

FULL COUNCIL
23rd January 2006

Consideration of Second City Academy

Reasons given for requesting that the decisions of the Executive be referred to Council for further consideration:

1. the chosen site is totally unsuitable given the traffic congestion already in the area.
2. the chosen site is completely wrong for the catchment area and would involve very young children having to travel ridiculous distances to attend school
3. the expansion of existing schools is not given sufficient priority compared to the desperate rush to create another City Academy.
4. the very close proximity of the selected site to other schools is inappropriate.
5. the other potential sites for a new school have not been given proper consideration by Brent Council
6. the Executive has failed to reconsider properly alternative sites in line with the resolution of the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel. The resolution was passed by the Panel on the 8th December requesting the Executive to reconsider alternative sites yet the Executive met on the 12th December and dismissed out of hand this reasoned request without carrying out any review of alternative sites, or considering the decisions made by the Planning Committee on the potential use of sites for schools particularly the potential of the Guinness site, the Unisy's site and the Palace of Arts site.
7. the discussion at the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel showed that many members have concerns about the principle of an Academy. These concerns relate to the high cost of academies, the lack of evidence that they improve academic performance and the governance issues which might arise if the sponsor runs the academy incompetently ;
8. the Panel specifically recommended that the Executive reconsider the site options available. It is clear that this recommendation was brushed aside by the Executive, which is intent on pursuing a site option that runs the risk of failing to gain planning consent.