

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the School Organisation Advisory Board held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 9 November 2010.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (Chairman), Mr D L Brazier, Mr R Brookbank (Substitute for Mr K Smith), Mr C J Capon, Miss S J Carey, Mr A R Chell (Substitute for Mr M J Northey), Mr M C Dance and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr G Cooke and The Reverend N Genders

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

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes - 10 September 2010

(Item 4)

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

2. 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 Managing Director for Children, Families and Education) (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. Mr Gibbens was present and spoke as the Local Member)

(1) This report sought the views of the Advisory Board on the proposal to undertake a joint public consultation with the Diocese of Canterbury on the amalgamation of Kingsmead (Community) Primary School and Diocesan and Payne Smith Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School conditional upon the establishment of a new Voluntary Controlled school on the current Kingsmead Primary School site, to replace both schools.

(2) Mr Doole reported on the detail of this proposal and the associated resource issues. He said that at this stage the proposal was being reported to the Advisory Board so it could express a view as to whether the merits of the proposed amalgamation were such that a formal consultation should be undertaken following which a further report on the outcome would be submitted to a future meeting.

(3) Mr Gibbens said it was important to look at how the learning opportunities for the pupils at both these schools could be improved, and to also take measures to

improve the quality of the school buildings. This proposal would achieve those objectives but Mr Gibbens wanted to ensure the status of the new school would be Voluntary Controlled and open to children of all faiths. Therefore if taken forward on that basis he supported the proposal and looked forward to seeing the outcome of the formal consultation.

(4) Mr Vye said that there was already a good degree of cooperation and joint working between the two schools. However progress was being hampered by a lack of finance and the poor quality of the buildings and this in turn was affecting pupil numbers at both the existing schools. The proposed amalgamation therefore held out the prospect of being able to provide better educational facilities along with greater flexibility in the use of the available resources. Mr Vye said going out to consultation on the basis of the new school being Voluntary Controlled was something he supported but it had to be recognised that the Governing Body of Kingsmead Primary School had not yet reached a formal view.

(5) On behalf of the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education, the Rev. Genders spoke in support of the proposal and the benefits amalgamation would bring to both schools. He said it was appreciated that the new school would be required to serve the needs of the whole community, which fitted in well with the Local Authority's admissions policy."

(6) The Advisory Board then discussed the proposal following which members expressed the view that the proposal should go forward to formal consultation.

(7) Resolved that endorsement be given to the proposal to undertake a joint public consultation with the Diocese of Canterbury on the amalgamation of Kingsmead Primary School and Diocesan and Payne CE Primary School conditional upon the establishment of a new Voluntary Controlled school in refurbished accommodation on the Kingsmead Primary School site.