

## **EDUCATION PORTFOLIO**

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00 pm on 24 July 2014

### **Present:**

Councillor Stephen Wells (Chairman)

### **Also Present:**

Councillor Mary Cooke and Councillor Hannah Gray

#### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mary Cooke declared that she was Chair of Governors at Blenheim Primary School.

#### **2 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

No questions had been received.

#### **3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24TH APRIL 2014**

In considering the minutes of the previous meeting, the Chairman noted that work continued to support the conversion of the Grovelands and Kingswood Pupil Referral Units to academy status as the Bromley Alternative Provision Academy from September 2014. The interim Executive Board would shortly be replaced by a new Governing Body for the academy and the Chairman requested that a final report be provided to Members once this had been completed.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014 be agreed.**

#### **4 BLENHEIM NURSERY PROVISION**

The Portfolio Holder considered a report outlining the outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposal to close the nursery at Blenheim Primary School.

Over recent years, the nursery attached to Blenheim Primary School had experienced a decreasing roll and a reduction in revenue until the nursery was no longer covering its costs. In an effort to reduce the cost of running the nursery to the school, the decision had recently been made to open only in the mornings, with five children on roll in Spring 2014. In April 2014, the need for additional primary school places had been identified for Strategic Planning Area 7. Blenheim Primary School was identified as a school which might potentially accommodate a 'bulge' class, and the school itself was keen to participate, suggesting that the space currently used by the nursery could be utilised as an additional classroom, should the decision be taken to close the nursery provision.

A consultation had been undertaken on the proposal to close the nursery, which had ended on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014. Representations had been received from five parents of children who used the nursery who expressed a number of concerns. These included the quality of learning delivered at Blenheim Children's Centre Nursery which was the proposed alternate provision, as well as highlighting the difficulty the children would have in adjusting to a new nursery provision.

In response to these concerns, the Nursery Manager of Blenheim Children's Centre Nursery had made contact with all parents of children who used the nursery to assure them that places had been identified for the five children currently on the roll of Blenheim Primary School Nursery and that, as the nursery was open during the summer holidays, there was an opportunity for the children to attend the nursery and settle in before the start of the new term in September 2014. The Head Teacher of Blenheim Primary School and the Nursery Manager would work closely together to make sure the children continued to be supported. It was noted that Blenheim Children's Centre Nursery had been inspected by Ofsted in June 2014 and had received a 'Good' rating.

In considering the report, the Portfolio Holder was pleased to note the provisions in place to support the transition of the five children currently on the roll of Blenheim Primary School to the proposed alternate provision of Blenheim Children's Centre Nursery, and underlined the importance of ensuring the transition plan was fully delivered for these children. The Head of Schools, Early Years Commissioning and Quality Assurance Education confirmed that the Head Teacher of Blenheim Primary School and the Nursery Manager of Blenheim Children's Centre Nursery were working closely together to ensure a smooth transition process for the children.

The Portfolio Holder emphasised the need to seek the views of ward councillors in any consultation which affected education and early years provision in a particular ward. The Head of Strategic Pupil Place Planning confirmed that the new Department for Education guidance on consultations did not include a requirement to consult with ward councillors, but that the Local Authority did advise schools to fully consult with ward councillors when seeking expansion. A Member confirmed that there was a ward councillor appointed to the Governing Body of Blenheim Primary School, which fully supported the proposed closure of Blenheim Primary School Nursery to enable the school to accommodate a 'bulge' class for the 2014/15 academic year.

**RESOLVED that the closure of Blenheim Primary School Nursery be approved.**

The Meeting ended at 4.18 pm

Chairman