

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### 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 Thursday, 17 July 2008.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (Chairman), Mrs C Angell, Mr C J Capon, Mr M J Northey, Mr A R Poole, Mr M J Vye, Mr J Curwood (Substitute for Mr A D Crowther) and Mr C Hibberd (Substitute for Mr R B Burgess)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr A J King, MBE, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mrs E M Tweed and Mr M C Dance

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Adams (Area Education Officer Ashford & Shepway)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

**1. Minutes - 12 June 2008**  
(Item. 3)

(1) Following a request from Mrs Angell, Mr Dance updated Members on progress towards the selection of a suitable site for the relocation of Portal House (Special) School.

(2) RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2008 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**2. Goat Lees - Parental Representations for New School Provision**  
(Item. 4)

(1) In February 2008, the Advisory Board recommended that a public consultation be undertaken regarding new school provision in Repton Park in Ashford. The estate was under construction, with 1250 houses being built, in addition to the 85 replacement dwellings already built. The consultation meeting was attended by a number of residents from the Goat Lees estate in Ashford, which was about one and a half miles from Repton Park. The M20 separated the two estates.

(2) The Goat Lees estate was constructed between the years 1998 and 2005. 732 properties had been built. A developer contribution of a 1FE school site was provided. The condition was that a school must be substantially procured within 12 years of the commencement of the relevant phase of development or the site returned. For the avoidance of doubt, it was assumed that 1 January 2012 was the trigger day for returning the site (although legally it might be later).

(3) The residents from Goat Lees attended the consultation on Repton Park to make representations for a new school in their community. The absence of a school in Goat Lees had, in residents' views, impacted negatively on their quality of

life. In response to the residents' concerns, officers agreed to arrange a separate meeting in Goat Lees to discuss the matter further and agree a way forward.

(4) The Local Member, Mr R King chaired the meeting. Mrs E Tweed also attended as her division bordered on the estate. Around 23 members of the public attended, a number of whom had attended the Repton Park meeting. The majority of those attending appeared to be parents of pre-school children, who were keen to have a school in the community by the time their children started school.

(5) It was understandable that some residents of Goat Lees were campaigning for a school to be built as they anticipated this would meet the needs of families in the estate with primary aged children.

(6) In view of the significant possibility of further housing development in the area, it would seem sensible to plan for a school on the Goat Lees site, and be ready to move forward quickly. It was therefore suggested that a public consultation be conducted on the need for a new school when a planning application for housing on either the Police Training Ground, or the sites on the A28, came forward. This was earlier than normal, but did not commit the Authority to commissioning a school. A school competition (assuming no exemption was received) could then commence as soon as planning consent was granted and work started on site.

(7) The school site in Goat Lees had been provided via developer contributions. Currently approximately £1.9m was available from cash contributions from developers of sites across Ashford which could be allocated to the project. A 1FE school currently cost between £3.5m and £3.9m with a possible further £350K for nursery provision. Inflation would increase the costs. The revenue costs of a new school would be met from the Dedicated Schools Grant.

(8) Following a lengthy debate Mr M J Northey moved, Mr C J Capon seconded as an amendment, that the following words be deleted from the recommendation in paragraph 16 of the report:-

“once a planning application has been received relating to either, the Police Training Ground or land on the urban fringe off the A28 in Ashford.”

*Carried*

(9) The Advisory Board agreed to the proposal that a public consultation on the need for school provision in Goat Lees be undertaken.

### **3. Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status** (Item. 5)

(1) The report informed Members of the Advisory Board of the current situation regarding Foundation/Trust proposals.

(2) The Advisory Board noted the report.

