

EDUCATION LEEDS

CONFERENCE OF EDUCATION BUILDINGS AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS 9 – 11 MAY 2002 HILTON HOTEL, LEEDS

Minutes of Business Meeting held on 10 May 2002 at 9.30 am

Introduction from Tony Palmer, Team Leader, Estate Management, Education Leeds.

Welcome from Chris Edwards, Chief Executive, Education Leeds.

REPORT OF JOHN PROCTER, CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING GROUP

John Procter reported that new appointments to the Standing Group are as follows:

- a) Shirley Turner (Hampshire) – Chairman
- b) Chris Borderick (Northampton) – Vice Chairman
- c) Penny Pennington (Sheffield) – Secretary

Issues to be discussed are:-

- 1. Post 16 funding
- 2. PFI
- 3. BB82 New Area Guidelines
- 4. BB77 requires revision
- 5. Building construction costs continue to rise – regular examples of £2000+ per sq metre in London on projects.
- 6. Land prices rising
- 7. Building Regulations are impacting on construction costs as are DDA costs.
- 8. Fire risk assessment
- 9. DfES Capital Strategy Group has met in London
- 10. Update on VA liabilities and funding
- 11. Condition surveys underway leading to directed funding investment.
- 12. DfES under pressure to provide better evidence about investments and Basic Need.
- 13. AMP Guidance 2003/04 – LEAs should have received a letter.
- 14. AMP Standing Group would like to meet DfES to talk about ideas.
- 15. Concerns raised about NOF funding. Literature does not make reference to AMP opportunities.
- 16. Net Capacity measurement
- 17. Evaluation Office – some authorities are unhappy about its performance.
- 18. The latest AMP appraisal guidance – clarification needed.
- 19. Could everyone have a copy of the letter re Net Capacity?
- 20. Corporate performance assessments are on their way.
- 21. Globalisation of the insurance market after September 11th – higher premiums.
- 22. Risk management processes.
- 23. Installation of sprinklers
- 24. Oil – check systems don't leak
- 25. Schools Access funding – find its way into capital pot.

JP thanked Leeds for hosting the Conference and the Hilton Hotel for the venue.

JP thanked the DfES and Nikki Williamson.

JP thanked colleagues at Education Leeds, in particular Tony Palmer, Geoff Newsome and Jean Richardson.

The next Conference will be in Birmingham from 14/15 November 2002.

John Procter thanked the Standing Group for their support during the last five years whilst he has been Chairman and wished the new Chairman, Shirley Turner, good luck for the future.

JP then gave a humorous presentation, with slides, showing the birth of the Standing Group and changes over the last five years.

Shirley Turner thanked John for his tireless work. He has done a magnificent job.

DfES UPDATE

SCHOOLS CAPITAL UPDATE BY RICHARD WILKINSON

RW began by reminding colleagues of the DfES' main intention, i.e. improve standards. He went on to make reference to the following latest developments:

- a) Asset Management Plans
- b) More formula funding. 85% of capital funding is now formula. In terms of NDS which started in 1997 just over £1 billion in five years. This year (2002/03) the NDS now total £1 billion in one year. Next year it will go up 50%
- c) Needs related funding
- d) Devolved Capital – perceived as being well received generally.
- e) Integrate and simplify PFI. About 30 schools have opened and 39/40 contracts signed. Introduced standardised contracts. Trying to develop PFI to make it more accessible.
- f) Simplified VA – aligned with LEA.
- g) Better designed schools – need to have them well designed. Wider community needs. Putting ideas on the web site.

Current thinking

DfES want to make sure that thinking is joined up. How capital can best support that. Make sure that all the capital funding is supporting the priorities, whether it is access or schools performing poorly. Not having separate pots. Linking funding streams where possible to develop holistic solutions.

Deprivation – may be some weighting to support this.

Trying to attract some of the formula funding through Seed challenge programmes.

Expected timings

- Outline approach to Autumn allocation (May)
- NDS devolved: new notifications this Autumn
- Consultation – few changes to Basic Need allocations (June)
- Detailed guidance on Autumn allocation (July)
- Basic need proposals in (end September)
- Broad spending review information (September)
- PFI/Targeted bids in (mid December)
- Announcement of allocations (inc. to 05/06) (December)

AMP UPDATE BY ALAN JONES

Overview of main AMP work

- a) AMP appraisal guidance 03/04
- b) Area Guidelines and Net Capacity
- c) AMP supporting evidence

Appraisal guidance 2003/04 (copies sent to LEAs last week)

- Purpose of AMPs
- What AMPs have achieved
- Whether further development needed
- Links to DTLR policies
- Appraisal arrangements 2003/04
- Data needed for 2004/05

Purpose of AMPs

- a) Provide regularised framework for identifying and prioritising needs.
- b) Enable joining up of needs
- c) Enable move to more formulaic funding.
- d) Help to align central and local priorities.

