

## **The Deanes School Task and Finish Group (People and Families Scrutiny)**

Cllr Ray Gooding (Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning) and Tim Coulson (Director for Education and Learning)

10<sup>th</sup> July 2013

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The following presents the high level points that Cllr Ray Gooding and Tim Coulson will present at the first evidence gathering session of The Deanes School Task and Finish Group.

Additional information can be found on the ECC School Organisation and Planning web pages including the consultation document, responses to Freedom of Information requests, and a set of frequently asked questions that have been developed in response to the questions received to date through the public consultation meetings and e-mails and letters received by officers and Cabinet Members: <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Delivering-Education-Essex/School-Organisation-Planning/Pages/Consultations.aspx>

### **Background**

- Building School for the Future Programme and impact of cessation of programme.
- Essex County Council Capital Programme 2012 and decision to invest in colocation of Glenwood Special School and the Deanes. This was a sum of £23million.
- The decision to consult on the future of The Deanes School stems from a number of factors including: falling admission numbers; the need to consider the best use of the local authority's budget; and the need to ensure sufficient high quality school places in the area.

### **Current and Future Pupil Numbers**

- The number of children at the school on the January 2013 census was as follows:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Total
119	117	165	175	217	793

- At the time of commencing the consultation the intake for Year 7 in September 2013 was expected to be 74, of whom 6 have a statement of special educational needs. With 217 pupils leaving the school in July 2013 and 74 pupils joining in September 2013 the total roll drops by 143 to 650.
- Predictions for intakes at the Deanes are as follows: 2013/14 – 650; 2014/15 – 569; 2015/16 – 509; 2016/17 – 464; 2017/18 – 474; 2018/19 – 476; 2019/20 – 534; 2020/21 – 466; 2021/22 477; and 2022/23 – 473.
- Numbers of children in local primary schools in the year of transfer to secondary school are static:

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
210	225	214	191	203	165	209	201	171	195	192	197

- Castle Point Borough Council agreed in December 2012 to a suite of strategic sites to meet the requirement for a 5 year housing supply to cover 2014-19. This would create a potential 550 dwellings. Much of the planned accommodation Castle Point is for one or two bedroom dwellings. For these a factor of 10% is used to predict secondary children, for family homes the factor is 20%. This is not per year group but an average figure for those attending in years 7 to 11. An allowance in line with this has been made for future housing developments.
- Currently, there are 234 pupils at the school from Southend – 79 in the oldest year group, 32 in the youngest. Data from Southend local authority about school place planning suggests that it is not currently looking to additional provision in Essex to meet its needs.
- Currently, there are 95 pupils at the school from Basildon, 16-22 in each year group. There are increasing numbers in Basildon primary schools but currently plenty of capacity to meet this growth in Basildon secondary schools.

## Finances

- Schools receive funding based on pupil numbers. Therefore a fall in numbers reduced the revenue funding the school receives to meet salaries and day to day running costs.
- In April The Deanes School reported an extremely high budget deficit which looked set to increase.

2013 -14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
£208,090	£652,908	£973,455	£1,396,255	£1,947,008

- The situation remains precarious and dependent on the schools future forecasts being realised. Although only 74 pupils are planned to enter the school in September 2013 the budgeting forecasts are based on year groups of 120.
- These budget forecasts already assume a reduction in teaching staff in each of the financial years; 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17, with reductions also in support staffing. The school is already making more immediate redundancies to address some of the current year deficit.
- As the overall pupil roll falls by 143 in September 2013 this has a significant and immediate reduction of the budget from April 2014 in excess of £500,000.
- David Laws announced recently about possible additional funding for schools with falling rolls. We have now looked at this further and are doubtful that it offers much help to The Deanes.

## School Performance and Standards Issues

- Glenwood School is an outstanding (Ofsted judgement), popular and oversubscribed New Model Special School for children with severe and lifelong difficulties.
- At the time of its most recent inspection in February 2012, The Deanes School was judged to be a 'good' school
- It is widely accepted that when the size of a secondary school falls below four forms of entry (120 pupils a year) it can face significant financial and educational challenges.

## Process

- Consultation on the Deanes started on the 10 June and closes at midnight on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July.
- During August the views expressed during the consultation will be considered and a report prepared for the Cabinet Member who will take a formal decision on whether to proceed with the publication of a statutory notice proposing the closure of The Deanes School.
- There will then be 6 weeks for objections to be raised before Cabinet would make a decision about closure.
- Then the Governing body has the opportunity to appeal to an independent adjudicator.
- The school is also reported to be investigating the possibility of becoming an Academy. The current financial position would be one of ministers' considerations in reviewing any application to convert.