

At a meeting of the SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE OF CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 3) on MONDAY 13 JULY 2009 at 11.30am

Present:-

Councillor P Smith in the Chair

Councillors Trueman, D Wilson and N Wright.

Receipt of Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Watson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the School Organisation Committee of Cabinet held on 8 April 2009 were submitted.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

School Place Planning for the Future – SEN Special Schools Review of Provision

The Executive Director of Children's Services submitted a report which asked the Committee to consider three statutory proposals to make prescribed alterations at Sunningdale School, Portland College and Barbara Priestman School.

It was proposed to change the age range for Sunningdale School from 3-11 to 2-11 years, to change the special needs provision at Portland College from children with severe learning difficulties to children with severe learning difficulties/profound and multiple disabilities and to change the age range at Barbara Priestman School from 3-19 years to 11-19 years and to change the special needs provision from children with physical difficulties and associated learning difficulties to children with an autistic spectrum disorder and/or significant complex learning difficulties.

The statutory notice relating to each school was published on 14 May 2009 with the six week representation period expiring on 25 June 2009. During the representation period for the proposals, no objections were received.

The three proposals were not linked or dependent upon each other and separate determinations could be made by the Committee on each proposal.

The Executive Director of Children's Services reported that the main purpose of the proposed changes were to better reflect the ages and needs of current and future pupils in the City. Members were directed to the further improvements which would result from the changes as outlined in section 3.3 of the report together with the extracts set out in Section 5 of the DCSF Decision Makers Guidance.

The Head of Resources, Children's Services highlighted that no children would be displaced as a result of a change in age profile for Barbara Priestman School.

Having considered all of the information put before them, the Committee were satisfied that the approval of each of the proposals would result in the designations of each school reflecting the current special educational needs cohorts attending and would address future trends.

In addition, in relation to Sunningdale School, it was considered that the extended age range would provide equality of access to education, associated services, specialist staff, and suitable accommodation, comparable to that at Columbia Grange School for children with similar special educational needs. The extended age range would also result in an improved supply of pre-school places.

In relation to Portland College it was considered that the alteration would improve and regularise and the availability of provision for pupils with severe learning difficulties and/or profound and multiple disabilities.

In relation to Barbara Priestman School it was considered that the alterations would improve access for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder and/or significant complex learning difficulties to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment by providing an extension to the continuum of provision currently in place. In addition, pupils would receive improved access to specialist staff and there would be an improved supply of suitable places, including post 16 provision.

Accordingly, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the change in age range at Sunningdale School from 3-11 years to 2-11 years be approved;
- (ii) a change in the special needs provision at Portland College from children with severe learning difficulties to children with severe learning difficulties/profound and multiple disabilities be approved; and

- (iii) a change in the age range at Barbara Priestman School from 3-19 years to 11-19 years and a change in the special needs provision from children with physical difficulties and associated learning difficulties to children with an autistic spectrum disorder and/or significant complex learning difficulties be approved.

(Signed) P SMITH
Chairman