

Lancashire County Council

Education Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 25th April, 2018 at 10.30 am in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Christian Wakeford (Chair)

County Councillors

M Dad	E Nash
A Cheetham	J Rear
B Dawson	D T Smith
A Gardiner	D Stansfield
N Hennessy	P Steen
A Kay	C Towneley
Ms S Malik	P Williamson

Co-opted members

Mr Ian Beck, Representing RC Schools
Mrs Janet Hamid, Representing Parent Governors
(Secondary)
Mr Kenvyn Wales, Representing Free Church Schools
Mr John Withington, Representing Parent Governors
(Primary)

County Councillors Bernard Dawson and Phillippa Williamson replaced County Councillors Jenny Molineux and Stephen Clarke respectively.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor John Potter and Dr Sam Johnson.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

John Withington declared a non-pecuniary interest in that his daughter was a pupil at Hameldon Community College, Burnley.

3. Call In Request: Proposed Closure of Hameldon Community College, Burnley

The report explained that on 12 April 2018, Cabinet received a report on the proposed closure of Hameldon Community College, Burnley. Cabinet:

- i. Considered the information in the report
- ii. Approved the proposal as detailed in the statutory notice to close Hameldon Community College, Burnley, with implementation commencing from 31 August 2018; and
- iii. Approved that an appropriate statutory decision letter be sent out, as specified under legal requirements, to give the reasons for the decision to those who were to be informed of them.

Following requests from seven County Councillors in accordance with the "Call In" procedures, the Chair of the Education Scrutiny Committee had called a meeting to consider calling in the decision.

The Committee welcomed Sarah Ingham, a witness from Save Hameldon Campaign, and County Councillor Jeff Sumner, to present their reasons for the decision to be reconsidered.

In presenting the case for the Call In, it was felt that the steps and procedures for the consultation into Hameldon Community College had not been managed appropriately and this was a violation of the county council's own rules as it had not followed all the steps that had been set out in its own consultation policy. It was reported that the consultation had not been received by all parents.

County Councillor Susie Charles, Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Schools, spoke in response. It was highlighted that since 2007, the HMI stated that Hameldon Community College required special measures, as it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. The persons responsible for managing and governing the school were not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements in the school. It was highlighted that the school was built for 700 pupils and there were now under 200 pupils. In addition, it was reported that the school had a financial deficit of £2.5 million and there would be an ongoing financial risk if it was to remain open.

In the debate that followed, committee members expressed sympathy for the parents of Hameldon pupils, but recognised that in light of the poor Ofsted reports and declining pupil numbers, the decision of Cabinet to approve the proposed closure of the school was an appropriate course of action.

It was proposed and seconded that the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools' decision on 12 April 2018 in relation to the proposed closure of Hameldon Community College should not be called in. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried and it was therefore:

Resolved: That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools' decision on 12 April 2018 in relation to the proposed closure of Hameldon Community College should not be called in.

4. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

5. Date of the Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee is due to be held on Monday 25 June 2018 at 10.30am, Cabinet Room C, County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston