

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

COMMITTEE OF THE CABINET MEETING

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At a meeting of the **Committee of the Cabinet** held on **Wednesday 7 September 2005** at 5pm at City Hall, Victoria Street, SW1.

Present: Councillors Brian Connell (Chairman), Simon Milton and Sarah Richardson.

1. INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIRMAN

1.1 The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 The Chairman declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 3 on the agenda, as he was a trustee of the holding company for Paddington Academy.

3. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE – CONSULTATION ON EDUCATION VISION AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS (see report of the Chief Executive – agenda item 3)

3.1 The Chief Executive introduced the report which outlined consultation arrangements for the draft Education Vision; management arrangements for the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme; and financial implications associated with the project. It was noted that the Government requirement for local authorities to form Local Education Partnerships remained an outstanding issue for Westminster, although it was hoped that an alternative arrangement involving the City Partnership would be acceptable to Partnership for Schools (PfS).

3.2 The Committee noted the above and discussed (a) the structure of the strategic board; (b) community use of new school facilities; and (c) links to primary schools.

3.3 Paul Doherty, Interim Director BSF, outlined some of the financial implications associated with the BSF funding arrangements for school governing bodies. It was noted that the governing bodies would be required to sign capital contracts and would be liable for the revenue costs of the programme. This had been made clear to schools through meetings held between headteachers and Council officers.

- 3.4 Peter Rabbett, Lead Consultant (Cocentra), presented version two of the draft education vision. Members made the following suggestions for incorporation into version three:

Summary (page 6)

- Requires clearer language, should be less bureaucratic and written from a parent's perspective
- Second strapline should become first strapline and include the word 'achievement'
- Use of the word 'career' rather than 'employment' would help address poverty of ambition

Overall document

- Use of quotes from pupils, parents, employers would strengthen the vision
- Targets could be strengthened (e.g. 'no child will leave a Westminster secondary school without fulfilling their full potential').

- 3.5 Members discussed the need to increase the percentage of Westminster children educated in the City's state schools, but recognised that the decision to privately educate was often a lifestyle choice made at birth and was consequently difficult to influence. The high percentage of out-of-borough pupils in Westminster schools was also recognised as an issue requiring attention.

- 3.6 It was indicated that eight public consultation events would be taking place to allow stakeholders to input into the vision. In addition to the use of focus groups, the Committee suggested telephone canvassing and noted that a dedicated website would be operational from 9 September 2005.

3.7 **Resolved:**

1. That the draft Education Vision, attached at appendix 4 to the report, be approved for consultation with the education partners, stakeholders, voluntary and community groups and Council departments, as detailed in the report.
2. That the proposed management arrangements for the BSF programme, as set out in the report, be approved, subject to a review of the membership of the strategic board after its second meeting.
3. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Children's Services and Finance & Support Services, be authorised to draw down funds from those earmarked for the BSF Programme at his discretion.

Reasons for Decisions:

The need to consult on the draft Education Vision is self-evident and sits well with the Council's commitment to Civic Renewal, the renewed Education Guarantee and the delivery of its successor programme.

The proposed management structure is likely to be supported by stakeholders.

Delegating budget responsibility to the Project Sponsor is required for the successful management of the project.

4. END OF MEETING

4.1 The meeting ended at 5.51pm.

Chairman

Date