relation to those matters set out in Appendix A where there are no objections.
- 3.2 Where there are objections the realistic options are:
- 3.2.1
 - a) Executive Board to make the decision or
 - b) Executive Board to make the decision following recommendation of an Advisory Board or
 - c) An officer to whom the authority has been delegated to make the decision or
 - d) An officer to whom authority has been delegated to make the decision following recommendation of an Advisory Board

4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to approve

- 4.1 That the Executive Board makes decisions on all statutory proposals where they have the responsibility to do so as set out in appendix A.
- 4.2 Where there are objections to proposals that these are first referred to an Advisory Board for a recommendation to be made to the Executive Board.

- 4.3 That an Advisory Board be set up to advise the Authority on proposals.
- 4.4 That the draft Standing Orders at Appendix B be adopted as the Standing Orders for the Advisory Board.

