

The Deanes School Consultation Task & Finish Group

10:30	Wednesday, 10 July 2013	Committee Room 6, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex
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Membership:

Councillor G Butland
Councillor J Chandler
Councillor T Higgins
Councillor N Hume
Councillor A Wood
Mr R Carson

Chairman

For information about the meeting please ask for:

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Essex County Council

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Part 1

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

Pages

- | | | |
|----------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence | |
| 2 | Membership
To confirm the membership of the Group, as shown on the front of the Agenda. | |
| 3 | Declarations of Interest
To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members | |
| 4 | The future of the Deanes School - Consultation
To receive and scrutinise evidence from Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, and Tim Coulson, Director of Education and Learning (papers attached). | 5 - 20 |
| 5 | Future Sources of Evidence and dates of next meetings
To confirm the dates of future meetings and sources of evidence the task and finish group will need to consider. | |
| 6 | Any Other Business | |
| 7 | Urgent Business
To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency. | |

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

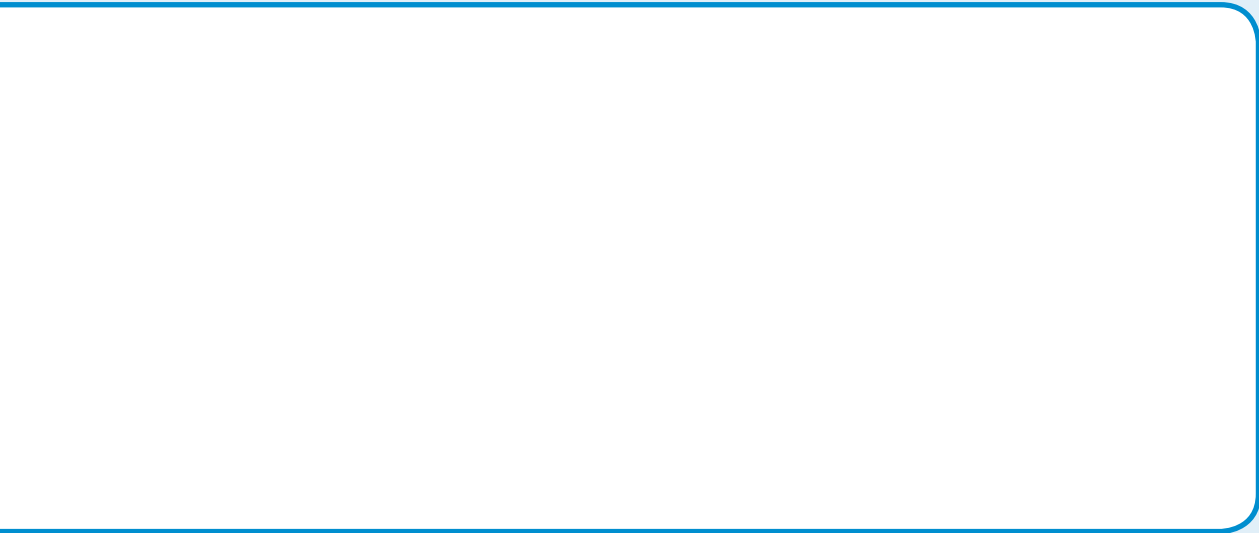
To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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Urgent Exempt Business

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.



The Future of The Deanes School

1. Introduction

In February 2004 the Government announced the introduction of a £55bn programme to rebuild or improve significantly the premises of the vast majority of secondary schools in the country. The programme was called Building Schools for the Future (BSF). The BSF programme was to be delivered through 'waves' with a named group of schools in each wave. A project to rebuild Glenwood School was originally included in Wave 4 of the BSF programme but in view of the difficulty of securing a new site on which to rebuild the school, it was decided that the school would move to the site of The Deanes School which was due to be rebuilt in wave 5 of the BSF programme, and new premises for both schools would be built as part of a co-location project.

However, in July 2010 the new Coalition Government announced the cessation of the BSF programme in order to help address high levels of public spending and the project to relocate Glenwood School and rebuild it in conjunction with new premises for The Deanes School was stopped. At that time the project had reached the stage of submitting an Outline Business Case to Partnership for Schools, the Government body responsible for delivering the BSF programme.

The Appleton School and The King John School also had proposed capital investment under the BSF programme withdrawn.

Given the poor condition and suitability of its existing premises, the County Council was committed to seeing Glenwood School rebuilt, and it also had a desire to improve the premises of The Deanes School. The County Council therefore decided that it wished to proceed with the co-location project, albeit in a reduced form as far as The Deanes School element was concerned, and a sum of £22.85m was included in the capital programme from 2012 onwards to fund such a project. Bids for this project were invited in March 2013 and are currently with the County Council for consideration.

This is a very significant capital project to which to commit in the current financial climate and the County Council has therefore decided to halt procurement whilst it takes the opportunity to review the situation at both schools.

Glenwood School is an outstanding (Ofsted judgement), popular and oversubscribed New Model Special School for children with severe and lifelong difficulties. Despite investment by the school the premises are in poor condition and are unsuitable in many respects. The project to rebuild the school remains a very high priority for the County Council. There have been attempts to rebuild or relocate the school for at least the last 15 years.

At the time of its most recent inspection in February 2012, The Deanes School was judged to be a 'good' school and there were 886 pupils on the school roll. In January 2013 this was 793 and for September 2013, it is estimated this will have

fallen to 650 and in the next three years it is predicted that this will fall further to below 500. The intake for September 2013 (excluding 6 statemented pupils), comprises 21 pupils living outside the areas served by the three local schools, 17 from Southend and 21 from the priority admissions area of The Deanes'. The remaining 9 pupils are from The Appleton and The King John areas. There are therefore only 30 'local' children due to start at the school.

The fall in numbers impacts on the revenue funding the school receives to meet its day to day running costs as all schools receive a budget allocation based on pupil numbers.

Given this fall in numbers, the question has arisen about whether rebuilding The Deanes School is the best use of the Council's funding. The Council is determined to use the limited funding it has to best effect as there are many competing priorities. In the light of its decision not to proceed with the capital project at this stage, the County Council has decided to undertake this consultation on a proposal to discontinue The Deanes School with effect from 31 August 2016.

For schools to achieve and maintain high educational standards, strong leadership and governance and high quality teachers are vital ingredients. This is critically underpinned by buoyant pupil numbers generating a viable budget and a secure future which gives a sound basis for future planning and development. This helps to make a school attractive to good teachers and leaders seeking to progress their careers, and to parents wanting the best for their child. If popularity is low and pupil numbers decline at a school it becomes increasingly difficult for it to maintain this position.

The County Council is committed to parental preference and ensuring every child has access to the highest quality education to ensure they have the opportunity to maximise their potential.

For these reasons the Council feels that the future of the school should be considered.

The Council considered three ways forward:

1. The closure of The Deanes School from 31 August 2016 with intakes ceasing from September 2014 and expansion of places at The King John and The Appleton schools;
2. The Deanes School continues and further reviews to take place in the future of its on-going viability in the light of demand and popularity;
3. The Deanes School continues and further reviews to take place in the future of its on-going viability and expansion of places at The King John and The Appleton schools.

Having considered these alternatives, the Council is proposing the first of these and this consultation is to invite views on this proposal. Decisions will be subsequently made in the light of the views expressed during the consultation.

As The King John and The Appleton schools are academies, they too will need to consult on their part in these proposals and obtain the agreement of the Secretary of State as necessary. They are therefore seeking views from their parents about their proposal to enlarge on a permanent basis and to admit existing pupils from The Deanes School on a transitional basis subject to a decision being taken to close The Deanes School

2. Current and future pupil numbers

The number of children at the school at the time of the census in January 2013 was as follows:

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

At the time of preparing this consultation document the intake for Year 7 in September 2013 is 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.

