

OXFORDSHIRE DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday, 11 November 2020 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 10.20 am

Present: Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor John Howson (for Agenda Item 3)
Councillor Les Sibley (for Agenda Item 4)
Councillor Michael Waine (for Agenda Item 4)

Officers: Barbara Chillman (Children, Education and Families),
Lucy Tyrrell (Resources)

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 1)

None received.

2 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS (Agenda Item 2)

| <i>Speaker</i> | <i>Item</i> |
|--------------------------|--|
| Councillor Les Sibley | 4. Proposed Expansion of St Edberg's CE School, Bicester |
| Councillor Michael Waine | 4. Proposed Expansion of St Edberg's CE School, Bicester |

3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor John Howson asked the following question with notice:

How often does the local authority update information on free school meal pupil numbers on the DfE web site?

This was answered as follows:

The DfE updates the free school meal information on their webpages annually – usually around June based on the position in January.

Councillor Lindsay-Gale undertook to provide Councillor Howson with a written answer on whether the information updated on the DfE website changes when data is updated, as it does for academies, and whether this information could be used to advise Councillors on any rise in free school meals, especially during this pandemic.

4 PROPOSED EXPANSION OF ST EDBURG'S CE SCHOOL, BICESTER (Agenda Item 4)

Document considered: Report on Expansion of St Edberg's CE School, Bicester.

A copy is attached to the signed copy of this decision.

Summary of representations made at the meeting

Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale confirmed that she had received the full report and supporting annexes.

Councillor Les Sibley, (Bicester West, Conservative Independent Alliance), spoke in favour of the proposal stating that the expansion was planned originally in 2006 as the Kingsmere Development had proposed 1585 dwellings, but over the past few years the total number has now increased to 2400. Councillor Sibley noted that it is good that the report recognises the growth of Kingsmere and the need for an expansion of school places and facilities for St Edburg's School.

In the report with regards to the walking bus, the Kingsmere Residents Association highlighted the need for a pedestrian crossing to help teachers and pupils to cross safely the busy Whitelands Way Road, and could certainly agree that a crossing is essential not only for school users but also for residents to visit the local shops within the community.

An expanded St Edburg's School would see a reduction in operating costs and financial gain due to increased pupil numbers with money saved allocated for the benefit of the children.

Councillor Sibley commented that it is worth noting that all the local primary education providers who responded to the consultation supported the expansion of St Edburg's CE School in preference to the establishment of a new school.

Councillor Sibley noted that as the local County Councillor for Bicester West, he fully supported the recommendations as outlined in the report as the best economical, practical, and viable option for the Kingsmere Community.

Councillor Michael Waine, Bicester Town Conservator Independent Alliance Member, spoke in favour of the proposal stating that as the current Chairman of the OCC School Organisation Group, the official group made up of Councillor representatives from OCC and the City/Districts, Headteachers, Governors and the Dioceses, the proposals for the expansion of St.Edburg's School have been fully discussed at the July meeting and unanimously agreed as the most sensible way ahead.

He also confirmed that as Chairman of the Bicester and Kidlington Locality Group of County Councillors, these proposals were discussed and agreed unanimously by those present, all the Bicester County Councillors.

Councillor Waine confirmed that given this level of agreement at County and Local level he wished to strongly support the adoption of these proposals.

Councillor Waine added that this is a question of sustainability and numbers, after a delayed start due to taking year group by year group, this proposal means that all children's needs will be met in the area, and all the three local Councillors have walked this route and confirm that it can be done within the times suggested.

Councillor Lindsay-Gale thanked the above Councillors for their contributions in support of this proposal.

Barbara Chillman confirmed that the expansion of St Edburg's CE Primary School onto a satellite site on an existing school site avoids the risk of establishing a separate school which is more challenging for a school of this size. Following two rounds of consultations, which have been extremely helpful in determining local concerns, has developed this final proposal which includes the walking bus requested. There is a further suggestion of a pedestrian crossing, however that cannot be confirmed in this meeting and is a matter being pursued with OCC and the developers.

Barbara Chillman confirmed that this proposal does not provide as much diversity as a separate school, however, is more stable to ensure the high quality of education in Bicester will continue without a destabilising effect that a new school can bring.

Cabinet Member's Comments

Councillor Lindsay-Gale commented that she was clearly persuaded with the new provision for this school and is happy to approve and support this proposal as follows:

The decision in terms of determining the proposal to expand St Edburg's CE Primary School lies with the Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services. In considering the proposal for the school expansion, I have had regard to the information set out in the documentation before me, and am satisfied that an appropriate fair and open-minded consultation and representation period has been carried out, and that the proposer has given

full consideration to all of the responses received. Thereby, I confirm my decision as follows:

To approve the proposal to make the following prescribed alterations to St Edburg's CoE (VA) School effect from 1 September 2023:

- Expand St Edburg's CoE (VA) School onto an additional (satellite) site;
- Increase the school's capacity from 2 forms of entry to 3 forms of entry;
- Reduce the lower age range by one year to include 2-year olds.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing