

**Subject:** Inaccuracies and omissions in GVC consultation parents meeting notes

I'm sure that you will agree that it is very important, for the whole consultation process, that the published notes for the parents' meetings are an accurate, complete and fair reflection of the views, questions and answers expressed on the nights in question. After all, these notes will be an important part of the information on which the cabinet will make their decision.

The notes for the GVC parents' meeting have numerous omissions and inaccuracies. Please use my comments to update the document and re-publish it on your website.

- There is no mention of the numerous statements from parents in their introduction that state what great things GVC has done for them and their families. Nor was there any mention of the support for the staff by the parents.
- The notes contain no estimates of the number of parents attending the meeting. After a rough count, I estimated that there were 400 attendees.
- There is no mention of the early request to ask and answer one question at a time, or Ms Gorman's response - a sharp "no".
- Question one is incorrect. The gentleman stated that Croydon Hill was a concern regarding accident figures, but, in his view, the more dangerous road was the 1.5 miles of the B1042 between Tadlow and the Wimpole/Arrington roundabout, which is on both the direct route and the alternative route via Potton. The figures stated were for this road and not Croydon Hill.
- Answer to question one has omissions. There is no mention of the numerous comments that pointed out that there are no alternative routes to avoid this stretch of road nor the comment that was made that the alternative route put forward by the LA is halfway to Stratton Upper School. This issue was also brought up later in the evening.
- Answer to question three has omissions. There is no record that Ms Belchamber made it clear that the Council do not even have planning permission for the school named in option three. This is important because many of the parents do not believe option three is a viable option.
- Answer to question four has omissions. The response did not answer the question of why the status quo was not included. It is not recorded that the gentleman who asked the question, politely pointed out that he was still waiting for an answer several times during the meeting and that no satisfactory answer was given, including statements such as "mine's got to be the easiest one of the night", "do you want me to ask my question again?" and "I'm still patient".
- Statement six has omissions. The actual statement was that at the GFS parent's meeting Mr. Dickens stated that GVC's Ofsted report was the worst report he had ever seen. Yet, in the view of the speaker, the Millfield Primary School was worse than Gamlingay. To which Mr. Dickens replied that he hadn't seen the Ofsted report for Millfield Primary School.
- Statement seven has omissions. This was actually in response to statements by Mr. Dickens to the affect that the LA do have a target date for removing special measures in 2012.
- Question 11 is incorrect. As GVC has no year 9, I don't need detailed notes to know that this question is incorrect. I believe that the speaker said year 7.

- Question 14 has no answer. Was none given?
- Question 15 has no answer. Was none given?
- There was a statement from Mr. Dickens explaining how it would be very difficult to attract head teachers to apply for a job at a failing middle school. At which point, a parent governor stated that, at an Ofsted workshop for governors of failing schools, a question was asked about this very issue. The response from Ofsted was that a rural village school with happy children and supportive parents and staff such as GVC would have no trouble attracting an excellent head teacher. Many potential head teachers would relish the challenge. The LA governor then stood up and said that she has an outstanding, newly-trained practitioner that would love to come and work in GVC.
- Question 16 has omissions. The speaker also asked about the total points score. In addition to this, the CVA scores for both Bassingbourn and Stratton were compared and the point was made that it could be argued that Stratton are making even more progress because they take the children later than Bassingbourn.
- Question 16 has no answer. Was none given?
- During the discussion of the merits of Bassingbourn versus Stratton, Mr. Dickens brought up the progress between KS2 and KS4 as an indicator and stated the figures for Bassingbourn. When asked for the same metrics for Stratton for comparison, he did not know. There was a lot of anger expressed that Mr. Dickens did not have these simple figures relating to both the schools referred to by options one and two.
- Statement 17 has omissions. The speaker, a teacher at GVC as well as a parent, stated that, whilst she recognized that there were lots of good aspects of GFS, she had concerns about the expertise of GFS to teach years 3 to 6. A parent governor asked the teacher if the speaker knew who would be teaching the additional years at GFS if option two was selected. When the teacher replied I have no idea, the parent governor answered with "you are - the teachers of GVC".
- Statement 20 has omissions. The leadership and accountability of the LA was called into question. The feeling was that the LA had let the school down because they were aware of the issues of weak leadership as early as 2007. A view was expressed that the LA must be either incompetent or manipulative.
- Point 24 has inaccuracies. The show of hands was not for an option 4, but for those that thought that GVC should at least be given the chance to improve.
- Point 24 has omissions. A show of hands was indeed made and no count was taken. However, out of the 400 or so attendees I saw just two people who did not raise their hands, and they were present as observers only. Even if we are generous, I think it is safe to say that the number of people who did not raise their hands was in single figures. This should be recorded in some way in these notes. May I suggest describing the response as "overwhelming support".
- Statement 27 has omissions. I know because this was my statement. I introduced myself and described my position as a parent who has two children who have both benefited enormously from GVC. My statement was this "If the children want this school open, and the parents want this school open, and the community want this school open, and Ofsted want this school open and this school closes, then I question your integrity, I question your reasons and I question the whole consultation process and I also question whether the decision hasn't already been made".

Hope this has been useful for you and I look forward to seeing the document updated on your website.

Yours sincerely,

Michael White