The latest predicted intakes for the school are produced using the number of pupils on roll in January of each year and historic trends in admissions from Year 6 in primary schools. The forecast pupil numbers for The Deanes are produced together with the forecasts for the other two secondary schools serving the area, The Appleton and The King John. Forecast admissions for popular oversubscribed schools are set at their published admission numbers. The current numbers on roll and forecast Year 7 numbers are rolled forward to provide the forecasts for the next year ahead and so on for later years. The Year 7 column in the table below shows the predicted intake for each school year from 2013-14 to 2023-24. The total column shows the predicted number of pupils on roll, assuming a roll forward of cohorts each year. The potential total column includes possible additional children that are predicted to be produced from known new housing developments in the area.

The predicted intakes for the three schools serving the area assume that both The Appleton and The King John will maintain their popularity and will fill and also that the pattern seen in the last three years of significant proportions of children from outside the local area taking up places will continue.

Predicted intakes and number on roll at The Deanes School							
Year	7	8	9	10	11	Total	Potential Total (including known additional housing)
2013/14	74	119	117	165	175	650	650
2014/15	94	74	119	117	165	569	569
2015/16	105	94	74	119	117	509	509
2016/17	71	105	94	74	119	463	464
2017/18	126	71	105	94	74	470	474
2018/19	73	126	71	105	94	469	476
2019/20	148	73	126	71	105	523	534
2020/21	32	148	73	126	71	450	466
2021/22	78	32	148	73	126	457	477
2022/23	117	78	32	148	73	448	473
2023/24	89	117	78	32	148	464	489

Castle Point Borough Council agreed in December 2012 a suite of strategic sites to meet the requirement for a five year housing land supply (covering the period 2014-2019). There is potential for some 550 dwellings to be built on six of these sites located in the area served by the three schools. At this stage Castle Point Borough Council has yet to determine the strategic sites that will be used to meet the requirement for the future housing land supply for the periods beyond 2019. However, any new housing is unlikely to exceed around 220 completions a year, spread across the whole of Castle Point Borough Council's area.

The predicted intakes for The Deanes fluctuate because the number of children currently in each year group in the primary schools as shown below, on which the forecasts are based, fluctuate. Despite this year on year fluctuation the current cohorts in the four main feeder primary schools over the next 7 years are not significantly different to those for the last five years.

Past Year 6 cohorts					Current cohorts						
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Yr6	Yr5	Yr4	Yr3	Yr2	Yr1	YrR
210	225	214	191	203	165	209	201	171	195	192	197

3. Applications and admissions

The school census of January 2013 indicated that 275 of the 793 pupils on roll at The Deanes lived in the priority admissions area for the School. This represented 35% of the total.

Of the 65% of pupils who lived outside the priority admissions area the main areas which they were drawn from were as follows:

Southend-on-Sea	234 pupils	(30%)
The Appleton and King John area	122 pupils	(15%)
Basildon area	95 pupils	(12%)
Canvey Island	43 pupils	(5%)
Other areas	24 pupils	(3%)

Whilst the largest number of pupils from outside the school's priority admissions area has come from Southend, numbers from this area have declined over the past 5 years. The numbers of pupils residing in Southend on roll at the school in each of the year groups in January 2013 were as follows:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
32	26	43	54	79

Conversely the number of pupils residing in the Basildon area has increased over the past 3 years. The numbers of pupils residing in the Basildon area on roll at the school in each of the year groups in January 2013 was as follows:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
22	25	26	6	16

The number of pupils from Canvey Island has declined over the past two years with only 5 pupils in Year 7 and 4 pupils in Year 8.

When the current Year 8 at The Deanes School was admitted in September 2011, 111 children were offered places of which 43 were in The Deanes priority admissions area, 25 were from Southend and 31 were from outside the areas served by the three schools. The remaining 12 were from the The Appleton and The King John areas.

When the current Year 7 was admitted in September 2012, 129 children were offered places, of which 39 were in The Deanes priority admissions area, 34 were from Southend and 37 lived outside the areas served by the three schools. The remaining 19 were from The Appleton and The King John areas.

There are currently 68 children offered places for September 2013 (plus 6 with statements). Of these, 21 live outside the areas served by the three schools, 17 live in Southend and 21 are in The Deanes priority admission area. The remaining 9 are from the The Appleton and The King John areas.

The figures above show that in 2011, 55 places were required for children local to the three schools, in 2012 it was 58 and for 2013 it is 30. In the same three years the numbers of first preferences for The Deanes School were 60, 67 and 57 respectively, despite over 400 applications in total.

All of the above suggests a school with relatively low popularity where intakes and rolls have declined in recent years and the local demographics do not indicate a significant or early increase in pupil numbers in the area. Equally, whilst predicted Year 7 intakes for the next 10 years fluctuate between a low of 32 and a high of 148, the pattern of admissions over recent years suggests that only about half of these will be children local to the three secondary schools in the area. The remainder come from Southend, Canvey and Basildon in the main. Schools in these areas are improving and may prove a more popular choice for local parents in the future which could impact further on this on this pattern of parental preference.

4. Standards issues

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. For example, senior teachers can become over-stretched because there are fewer of them trying to do the same number of tasks as in a larger school. The school would have fewer teachers overall, and they may have to teach one, two or more different subjects. This could mean teachers having to teach outside their specialism and the quality of teaching and pupil performance could decline. The curriculum can become narrow and inappropriate for all pupils in the school. The school would be unable to achieve economies of scale and could easily run into budget problems. This makes it more difficult to provide the appropriate range of opportunities for pupils at the school.

The last draft budget plan submitted by The Deanes School on 22 April 2013 based on previous predicted intakes of pupils, plus 10%, shows the following projected annual budget deficits:

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

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.

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.

5. What the proposed closure would mean for pupils at the school

If a decision was made to close the school in August 2016, there would be no further admissions to Year 7 from September 2014. This is how your child(ren) would be affected by this proposal:

September 2013		September 2014		September 2015
Year 7 at The Deanes	→	Remain and continue into Year 8 at The Deanes	→	Transfer to roll of The Appleton or The King John to start Year 9.
Year 8 at The Deanes	→	Transfer to the roll of The Appleton or The King John to start Year 9	→	Continue at The Appleton or The King John
Year 9 at The Deanes	→	Remain and continue into Year 10 at The Deanes	→	Remain and continue into Year 11 at The Deanes
Year 10 at The Deanes	→	Remain and continue into Year 11 at The Deanes	→	Leave to commence Year 12 elsewhere as now.
Year 11 at The Deanes	→	Leave to commence Year 12 elsewhere as now.		

The Appleton and The King John Schools both commence their Options in Year 9 hence the plan for children to transfer out of The Deanes at the end of Year 8. The Appleton and The King John Schools have agreed, exceptionally, to admit half each of the Year 7 and Year 8 cohorts at The Deanes as set out above. An application process will be put in place as soon as a final decision about closure is known for parents of children in Year 7 and Year 8 at The Deanes in 2013/14 so that they can express a preference for either The Appleton and/or The King John Schools. Those preferences will be considered by The Appleton and The King John School against their admission policies and places will then be confirmed for each child in preparation for transfer in September 2014 or 2015.

Parents will be free to apply for any other secondary school(s) of their preference at that stage and that will be considered against the admission policy of the schools concerned. The Appleton and The King John Schools will be supported with additional accommodation and resources to admit the additional children into Year 9 in September 2014 and 2015 and as such all children at The Deanes School in Year 8 at the end of the summer terms 2014 and 2015 will be guaranteed a place at one of those two schools to commence and complete their three year examination courses.

The County Council will work closely with The Deanes School and with The Appleton and The King John Schools to ensure that teaching and learning and all other activities are maintained and supported in the best interests of those cohorts of children completing their education at The Deanes School.

6. Future admission arrangements

Subject to approval by the Secretary of State, The Appleton and The King John Schools have agreed to modify their admission arrangements for September 2014 onwards, to include the current Deanes priority admissions area as part of

their existing priority admission areas. This is conditional upon a final decision to close The Deanes School. Parents living in the current Deanes priority admissions area would therefore have a high priority for admission to The Appleton and The King John Schools in future years. The Appleton and The King John Schools have also agreed, subject to their consultation with parents and the local community, and to a final decision to discontinue The Deanes School, to increase their published admission numbers for future Year 7 intakes by 30 places each.

A final decision to discontinue The Deanes School will not be known until mid-November at the earliest. The national closing date for applications for intakes for secondary schools in September 2014 will be 31 October 2013 so unfortunately the future of The Deanes School will not be known at the time parents of this cohort of Year 6 children (current Year 5) are required to apply for a school place. Parents will therefore be able to apply for a place at The Deanes in September 2014 if they wish. If a final decision is taken in mid-November to discontinue the School and this is not appealed by the governing body, then any preferences expressed for The Deanes School for September 2014 will be removed and all other preferences will be promoted so those applications are not disadvantaged.

If, after this consultation, a decision is made to proceed with the publication of statutory notices proposing the closure of the school, further information and guidance will be made available to this cohort of parents.

7. The Timescale and consultation process

The consultation period will run for 6 weeks from 10 June to 22 July 2013. Meetings will be held with staff, governors, School Councils, primary and secondary schools, parents and other interested parties during this period. The proposals are public and specifically distributed to all statutory consultees, i.e.:

- the governing body of any school which is the subject of proposals (if the Local Authority (LA) are publishing the proposals);
- families of pupils, teachers and other staff at the school;
- any LA likely to be affected by the proposals, in particular neighbouring authorities where there may be significant cross-border movement of pupils;
- the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected;
- families of any pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposals including where appropriate families of pupils at feeder primary schools;
- any trade unions who represent staff at the school and representatives of any trade union of any other staff at schools who may be affected by the proposals;

- if proposals involve, or are likely to affect a school which has a particular religious character, the appropriate diocesan authorities or the relevant faith group in relation to the school;
- the trustees of the school (if any);
- MPs whose constituencies include the schools that are the subject of the proposals or whose constituents are likely to be affected by the proposals;
- the local district or parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposals is situated;
- any other interested party or such other persons as appear to the proposers to be appropriate.

During August the County Council will consider the views expressed during the consultation and the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning will take a formal decision on whether to proceed with the publication of a statutory notice proposing the closure of The Deanes School. If there is a decision to continue towards closure, this notice will be published on 2 September 2013 and will give a further 6 week period for representations to be made. Once the notice closes on 14 October 2013 the County Council would expect to make the final decision within 6 weeks.

Once the County Council Cabinet has made a final decision, the governing body of The Deanes School has a period of 4 weeks in which to consider whether to refer this decision to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. If the governing body chooses to do this then a final decision from the Schools Adjudicator might be expected in February 2014.

8. Other issues

Sports Facilities - the intention will be over the next three years to find a way to continue to manage the very well-used sporting facilities currently managed by the school and for them to be provided to the local community during the day, outside school time and in school holidays.

The Enchanted Wood Day Nursery - the nursery currently located on the Deanes site is managed by a company independent of The Deanes School so would be expected to continue in its current form.

Home to School Transport – Essex County Council meets school transport costs for those children of statutory secondary school age who live at least three miles away from, as measured by the shortest available walking route, and attend their designated local secondary school. Free school transport will be provided for pupils who gain a place at a school that is closer than their designated local school as measured by the nearest road route but is at least three miles away from where they live. In a case where there are two designated schools for a home address the child would be required to reside closer than both schools in order to qualify.

The right to free home to school transport is extended to children aged 11 or over who are entitled to free school meals or whose parents receive their maximum working tax credit, where they are attending one of the three nearest qualifying schools as determined by the County Council and they reside between 2 and 6 miles from that school. In these circumstances transport is provided but is reviewed each academic year on the basis of evidence of the benefit received.

Glenwood Special School – The County Council is committed to enlarging and providing new buildings for Glenwood School and a project to do this will proceed. We would still like this to be achieved on The Deanes site. The Deanes School is a foundation school and as such the freehold of the site and the buildings are held by the governing body so discussions will continue with the governing body throughout this process.

9. How to make your views known

You are invited to respond to this consultation using the following electronic survey form:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/thedeanesschool>

Alternatively, you may wish to write to or e mail us with your comments to the address given below by Monday 22 July 2013. All comments received through these mechanisms or made directly to council officers or members will be collected to be included in the analysis of feedback received.

The County Council has arranged a number of meetings during June and July at which parents, staff, schools and the wider community can ask questions and make their views known. The details of these meetings are as follows:

Date and time	Title	Venue
20 June 2013 7.30pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils and prospective Year 7 pupils of The Deanes School	The Deanes School (Sports Hall)
26 June 2013 7.30pm	Public meeting for the local community and other interested parties	The Deanes School (Sports Hall)
27 June 2013 7.00pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils and prospective Year 7 pupils of The King John School	The King John School (School Hall)
1 July 2013 7.00pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils and prospective Year 7 pupils of The Appleton School	The Appleton School (School Hall)
4 July 2013 6.00pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils at Glenwood School and the wider school community	Glenwood School
4 July 2013 7.30pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils at local primary schools	Montgomerie Primary School

This information is issued by **Essex County Council, Schools, Children and Families.**

You can contact us in the following ways:

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By post: **Essex County Council, School Organisation and Planning PO Box 4261, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1GS**

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Published 10 June 2013

		AGENDA ITEM 4
Consultation about a proposal to close The Deanes secondary school		PAF/03/13
Committee:	People and Families Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	4th July 2013	
Enquiries to:	Name: Tim Coulson / Frank Thomas Designation: Director for Education & Learning / Lead Officer Directorate: SCF Tim.Coulson@essex.gov.uk or Frank.Thomas@essex.gov.uk	

Purpose of the Paper: To advise the Committee about this consultation and the decision making process and timeline, and to recommend the establishment of a task and finish group of the Committee to support and scrutinize this process.

1. Introduction

At its meeting on the 11th June the People and Families Scrutiny Committee, as part of its consideration of future work programme, agreed to establish a task and finish group to consider the proposals for The Deanes School and associated consultation process. This was with a view to feed any findings back to the full Committee as well as to the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning to inform forthcoming decisions needed on this subject.

This report provides the committee with an overview of the process to date and the timescales going forward. It is intended, subject to agreement of the Committee and agreement of Terms of Reference, that an initial paper is presented to the Task and Finish Group which sets out all the information that has been used to reach the point of launching the consultation document.

The consultation document is available on the Essex County Council website:

<http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Delivering-Education-Essex/School-Organisation-Planning/Pages/Consultations.aspx>

There will also shortly be available on the website a range of information including responses to frequently asked questions.

2. Recommendation

To establish a Task and Finish Group of the Committee to scrutinise the Deanes Consultation proposals and process.

3. Background

In February 2004 the Government announced the introduction of a £55bn programme to rebuild or improve significantly the premises of the vast majority of secondary schools in the country. The programme was called Building Schools for the Future (BSF). The BSF programme was to be delivered through 'waves' with a named group of schools in each wave. A project to rebuild Glenwood School was originally included in Wave 4 of the BSF programme but in view of the difficulty of securing a new site on which to rebuild the school, it was decided that the school would move to the site of The Deanes School which was due to be rebuilt in wave 5 of the BSF programme, and new premises for both schools would be built as part of a co-location project.

However, in July 2010 the new Coalition Government announced the cessation of the BSF programme in order to help address high levels of public spending and the project to relocate Glenwood School and rebuild it in conjunction with new premises for The Deanes School was stopped. At that time the project had reached the stage of submitting an Outline Business Case to Partnership for Schools, the Government body responsible for delivering the BSF programme.

The Appleton School and The King John School also had proposed capital investment under the BSF programme withdrawn.

Given the poor condition and suitability of its existing premises, the County Council was committed to seeing Glenwood School rebuilt, and it also had a desire to improve the premises of The Deanes School. The County Council therefore decided that it wished to proceed with the co-location project, albeit in a reduced form as far as The Deanes School element was concerned, and a sum of £22.85m was included in the capital programme from 2012 onwards to fund such a project.

This is a very significant capital project to which to commit in the current financial climate and whilst bids for the project were invited in March 2013 and a preferred bidder has been selected, the County Council has decided to halt procurement whilst it takes the opportunity to review the situation at both schools.

Glenwood School is an outstanding, popular and oversubscribed New Model Special School for children with severe and lifelong difficulties. Despite investment by the school the premises are in poor condition and are unsuitable in many respects. The project to rebuild the school remains a very high priority for the County Council. There have been attempts to rebuild or relocate the school for at least the last 15 years.

At the time of its most recent inspection in February 2012, The Deanes School was judged to be a 'good' school and there were 886 pupils on the school roll. In January 2013 this was 793 and for September 2013, it is estimated this will have fallen to 650 and in the next three years it is predicted that this will fall further to below 500. The intake for September 2013 (excluding 6 statemented pupils) currently stands at , 21 pupils living outside the areas served by the three local schools, 17 from Southend and 21 from the priority admissions area of The Deanes School . The remaining 9 pupils

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The fall in numbers impacts on the revenue funding the school receives to meet its day to day running costs as all schools receive a budget allocation based on pupil numbers.

Given this fall in numbers, the County Council needs to consider whether rebuilding The Deanes School is the best use of the Council's funding. The Council is determined to use the limited funding it has to best effect as there are many competing priorities. In the light of its decision not to proceed with the capital project at this stage, the County Council has decided to undertake a consultation on a proposal to discontinue The Deanes School with effect from 31 August 2016.

For schools to achieve and maintain high educational standards, strong leadership and governance and high quality teachers are vital ingredients. This is critically underpinned by buoyant pupil numbers generating a viable budget and a secure future which gives a sound basis for future planning and development. This helps to make a school attractive to good teachers and leaders seeking to progress their careers, and to parents wanting the best for their child. If popularity is low and pupil numbers decline at a school it becomes increasingly difficult for it to maintain this position.

The County Council is committed to parental preference and ensuring every child has access to the highest quality education to ensure they have the opportunity to maximise their potential.

For these reasons the Council felt that the future of the school should be considered.

3. The Timescale and consultation process

The consultation was launched on the 10th June and runs for 6 weeks until the 22 July 2013.

A range of meetings are being held with staff, governors, pupils, primary and secondary schools, parents and other interested parties during this period.

Date and time	Title	Venue
20 June 2013 14:00	Meeting for Pupils of The Deanes	The Deanes School
20 June 2013 15:00	Meeting for staff of The Deanes	The Deanes School
20 June 2013 17:00	Meeting for the governing body of The Deanes	The Deanes School
20 June 2013 7.30pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils and prospective Year 7 pupils of The Deanes School	The Deanes School
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27 June 2013 7.00pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils and prospective Year 7 pupils of The King John School	The King John School

1 July 2013 7.00pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils and prospective Year 7 pupils of The Appleton School	The Appleton School
4 July 2013 6.00pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils at Glenwood School and the wider school community	Glenwood School
4 July 2013 7.30pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils at local primary schools	Montgomerie Primary School
8 July 2013 7.30pm	Meeting for parents/ carers of pupils at local primary schools	Thundersley Primary School

The proposals are public and specifically have been distributed to all statutory consultees:

- the governing body of any school which is the subject of proposals;
- families of pupils, teachers and other staff at the schools;
- any local authority likely to be affected by the proposals, in particular neighbouring authorities where there may be significant cross-border movement of pupils;
- the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected;
- families of any pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposals including where appropriate families of pupils at feeder primary schools;
- any trade unions who represent staff at the school and representatives of any trade union of any other staff at schools who may be affected by the proposals;
- MPs whose constituencies include the schools that are the subject of the proposals or whose constituents are likely to be affected by the proposals;
- the local district or parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposals is situated;
- any other interested party or such other persons as appear to the proposers to be appropriate.

During August the County Council will consider the views expressed during the consultation. The Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning will then take a formal decision on whether to proceed with the publication of a statutory notice proposing the closure of The Deanes School. If there is a decision to continue towards closure, this notice will be published on 2 September 2013 and will give a further 6 week period for representations to be made. Once the notice closes on 14 October 2013 the County Council would expect to make the final decision within 6 weeks.

Once the County Council Cabinet has made a final decision, the governing body of The Deanes School has a period of 4 weeks in which to consider whether to refer this decision to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. If the governing body chooses to do this then a final decision from the Schools Adjudicator might be expected in February 2014.