

CABINET – 27 FEBRUARY 2024**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions:****Question (1): Kate Gray**

Why is the option to retain Reigate Priory School in its current form (5 form entry) on its existing site excluded from the scope of the working group?

Please take account of the following points when responding to this question.

- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council has stated that many of SCC's "stated constraints are capable of being overcome" and requested "to work with the County Council and Department for Education to consider all options pertaining to the existing site, to conclude the potential for the school to remain there, before a decision is made on relocation options."
- In a letter dated 17 July 2020, Strutt & Parker as agents for the Department for Education described an option for a 2-storey rebuild on the current site as "a well-considered and high quality scheme which enhances the heritage value of the site. It also complies with all national and local policy, including in respect of heritage and Green Belt matters."
- 100 out of 216 Priory parents and 46 out of 98 Holmesdale parents who responded the survey left a comment that they wanted a solution on the existing site. This was overwhelmingly the single largest piece of feedback from the consultation.

Reply:

Thank you for this question. Please refer to Annex 2 of the Cabinet report which outlines the multiple constraints of the current site and why the school in its current form cannot remain at Priory Park.

Clare Curran

Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning

27 February 2024

Question (2): Chris Morris**Consultation Process**

SCC giving the public 24 hours notice to digest the consultation results before submitting any questions is yet another example of how SCC rail road processes through that suit no one except themselves. A consultation where both choices end up with the same outcome is not open or transparent, it's an abuse of power.

Are SCC confident that this public consultation is legal? Specifically the framing of the consultation, the binary choices, the selective choices of what's in scope and what's not.

The general principles for a lawful consultation process must be adhered to:

- It must take place when proposals are still at a formative stage. A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined”.

Our legal advice suggests SCC could be in breach of this based on the fact the proposals are not at a formative stage and have very much been pre determined. What is your response to this?

Reply:

Thank you for this question.

The Council strongly refutes this suggestion that the outcome is predetermined. We have consulted about options which were chosen legitimately and reasonably, and responses are being taken into account.

The Council considers that the consultation was appropriate, fair, and open and therefore adhered to the principles of a lawful consultation process.

The Cabinet Report on the provision of school places in the planning area of Reigate to which this question relates, includes a Consultation Analysis Report to ensure Cabinet decision making is informed by consultation responses, alongside information on the viability of any solutions.

Clare Curran
Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning
27 February 2024

Question (3): Justin Gibson

Surrey County Council have spent £2.4m (expected to be £2.6m) on this planning proposal from an allocated £3m budget.

At what stage was the £3m funding agreed to be accounted for under the capital programme? Why is it not possible to account for option 2, some elements of which may also require capital spend, under this budget line?"

This appears another example of WP being pre determined and everything fitting around this pre determination.

Reply:

It is always made clear that feasibility costs in any project have the potential to be written off as abortive costs to revenue. It is important to investigate feasibility of any project properly in order to determine deliverability of any scheme. Costs included in any feasibility of the Woodhatch site included several options that were explored, in addition to education provision.

The report delegates authority to spend up to £0.6m on option 2. There is a capital budget for school provision in Reigate. Financial regulations and policy would allow

us to capitalise option 2 if this option delivers an asset. Either option would be a revenue pressure if an asset is not created nor enhanced.

Clare Curran

Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning

27 February 2024

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