

## **SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2007 at 6.00 p.m.  
in Committee Room 2, at the Council House, Dudley

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillor Nottingham (Chairman)  
Councillors Ahmed, Ms Boleyn, Mrs Coulter, Johnston, Rahman, Rogers, Simms, A. Turner and C. Wilson; Mr Jones, Mr Smith; Mr Hatton; Mr Lynch, Ms Verdegam; Mr Taylor; and Mrs Simms.

### **OFFICERS**

The Director of Finance (as Lead Officer to the Select Committee), the Director of Children's Services, the Assistant Directors of Children's Services (Early Years, Youth and Education Services) and (Resources) the Race Equality Officer (Mr Silvera) Directorate of Children's Services (for agenda item no. 5) and Mr Sanders (Directorate of Law and Property)

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor Mrs Walker (Cabinet Member for Children's Services).

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### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor Mrs Dunn and Ms Partridge.

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### **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillors Rahman and Simms were serving in place of Councillors Ms Partridge and Mrs Pearce, respectively, at this meeting.

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### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made at this juncture.

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### **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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53                      CHILDREN'S SERVICES EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2007/08

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A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted under cover of which the Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2007/08 for the Directorate of Children's Services was set out.

RESOLVED

That the Directorate of Children's Services Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2007/08, as attached to the report now submitted, be received.

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54                      STANDARDS REPORT – PERFORMANCE DATA

(At this juncture, Mr Lynch and Ms Verdegam declared a personal interest in this item in view of their employment as teachers in the Borough).

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted setting out the latest data available on the performance of schools at the Foundation Stage and key stages 1-5 (inclusive).

The respective measures for assessment in relation to the Foundation and Key Stages were explained in the report and Dudley's Performance was compared with those of its statistical and geographical neighbours at each Key stage. Results in relation to the attainment of pupils by ethnic heritage and by looked after children were analysed. Trends over the period from 2004 to 2006 in relation to the key stages were set out. Performance by school at each key stage was indicated in the appendices to the report.

In the discussion, particular reference was made to the disparity of some 12% between the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A\* to C grades and the percentage when those subjects had not included successes in English and Mathematics. In responding, while pointing out that Dudley's performance in terms of pupils achieving 5 or more such grades including English and Mathematics was second out of the six West Midlands Authorities, the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Early Years, Youth and Education Services) confirmed that Heads were striving to improve performance in those subjects.

In relation to the breakdown of results by ethnicity, it was suggested that the white school population might be broken down between different groups in a manner similar to statistical reports on ethnic minority pupils and the Assistant Director of Children's Services agreed to make the necessary arrangements.

RESOLVED

That the report and the information contained therein be received and noted.

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SCHOOL BUDGETS 2007-08

(At this juncture, the following Members declared a Personal Interest, in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of this item in view of their governorships of the schools indicated. Mr Lynch and Ms Verdegam also declared a personal interest in the item in view of their employment as teachers at schools in the Borough:

Councillor Ahmed – The Kingswinford School

Councillor Ms Boleyn – Maidensbridge Primary School

Councillor Mrs Coulter – Netherton C of E School

Councillor Johnston – St. Edmund and St. John C of E Primary School,  
Wrens Nest Primary School and Castle High  
School

Councillor Nottingham – The Crestwood School

Mr Smith – Oldswinford Hospital.)

A report of the Director of Children's Services was submitted setting out the second indicative school budgets for 2007/08.

In introducing the report, the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Resources) explained the implications of falling school rolls on school budget allocations and referred to the significant challenges ahead in addressing not only this issue but also that of joining up the various elements of the Children's Services agenda.

RESOLVED

That the second indicative school budgets for 2007/08, as indicated in the attachments to the report now submitted, be received and noted.

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REVIEW OF CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS ON SCHOOL CLOSURES

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted under cover of which was set out the report of the Working Group on Consultation Arrangements on School Closures.

## RESOLVED

That the report of the Working Group be endorsed and that it be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services for consideration.

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### QUESTION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.8

A question asked by Mr Lynch under Council Procedure Rule 11.8, as set out below, was reported by the Lead Officer to the Committee, to which the reply, also set out below, was given by the Director of Children's Services;

#### Question

- (1) What proportion of schools currently recycle waste paper generated in the course of their work?
- (2) When is it intended to extend the recycling of other materials to schools?
- (3) How does the proportion of waste recycled by schools compare to the proportion of domestic waste currently recycled in the Borough?
- (4) To prevent the heavy economic and environment overheads involved in collecting this waste on separate trips, have more creative solutions such as collecting school recycled materials on the same rounds as domestic materials been investigated?
- (5) Would the Director agree that this is an important educational issue, in addition to an environmental one?

#### Reply

- (1) We do not collect the data of which schools recycle waste paper generated in the course of their work. No more than 30 tonnes of waste paper in total has been collected from schools and Council premises combined in this current financial year.
- (2) The general issue of recycling in schools is a matter for the Directorate of the Urban Environment which handles school waste. Schools do have discretion on their choice of service providers. In addition, there may also be practical reasons as to whether individual schools can actually receive a waste paper collection service.

- (3) It is not known what the proportion of waste recycled by schools is compared to household waste currently recycled in total. Schools and other Council premises combined account for less than 0.01% of the total recycled.
- (4) This is also a matter for the Directorate of the Urban Environment. I am advised however that the collection of materials from schools using the current kerbside collection scheme is impractical. The containers offered to residents are of insufficient size to cater for school waste over a fortnightly period. Equally these containers would have to be placed at the kerbside in the vicinity of the school, which would be impractical and possibly dangerous. There is also an issue of quality with the waste paper material generated at schools, which cannot be mixed with the grades of waste paper collected from residential premises.
- (5) Recycling is an important educational issue and I am sure that it is dealt with in the context of the ordinary school curriculum. The practicalities of recycling are, however, not as simple as they are sometimes thought to be.

58

#### THANKS

This being the last scheduled meeting of the Committee in the current municipal year, the Chairman thanked Members and officers for their hard work over the year and they, in turn, thanked him for his able Chairmanship.

The meeting ended at 7.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN