

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Education
held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 8 April 2015

Present:

Cabinet Member: Councillor D Kershaw

Other Members: Councillor J Blundell (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate):

People M Halpin, I Merrifield

Resources G Holmes, M Salmon

Apologies: There were no apologies

Public Business

46. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

47. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

Further to minute 38/14 relating to Library Petitions, the Cabinet Member indicated that a number of meetings had been held with local residents that had enabled discussions on possible alternative models of delivery which would retain library services but deliver significantly reduced costs to the Council. Options would include the co-location of different services and opportunities to co-operate with statutory and non-statutory partners in the City.

48. Feedback from the Consultation on Potential Changes to the Eligibility Policy for School Transport for Pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities

The Cabinet Member for Education considered a report of the Executive Director of People on the Feedback from the consultation on potential changes to the eligibility policy for transport for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities.

A public consultation began on 24 November 2014 on possible changes to the eligibility criteria for pupils/students in receipt of Special Educational Needs transport to school/college. The consultation ran until 23 January 2015 with the proposal at that time to implement any changes from September 2015.

In December 2014, the Cabinet Member released a statement delaying any possible decisions on revised eligibility criteria. He stated that there would be no changes to the September 2015 criteria but that the consultation would continue in order to gather full public, parental and young people's feedback into proposals. It was made clear at that stage that any changes which may be proposed for September 2016 would be subject to a further period of statutory consultation.

The report detailed the consultation responses received from 7 consultation events held at various venues across the City and to an online questionnaire.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged the difficult decisions that the Local Authority had to make in these austere times. This was an extremely emotive subject and for any proposals for change in the future, every endeavour would be made to work with parents to secure the best outcomes for the children concerned.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Education notes the responses received from the consultation and agrees to include consideration of these in any further decisions on whether to consult on changes to the eligibility criteria for transport for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities.

49. **Determination of School Terms and Holidays 2016 - 2017**

The Cabinet Member for Education considered a report of the Executive Director of People on the outcome of public consultation on the School Terms and Holidays dates for 2016/2017 and sought agreement to the School Terms and Holidays Calendar for 2016/2017.

Currently the local authority was required to set term and holiday dates for community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, pupil referral units, and maintained nursery schools. All schools in England were free to decide when their school day should start and end.

Governing bodies were required to set term and holiday dates in foundation and voluntary aided schools. The academy trust was responsible for the duration of the school year and term and holiday dates for academies and free schools.

The public consultation on the Coventry school terms and holidays dates 2016/2017 took place from 23 February 2015 to 10 March 2015 to which there were 493 valid replies to the consultation. The most popular of the three options available was Option 1, with pupils beginning their Christmas holidays on Monday 19 December. This was the preferred option of other West Midlands Authorities and also Warwickshire. Details of the options and a copy of the consultation document were attached as appendices to the report.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Education:

- (1) Notes the outcome of the public consultation on School Terms and Holidays and agrees a calendar of School Terms and Holidays for 2016/2017.**

(2) Adopts Option 1 as the School Terms and Holidays programme 2016/2017 for Community, Voluntary Controlled and Community Special Schools and maintained Nursery Schools.

(3) Invites the Catholic and Church of England Diocesan Authorities and the Governors of Trust Schools and Academies to recommend the same calendar of School Terms and Holidays for their schools.

50. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding minutes.

51. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 2:55pm)