

**EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE EDUCATION AND HERITAGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1ST MAY 2002**

142. Report of the Review Panel on Recruitment and Retention of Teachers

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Education about the outcome of investigations by the five-member Review Panel into Recruitment and Retention of Teachers. The report also described the experience gained from conducting the review.

A copy of the report, marked 'B' is filed with these minutes. The Committee also received a presentation on the Education website "Come and Teach in Leicestershire".

The following comments and issues arose from discussion:

- Work was proceeding through the County Council Public Relations Unit with schools on the possibility of placing block advertisements of teaching vacancies in the local newspapers. This could help to reduce advertising costs.
- If schools had sufficient budget provision it could be more effective for them to appoint a permanent teacher without specific class responsibilities rather than employing supply teachers to cover teachers away on training or for sickness absence.
- It was more cost effective to use agencies to provide supply teachers than for the LEA to set up its own pool of supply teachers as the agencies also took on the responsibilities and associated risks.
- It was noted that some schools, and groups of schools, maintained their own lists of supply teachers as the quality of supply teachers from agencies was variable.
- Some members felt that although the information provided on the Education website was good, the presentation of the website itself should be improved and that the access to various components of the information should be simplified.
- It was important to be able to provide a comprehensive list of teaching vacancies both on the website and in paper form for those applicants who had no access to IT.

- Some schools had their own websites, linked to the Education website, but other schools did not. All schools should be encouraged to develop their own websites and link those to the Education website. These could, if considered appropriate, include the facility to access job application forms via the website.
- It was suggested that the Council should consider making representations to the government about the adverse impact of constant change, new initiatives, increased bureaucracy and the inspection regime on the recruitment of new people into the teaching profession.
- In relation to the process of conducting the five-member review, members who had served on the panel reported that they had found it an effective way to obtain and assess evidence, investigate matters and reach conclusions and that had been a substantial measure of cross-party agreement on issues.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the recommendations of the Review Panel set out in paragraph 18 of Appendix A of the report be approved and referred to the Cabinet for consideration, subject to adding the following to the Panel's recommendations:
 - (i) As a matter of urgency, the Director of Education should explore ways of obtaining a more comprehensive list of teaching vacancies than is currently available on the Education website;
 - (ii) Efforts should be made to make the Education website more vibrant and attractive for potential users and easier for users to access the various components of information on it.
 - (iii) Schools should be encouraged to develop their own website to link into the Education website to enhance the information available to potential applicants for teaching posts (including application forms if considered appropriate).
- (b) That the conclusions set out in paragraphs 9 to 16 of Appendix B of the report be approved and referred to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration.