



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND PLACE SHAPING
POLICY & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
16 SEPTEMBER 2019
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Economic Development, Education and Place Shaping Policy & Scrutiny Committee** held on 16 September 2019 at 6.30pm at **Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP.**

Members Present: Councillors Karen Scarborough (Chairman), Geoff Barraclough, Danny Chalkley, Louise Hyams, Eoghain Murphy, Papyra Qureshi, Selina Short and Tim Roca.

Co-opted Members: Simon Atkinson, Sam Green, Ryan Nichol and Miles Ridley.

Also present: Councillor Timothy Barnes (Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills) and Councillor Richard Beddoe (Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning).

Apologies: Christabel Flight.

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Chairman advised that Councillor Louise Hyams was substituting for Councillor Lorraine Dean.
- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed Councillor Timothy Barnes (Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills), Councillor Richard Beddoe (Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning) and Sam Green, (Headteacher, Pimlico Academy) who was the new non-voting co-opted representative on the Committee, to the meeting.
- 1.3 The Chairman also welcomed Ruth Browe (Director of Intervention & School Services , TBAP Multi Academy Trust) and Wasim Butt (TBAP Principal for Beachcroft Westminster and Latimer RBKC) who took part in the discussion on School Exclusions.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

2.1 No further declarations of interests in respect of items to be discussed were made, other than those noted in the circulated schedule as set out below in paragraph 2.2.

2.2 Table of Member's interests tabled at the Committee Meeting was as follows:

Councillor/Member of the Economic Development, Education and Place Shaping P&S Committee	Organisation	Nature of Interest
Simon Atkinson	St Stephen's Primary School	Headteacher
Geoff Barraclough	Dorothy Gardner Centre	Partner is a Governor at the school
Danny Chalkley	Burdett Coutts School Foundation	Trustee
Sam Green	Pimlico Academy	Headteacher
Miles Ridley	St Peter's Eaton Square School	Headteacher
Ryan Nichol	St Gabriel's Primary School	Parent Governor
Tim Roca	Paddington Academy	Governor
Karen Scarborough	St Vincent's School	Governor
	St Mary of Angels	Governor
	Young Westminster Foundation	Trustee
	St Marylebone Almshouses	Trustee
Selina Short	Rochester Row Almshouses	Trustee

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2019 be approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

4. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE SHAPING AND PLANNING

- 4.1 The Committee received a written update from the Cabinet Member who responded to questions on the following topics:

- the process and timeframe for the adoption of the new City Plan in 2020.
- the significant progress being made delivering the Oxford Street District Plan.
- the restructuring of the bus routes on Oxford Street and the possibility of introducing low emission buses on the most popular routes.
- the success of public speaking at Planning Sub-Committee meetings and the provision of live streaming soon to be piloted at the meetings.
- the consequences of a possible reduction in Planning Applications.
- the allocation of £5.697m to a range of infrastructure projects under the Council's strategic portion of CIL put forward by service areas of the Council.
- the funding for and progress of place shaping in the Harrow Road area.

4.2 ACTIONS

1. That the time allocated to each public speaker and Ward Councillor at the Planning Sub-Committee be considered during the Planning Review.
2. That the next Cabinet Member report include an update on the delivery of all the projects/works being carried out in Westminster.

5. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- 5.1 The Committee received a written update from the Cabinet Member who responded to questions on the following topics:

- the opportunities to increase and promote apprenticeships to young people.
- the challenges that all schools were facing with the new National Funding Formula, the increase in SEND pupils within mainstream schools, the future pupil role projections and the reductions in teaching staff.
- the insufficient funding of pupils with EHCPs in mainstream schools.
- the opportunities that the Pop-up Business School offered to residents.
- the opportunities for including financial data in reports.
- the introduction of the Trailblazer Mental Health Support Team programme.

5.2 The Committee congratulated both primary and secondary schools on their summer examinations results.

6. SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

6.1 The Committee received a report on the current data on school exclusions in Westminster schools with comparisons against the most recent national and London benchmarks. The Committee noted the work that schools and services were already undertaking to prevent exclusions, the provision that was available for children who were excluded from schools and the additional actions being taken by the Council.

6.2 The Committee welcomed Ruth Browne, Director of Intervention & School Services at the TBAP Multi Academy Trust, who described the work of the Early Intervention Centre located off the Harrow Road. She advised that her staff worked with children who were at risk of permanent exclusion by using close intervention to re-engage with those children. She explained how a child came to be at Beachcroft, as a result of a managed move, often where the school and parents considered that a child would benefit from a fresh start.

