

AT A MEETING of the EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL  
held at The Castle, Winchester on 5 June 2013

**PRESENT**

Councillors: P Edgar (Chairman), R Burgess (Vice-Chairman), F Cowper, J England, P Fawkes, and C Choudhary

Co-opted: D White, P Clarke, T Blackshaw, D Mewes

The Chairman gave a warm welcome to all Members of the new Education Advisory Panel, in particular to newly elected Councillors. He drew Members attention to the importance of maintaining confidentiality about the discussions that would take place about individual schools.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Chadd, W Lovegrove and J Porter.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

With relation to items on the agenda, Councillor Edgar declared a non-pecuniary interest as a life member of the National Association of Head teachers.

**3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman informed Members that the new Executive Lead Member for Children's Services was Councillor Keith Mans and that he was the Executive Member for Education. He commented that Hampshire County Council had not reduced the role of the Local Authority in Education as some councils, but

rather saw themselves as a business and had grown their services; 58 services were currently sold to schools by Children's Services, bringing in £60 million. He told Members that in order to keep informed about the Academy sector he had attended the Academies Show in London in April and believed that there were some misconceptions about the role of Local Authorities. He explained that the government's policy on introducing academy schools was due to some Local Authorities failing to maintain their Education service adequately and provide support for the schools in their local area. It was noted that the Isle of Wight Council was to be subject to an Ofsted inspection because a number of its schools were in Special Measures or Inadequate.

Members were informed that, according to statistics at the end of April 2013, 8 out of 246 Hampshire primary schools had become academies, with 2 more due to change on 1 September 2013, 28 out of 70 secondary schools were now academies with 2 more scheduled for September 2013, and 1 out of 30 special schools. It was further noted that 26 of the 28 academies in Hampshire buy some of their services from the Local Authority and wanted to maintain a working relationship with them.

## **5. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations made.

## **6. THE WORK OF THE EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL**

John Clarke, the Deputy Director of Children's Services, (Education and Inclusion) gave Members an overview of the work of the Panel. (Item 6 in the Minute Book).

He began by noting that the Education Advisory Panel was one of the longest surviving panels, having begun life as the Schools Monitoring Panel in 1996, and was crucial to the Education Service. He explained that the Panel was not a decision-making body and its focus was its advisory role to the Executive Members and improving the health of the school system in the county. He noted the inclusion of representatives from teaching organisations and the dioceses to enhance the discussions.

The format for most meetings was one open paper which dealt with a major government policy or an issue within the county and the remainder of the meeting was confidential, discussing schools that were causing concern. Members commented that it was difficult to keep up to speed with changes in education policies and wondered whether there was scope in the meetings for broader issues to be addressed as well.

The Deputy Director indicated that it was easy to gain a very depressive view of the state of education within the county from the work of the Panel and reminded members that the 83% of Hampshire Schools which were rated good or outstanding by Ofsted were rarely discussed. Only 17% of the county's schools were in an Ofsted category or were of concern to the Local Authority. He noted the preventative work done in schools by the Local Authority.

Commenting on academy schools, it was indicated that the belief was that there would be no changing back and that partnership with them was the key. There was no provision for Local Authorities to intervene when an academy failed, but that Hampshire's education service remained in a good position to act if required and that the education provision to Hampshire's children was the Local Authority's priority.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the Education Advisory Panel noted the report.

**7. PROGRESS OF SCHOOLS IN EASTERN HAMPSHIRE CAUSING CONCERN**

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Children's Services identifying the schools in Eastern Hampshire that were causing concern (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

The Area Director explained to the Panel that the emphasis in schools had to be the quality of the teaching. Lessons had to be pitched at the right levels, matched to the needs of the pupils and that they should be inspiring and interesting; and teachers should have expert knowledge of progression and assessment which would inform further progress. He indicated that the best head teachers were those that were keen to improve the quality of education in their schools and encouraged professional development and that the best governing bodies were those that received regular reports on the quality of teaching from the head teacher. He noted that the relationship between officers and County Councillors was good and that the Local Authority had always been supportive when tough decisions about governing bodies and head teachers have had to be made.

For the benefit of new Panel Members an explanation of the four Ofsted categories was given - outstanding, good, requires improvement (previously satisfactory) and inadequate. It was explained that inadequate has 2 levels – Serious Weaknesses (previously Notice to Improve) where Ofsted considers that a school has the capacity to improve itself, and Special Measures where it considers that outside agencies need to be involved.

**RESOLVED:**

- That the Education Advisory Panel noted the report.

**8. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

That in relation to the following item the press and public be excluded from the meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information

within Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information for the reasons set out in the report.

9. **PROGRESS OF SCHOOLS IN EASTERN HAMPSHIRE CAUSING CONCERN**

The Panel considered the exempt appendix of the Director of Children's Services on schools in Eastern Hampshire causing concern (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

Members discussed in detail issues relating to those schools.

[SUMMARY OF AN EXEMPT MINUTE]