What AMPs have achieved

- a) Better knowledge of stock
- b) More prioritisation
- c) Improving data systems
- d) Reduced bureaucracy

Where further development needed

- a) More strategic focus
- b) More integration of other plans
- c) Embedded data assessment/updating
- d) Embedded school stewardship
- e) Project appraisal and delivery

Links to DTLR

- a) Single capital pot
- b) Best Value
- c) Local public service agreements

Appraisal arrangements 2003/04

- a) Greater focus on strategies and outputs
- b) In the process of setting up a round of meetings with CEOs and CEs. The topics for discussion at the meetings will cover:-
 - Capital investment strategies
 - Educational priorities – local and central

- Stewardship
 - Cross-cutting issues
 - Programme delivery
- c) 5 fold increase in the capital programme since 1997 – debate needed on delivering this. Problems in construction industry. Need to look at new forms of procurement.

Practicalities of these discussions

- a) Meetings – this will involve education advisers, LID and SBDU
- b) Timing based on need
- c) Fit in with other LEA contacts
- d) Will refer to sample projects
- e) Want to move towards more field based assessments

To cover:

Statement of Priorities

Revised local policy statement

Not asking for new property data this year

Supplying documents – by end July

Feedback likely to follow this year's pattern

Assessments process will take place after July

Capital allocation and feedback will come out in December

Advance warning of arrangements for next year in relation to data needed

At the end of this year data needed for 04/05 appraisal

Net capacity October/November 02

Condition & Suitability April/May 03

Supporting guidance

Next week on web page – option appraisal

AMP benchmarking data

Will also be producing analyses of premises data

First three web pages will be operational in June

NET CAPACITY AND REVISED AREA GUIDELINES BY BEECH WILLIAMSON

What is sufficiency?

In AMPs – total areas

AMP guide 5 is sufficient

Net area excludes toilets & showers, plant space, internal walls, school kitchens & circulation areas

Net Area Measurement

Valuation Office Agency are measuring all schools.

Will verify a sample of assessment completed by the LEA (49 LEAs)

Net Capacity Implementation

What LEAs should be doing

Verify status of space

Calculate net capacity based on proposed admission number
Agree capacity with schools
Add capacities etc. to AMP database

How net capacity will be used

Assessments complete July – October 2002
Data submission October – November 2002
Surplus places – pilot November 2002
Admissions January 2003 for September 2004
School organisation plans – June 2003
Statutory proposals – September 2002
Basic need – September 2003

Revised Area Guidelines – Summary

Net area formula
Allowance for inclusion
Guidance on ICT areas
Agree guidance on non-teaching areas
Community use
Supplementary areas

SCBD WEBSITE BY CHRIS STOLBERG

Chris took the meeting through the 'Teachernet' site which is proving very popular and is shortly to be redesigned.

www.teachernet.gov.uk

www.dfes.gov.uk

SUMMARY AND QUESTIONS

Shirley Turner (Hants) – asked about thinking on capital strategy for the future.
Answer – thinking about various options and will consult formerly on it and produce a draft paper.

Janice Beck (Surrey) - do you anticipate any further changes in relation to the funding for VA schools? Answer – the change is likely to be the removing of the upper limit which is £400,000. There would still be a budget set aside for bidding for VA schools.

Rosemary Siggie (Trafford) – Formula funds might be weighted – how would this work? Answer – there is a choice – authority level or school level. Income support at authority level and devolved capital at school level. Needs to be discussed.

Graham Oliver (West Sussex) – Looking at a scheme re condition of building and suitability issue. Running up against Darlington with Section 77. Puts us in a quandary. Answer – Section 77 holds sway. Trying to protect playing fields.

Tony Blackman (Kent) – AMP – those authorities who have elected to do their own surveys. Who is vetting those authorities – the Valuation Office? Answer – the DfES – we have a system that allows us to vet them.

Janice Beck (Surrey) – Question about adequacy of suitability data on access. New requirements under the SEN Disability Act. Work on BB77. Any thought being given as to how colleagues at the DfES can support LEAs over the next 18 months?
Answer – the current BB's access has been looked at and is still ok and doesn't need to be updated. Completely relevant. In relation to BB77 we are relying to a great extent on getting the right staff and are recruiting at the moment.

Rory Kennedy (Camden) – Parts of capacity form that we can amend. In step 4 we have had a couple of occasions where the headteachers have queried class bases. The Valuation Office have disagreed. Answer – it is for the Authority to decide.

Shirley Turner (Hants) – Beech Williamson said there was an anomaly about sufficiency assessments. What timetable are you working to? Answer – we are hoping to agree what changes to make within the next week.