6.3 The Committee further welcomed Wasim Butt, TBAP Principal for both Beachcroft in St John's Wood and Latimer in RBKC, who described the factors that might lead to a young person being permanently excluded. He advised that the incident could include a serious one-off incident, such as involving a knife, or more persistent disruptive behaviour, family break up or low aspirations, or a combination of these. Wasim also outlined the work that his staff carried out such as obtaining an EHCP for a vulnerable child and finding suitable school placements for young people.

6.4 The Committee discussed why the number of fixed term exclusions in Westminster secondary schools had increased in the last three years and were above the national average. The Committee heard about the funding pressures on schools, the high waiting lists for vital services such as CAMHS, the increase in SEN children in mainstream schools and the resistance from parents to engage with social services. The Committee noted that the number of fixed term exclusions in primary school had decreased in the last three years and were below the national average.

6.5 The Committee were pleased that the exclusion rates for young people with special educational needs (SEN) in 2017/2018 was lower than the national rate and that no Westminster SEN children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) from either primary or secondary schools had received a permanent exclusion in 2017/18.

6.6 The key themes that emerged from the Committee discussion were:

- the importance and sustainability of the Early Help Social Inclusion Pilot that worked intensively with vulnerable families to prevent school exclusion.
- the benefits of the discretionary provision given to special schools for group funding for children in the high need block.
- the complexities of permanent school exclusion, including the increase in problems with drug and knife crime, school refusal and the school curriculum,
- the pressure on schools to achieve high examination results and the need for a holistic approach to education.
- the importance of providing vocational courses and apprenticeships for young people who found it difficult to participate in an academic curriculum.

6.7 The Chairman thanked everyone who had given up their time to attend the meeting and contribute to the discussion.

6.8 **ACTION**

1. The Committee requested a briefing note on the demographics of the children/young people that had been permanently excluded from Westminster Schools. The information should include: age, ethnicity, sex, reason(s) why and what happened to them after they were excluded from school.

6.9 **RESOLVED:** The Committee concluded with the following comments, which would be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills:

1. That schools and services continue to work closely together to prevent school exclusions and that appropriate provision continues to be made available for both young people at risk of school exclusion and pupils that had been permanently excluded.
2. That the Council continue to evaluate the reasons behind school exclusions in Westminster and how it could provide quick access to vital services that could prevent vulnerable young people being permanently excluded from school.
3. That adequate educational provision be provided for excluded pupils along with a range of vocational courses and apprenticeship opportunities for young people Post 16.

7. **SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2019-20 UPDATE**

7.1 The Committee received a report reviewing the primary and secondary mainstream school provision across the borough. The Committee noted that the key issues for Westminster was the surplus in primary provision and the

increasingly demand for secondary school provision because of their successful examinations results.

7.2 The Committee heard how the Secondary transfer Pan London Coordination was organised and noted it was very important that parents received accurate information to enable them to make realistic preference choices so that they had the best chance to obtain a Westminster secondary school place.

7.3 The Committee discussed the capacity and admission criteria of Westminster schools, the secondary school expansion programme to deliver additional places for Year 7 pupils, pupil role projections for primary schools and how the Council worked with primary schools to identify opportunities to make effective use of their school portfolio.

7.4 The full School Organisation and Investment Strategy can be found at:
https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/wcc_sois_2018.20.10.18.pdf

7.5 **RESOLVED:** The Committee concluded with the following comments, which would be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Skills:

1. That the work to provide additional secondary school places in Westminster and the obligation to make this additional provision in order to fulfil its statutory duty be noted.
2. That the Council continues to work with primary schools to be creative in identifying opportunities to make more effective use of the school portfolio and that all resources be used in the most efficient ways.
3. That the Admissions Team continue to share knowledge and support schools to encourage parents to make realistic preference choices on their school admissions form, especially during the secondary school transfer process.

8. ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKERS AND COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

8.1 ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKERS

8.1.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Action and Recommendation Trackers be noted.

8.2 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

8.2.1 RESOLVED:

1. That the Access to Culture Task Group Report would be reviewed at the Communities and Customer Services P&S Committee on the 9 October.
2. That the Committee review the Westminster Adult Education Service and the City Skills Strategy at its next meeting.

9. TERMINATION OF MEETING

- 9.1 The meeting ended at 8.47pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____