

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the School Organisation Advisory Board held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 26 April 2011.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (Chairman), Mr D L Brazier, Mr C J Capon, Miss S J Carey, Mr M C Dance (Vice-Chairman), Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr M J Northey) Mr K Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M J Vye The Reverend N Genders

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Doole (Area Education Officer Thanet & Dover) Mr G Mills (Democratic Services Manager (Executive))

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

##### **3. Minutes - 10 December 2010**

*(Item 4)*

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2010 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

##### **4. Proposal to Amalgamate Kingsmead (Community) Primary School and Diocesan & Payne Smith CE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School by closing both schools and establishing a new 2 FE Primary School, with maintained Nursery Unit, on the current Kingsmead site, as a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School**

*(Item 5 – report by Interim Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills) (Mr Vye made a declaration of interest in his capacity as Chairman of Governors of Kingsmead Primary School. He therefore spoke on this matter in his capacity as a local member and not as a member of the Advisory Board.*

(1) Mr Doole said this report set out the results of the joint public consultation undertaken with the Diocese of Canterbury on the proposal to amalgamate Kingsmead (Community) Primary School and Diocesan & Payne Smith Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School by the closure of both schools, conditional upon the establishment of a new Church of England Voluntary Controlled school on the current Kingsmead Primary School site, to replace both schools

(2) The Canterbury Diocese had been granted exemption from competition by the Secretary of State and therefore the report sought the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on the issuing of a joint public notice. The Local Authority part of the Public Notice would propose the closure of both schools and the Canterbury Diocese part of the Public Notice would propose the establishment of a new 2 FE Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school to replace both existing schools.

(3) Mr Doole briefed the Advisory Board on the outcome of the public consultation exercise and also the views expressed at the public meeting as detailed in appendix 5 and appendix 6 of the report respectively.

(4) Mr Vye said that the view taken by the Governing Body of Kingsmead Primary School was that amalgamation would provide better conditions for pupils at both schools and increase the range and breath of teaching skills and opportunities. He said he believed strongly that prospective parents needed to be shown that this was a project worth supporting and he wanted to see a dedicated group of governors established which was representative of both schools who jointly could set the future direction of the new school. He also wanted to see the local authority closely involved in supporting that process. Mr Vye also spoke about the workload placed on the senior Management of both schools and the burden placed on all staff who were teaching children in sometimes difficult circumstances. He was therefore keen to ensure that appropriate measures were taken to ensure that the additional management burden which would naturally arise during the course of the amalgamation process did not in the meantime have an adverse impact on the daily running of each school.

(5) Mr Doole said that a joint Steering Group made up of representatives from both schools would oversee the transition and work to an agreed action plan. Also the two schools would be encouraged to work together as much as possible over the course of the next 12 to 15 months and that would include activities designed to encourage joint staff working, training and development and activities to prepare and support students in adapting to the new school.

(6) On behalf of the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education, the Rev.Genders said he was pleased that an exemption from competition had been granted and he spoke in support of the proposal and the benefits amalgamation would bring to both schools.

(7) The Advisory Board then discussed the proposal in more detail and raised a number of questions to which officers replied accordingly. Following discussion members expressed the view that the proposal to amalgamate these two schools should be supported and that the appropriate public notices should be published.

(8) Resolved that:

(a) the proposal to amalgamate the Kingsmead Primary School and Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School be endorsed; and,

(b) support be given to the issuing of a joint public notice with the Canterbury Diocese to include the closure of both schools and the establishment of a new 2 FE Church of England Voluntary Controlled school on the Kingsmead site.